

# **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER  
DECEMBER 9, 2014  
6:00 P.M.**

Kate Maynard, Principal Planner, City of Saratoga Springs, welcomed and thanked the public for attending the meeting. Ms. Maynard gave a brief overview of what the Comprehensive Plan is and what the Comprehensive Plan Committee was tasked to do. The Comprehensive Plan is an important policy document to the City. It embodies the City's policies and vision for future land use, design and enhancement to protect the unique character of the community. Per the City's Charter it is required to be reviewed every five years. The current update is looking at the 2001 City's Comprehensive Plan. The draft document and assorted items have been available on the City's website. Hard copies are available in the City's Planning Office, the City Clerk's office and the Library.

The review process began in May of 2013 approximately 1½ years ago, with the appointment of the Committee by the City Council. The Committee consists of Geoff Bornemann, Chairman, Jamin Totino, Vice Chairman, Steven Rowland,\* Oksana Ludd, Charles Wait, Jim Letts,\* Todd Shimkus, Mark Torpey,\* Sonny Bonacio,\* Theresa Capazolla, Devin Del Pos,\* Tom Denny, and Casey Holzworth. Kate Maynard, Principal Planner for the City of Saratoga Springs thanked all the committee members for their service and time on behalf of the City.

\* Indicates Committee members not in attendance this evening.

The members of the committee have met approximately 19 times over the past year and a half, with public input at the meetings. In addition, several public workshops also have been held.

The draft document is organized into four main sections:

- Economic Strength and Stability
- Environment, Health and Resiliency
- Transportation and Mobility
- Community Character

There are approximately 250 individual recommended actions embodied within the draft plan. For public comments tonight we request no personal comments or comments specifically directed to an individual person. Please be courteous and aware of time. We appreciate comments approximately 3 minutes in length, out of courtesy for the number of people present this evening wishing to comment.

This meeting is currently being web cast and can be viewed live and again once the video is posted on the site at any time. Minutes are being prepared and will be presented to the Comprehensive Plan Committee for their consideration as well as making them available to the public as well.

Additional public comments can be sent to the Planning Office. Bradley Birge, Administrator of Planning and Economic Development remains out of the office. All comments should be sent to the attention of [kate.maynard@saratoga-springs.org](mailto:kate.maynard@saratoga-springs.org). You can also forward them to the City's consultant MJ Engineering that address is [jhakes@mjels.com](mailto:jhakes@mjels.com). This will be referenced on the City's website as well. All comments received by Monday, December 15, 2014 by noon will be forwarded to the Committee for their review and use at the upcoming December 18, 2014 meeting. Comments received after that date will be forwarded to the City Council.

**Next scheduled meeting is:**

**Thursday, December 18, 2014 at 7:00 P.M.  
City Council Chambers**

The City Council will vote on the information submitted for adoption of the Comprehensive Plan since they are the governing body.

Geoff Bornemann, Chairman instructed the public to proceed to the front of the room to the microphone, stating your name and address for the record.

**Bonnie Sellers**, 73 Fifth Avenue. Thanked the Commission for the long process and the time and effort expended.

**Maureen Curtin**, 125 Grand Avenue. On behalf of the residential homeowners in the City of Saratoga Springs, we would like to thank those committee members who voted throughout this process to protect the residential neighborhoods. More than 15,000 City residents live in these homes. We thank you for keeping these residential neighborhoods residential. Also for not allowing commercial uses in our neighborhood. We thank you for maintaining density levels. Some areas in the City are already too dense. Thank you also for allowing multi-family housing in certain areas of the City. Thank you for not changing the character of our city.

**Travis Mitchell**, Environmental Design Partnership speaking on behalf of the D'Andrea family. Requesting the Commission correct an error which occurred when the Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2001. A visual presentation was provided to the Committee. 166 acres are shown within Conservation Development District, or the greenbelt. The 1999 Comprehensive Plan being shown. This acreage was divided between two zones, Medium density residential and resource management. In the 2001 update to the Comprehensive Plan the Recommended changes were inconsistent with the other changes. The 2001 plan took land which was prime for development and placed it in the greenbelt, with other constrained lands.

**Karen D'Andrea**. Members of the D'Andrea family. We never asked for or requested a PUD and we are not asking for one tonight. We are asking for a correction to the 2001 map and plan back to that of 1999. This is not a zoning request. Please correct this land use map. We would like to preserve the green belt and 80 acres of forever wild area and recreational land.

**Bobby D'Andrea**, 523 Crescent Avenue. Request the correction to the land use map back to 1999. We would like to donate 80 acres of property with 1 mile of waterfront property to the City. We request fairness and justice. Thank you for your service to the City.

**Joe D'Andrea** 460 Crescent Avenue. I am requesting justice for our family. We deserve justice. Affordable housing for the City as well as a park to the City. Thank you to the Board for their time and effort and service.

**Vincent Pelliccia**, 87 Court Street. I have attended many of these meetings. Concerned regarding Sustainable Saratoga suggested 143 policies. The Preservation Foundation suggested 141 actions. Would be a disaster if all the policies were implemented. The best thing the Commission can do today is to put a moratorium on this process.

**Dave DeMarco**, 2 Ingersoll Road. I am President of Saratoga National Bank, located at 171 South Broadway. I would like to thank the volunteers on this Committee for their contributions over the last 18 months. In reading the plan it seems to focus on the economy of downtown and preserving open space in the greenbelt. At the same time we should protect green space downtown and not prohibit limited development in the greenbelt. We need to find a way to revitalize and develop South Broadway as the gateway to our City. The Comprehensive Plan should be changed to revitalize South Broadway and include more flexible rules and regulations to that end. Less restrictive zoning that focuses on buildings that are architecturally designed to fit in and look good in that section of the City. A main destination is the Saratoga National Golf Course and the proposed expansion would add minimally to it's usage of acreage. Prohibiting PUD's would kill this project.

**Ellen Keihl**, 231 Caroline Street. Speaking on behalf of the Saratoga Democratic Committee. Thank you to the Commission. Conserving natural resources, historic preservation, intensive development downtown are all included in this Comprehensive Plan. We agree with the City Council on the PUD issue. Protect the greenbelt. A letter was read into the record by

Ms. Keihl on behalf of the Saratoga Democratic Committee.

**Tom Porter**, 236 Caroline Street. Opposed to any changes for Exit 14. Beautiful entrance to the City. I also support the D'Andrea family in their request.

**Steven Sullivan**, 56 Condon Road, Stillwater. I am a partner in Longfellow's, Hotel and Restaurant, 500 Union Avenue. I am here in support of the PUD process.

**Charlie Samuels**, Marion Place. PUD's equals suburban sprawl. The Comprehensive Plan Committee needs to listen to the public and communicate ideas for change clearly. They need to explain their vote.

**Tom Newkirk**, 553 Crescent Avenue. In favor of PUD's. This is an effective planning tool for the City Council to develop and execute reasonable economic development while preserving the greenbelt. There are currently 10 PUD's in the City. Thank you to the Committee.

**Todd Garafano**, President of the Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau. Retain the flexibility in the Comprehensive Plan. Fully support the Commission and request to allow PUD's.

**Kevin Bette**, Saratoga National Bank. Economic study needs to be taken into account. We totally support all of the initiatives of the new Comprehensive Plan. Allow developers to submit proposals and allow PUD's to have creative projects submitted. Thank you for your time.

**Harry Moran**, Patricia Lane. Chairman Sustainable Saratoga. Many of our recommendations have been incorporated into the new Comprehensive Plan. New plan identifies roles for the private and public sector in the vision for the future of Saratoga Springs. Thank you for your time and effort for the future of our City.

**Linda Whittle**, George Street. Thank you for your service. This Comprehensive Plan is viewed by lay people like myself and developers as policy. Concerned regarding policies, city is not on a level playing field. We need a strong Comprehensive Plan. We are known as the City in the Country with new people who have relocated, as well as a strong urban core and our parks.

**Steve Samuel**, Wedgwood Drive. Number of detailed comments which were submitted in writing to the Board. No PUD's in the greenbelt. He reviewed areas which need to be included such as energy efficiency, rail service such as Amtrak and North Creek Railroad. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic. He made some recommendations regarding better organization of the plan, formatting and a good proofread. Thank you for the work you have completed.

**Eric Olsen**, 6 Franklin Square. I am a Bikatoga member. We support the Comprehensive Plan, complete streets policy. This is a bike friendly town but we can improve bike transportation.

**Rod Sutton**, 12 5th Avenue. Address the issue of how will we pay for the things we want to do. Safe streets, drug people off the street, clean streets. We need to maintain the things in the community that we currently enjoy. Blending the economic impact with smart growth. Thank you for you efforts.

**Denise McDonald**, Phila Street. In looking over the Comprehensive Plan a good suggestion was made by an individual requesting a summary sheet be made available noting which items have been changed. This would make it easy for the public to compare. Also the affordable housing issue was raised. More research needs to be completed on this issue. I have some discomfort as a citizen I find it not in good form to have a Committee member out front in a public way advocating on any issue related to that, especially when the Comprehensive Plan Committee member is associated with a particular organization to promote business in the community and specifically the Chamber of Commerce. I researched the people who voted for the PUD's and the greenbelt and every single one had some type of Chamber connection

through their place of work, whether it is just their employer is a member of the Chamber or they do a lot of direct business with the Chamber. It starts to undermine the confidence of the Comprehensive Plan Process when somebody is that out front and that vocal in a public way. A recommendation I would make is if there is a conflict like this someone should recuse themselves from voting on a PUD process. It is very politicized.

Todd Shimkus requested of the Chairman to allow Tony Izzo, Assistant City Attorney, to address what the Commission was required to do as Committee members in terms of disclosing information and verify that all 13 of us followed the letter of the law as was recommended to us.

Tony Izzo, Assistant City Attorney stated this meeting was noticed, was presented and advertised as a public comment period. Members of the committee if they have questions they wish to ask can be done after the public has had an opportunity to comment. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. The primary purpose is for the public to speak.

Todd Shimkus asked a simple yes or no answer. Did we do everything to comply with the law?

Tony Izzo, Assistant City Attorney stated I addressed the legal issues and you complied with them.

**Gordon Boyd**, 99 State Street. I am speaking for the west side of Broadway. We need to get some serious attention on how the people use the City. We have a lot of people who work in the City. They work at Wesley, Prestwick Chase, restaurants, and the hospitality industry in the City. They earn between \$9.00 and \$15.00 an hour. They cannot afford to live in Saratoga Springs. All the Comprehensive Plans over the last 44 years we have further gentrified this town. The only people who can afford to live here are those moving in from downstate and elsewhere moving in and buying homes. Rents are out of reach for people who earn a little more than minimum wage. We need to find a place for people to live. We need the flexibility of the PUD's.

**Colin Kleptar**, Waterbury Street. Thank you to the members who are here tonight. As a whole I do support the plan. I bike or take CDTA to work. There is affordable housing in the City if you work for it. I bought a home and fixed it myself. PUD's could work for some communities with smart growth and monitoring. Thank you for your time.

**Robert Davis**, Phila Street. A member of the Comprehensive Plan member is a builder and is voting on PUD's while building. Suggest that member recuse himself from voting on PUD's in the Comprehensive Plan. Concern regarding affordable housing.

**Patrick Kane**, 19 Marion Place. Land Use Volunteer for ten years. We have good quality people. We are self governing. We have a pretty good safety net here. This is something which shouldn't be taken very lightly. A PUD is a tool not a weapon. Saratoga Springs is the slowest growing municipality in the County. 496 people come to Saratoga Springs. In that same time period we had 595 people move to Corinth. 15% of our population is over 65 years old. We have the 13 lowest median income in our County. We are not this wealthy community people think we are. To prohibit the PUD tool is suppression.

**Sam Brewton**, Lake Avenue. We do not necessarily feel confident with the Boards, with the safety nets. We have seen things be accepted that are well proposed. I have lived here for 20 years and I am against the PUD language. I appreciate your time.

**Kathleen Fyfe**, West Circular Street. Run the Leadership Saratoga Program. Two topics to share this evening. Vision and Passion. We have a passion to live in this community. Quality of Life is what makes this community so special, and protecting it is forefront. I agree with the idea of limiting the PUD's not prohibiting. It is a planning tool. Thank you so much for your commitment to this project.

**Vincent Pelliccia**, 87 Court Street. Concern taking barns, garages and converting them. My concern is the fragile infrastructure. Very dangerous to let wide open development.

**Patrick Kane**, 19 Marion Place. What is the definition of greenbelt. We are talking about this term. Is there an official definition.

Geoff Bornemann closed the public hearing at 7:37 P.M.

The next steps:

The public has until 12 noon on Monday, December 15, 2014 to submit written comments either via mail or email.

The next meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Committee is Thursday, December 18, 2014 at 7:00 P.M. in Council Chambers.

There will be a summary of the changes and proposals which will be available on the website as well as distributed to all Committee members.

Additional items could be placed as late as Monday or Tuesday of next week.

We will allow brief comments for items on the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski  
Recording Secretary