

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC) Meeting #14
Date and Time: May 19, 2014
Location: City Recreation Center Community Room, 15 Vanderbilt Avenue
Attendees: See attached Sign-In

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
<p>Item #1 Welcome</p>	<p>The Committee Chair welcomed everyone.</p>	
<p>Item #2 Public Comment on Agenda</p>	<p>Comment #1: Ironic that the Committee is discussing Community Character while also discussing increasing density by a lot and introducing commercial. The public is not aware these issues are even being discussed; need transparency.</p> <p>Comment #2: Cherry St. is in Core Commercial designation. It's unclear in tonight's map discussion what this is. Keep commercial downtown. Concern about Beekman St. Art District. Don't force into art ghetto.</p> <p>Comment #3: Didn't realize new document shows up to a 100% increase. This is a commercial intrusion into residential neighborhoods. No idea what form based zoning is. Flexibility is the new code word for increasing density. Against high density. There is a lack of City oversight. Petition against Beekman St. was signed. Not against art, but proposal is not about art. Against commercialization and changing neighborhood character.</p>	<p>Keep in mind when discussing and revising land uses and draft Comp Plan</p>
<p>Item #3 Administrative Items – Financial Disclosures</p>	<p>The Committee was previously given two forms which provide suggested language on how to disclose on record. The first related to citywide property, interest, or organizations. The second form specifically related to 12+ focus areas.</p>	<p>None</p>

	<p>Geoff Bornemann disclosed that he owns piece of property. He is involved as member of Saratoga Plan, Saratoga Preservation Foundation, Sustainable Saratoga, Saratoga Vital Aging Network, and the Beekman St. Association (although he does not own property in the Beekman St. area).</p> <p>Jamin Totino disclosed he owns property at 23 & 25 Beekman Street owns with wife. He is also part of the Beekman St. Association.</p> <p>Charles Wait disclosed he owns property at 658 North Broadway. He is also the Chairman and Chief Operating Officer of the Adirondack Trust Company which has financial interest in roughly 70% of properties in Saratoga. He is on the New York Racing Association Board of Directors.</p> <p>Devin Dalpos disclosed that he and his wife own 20 Karner Drive. He is also a board member of the non-profit organization Southwest Neighborhood Association of Saratoga and a member of the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>Theresa Capozzola disclosed she is half owner 55 Gilbert Road and 57 Gilbert Road. She is a real estate attorney and provides services related to real property. She is also on the Complete Streets Committee.</p> <p>Jackie Hakes (Consultant) disclosed she is on the Executive Board of Saratoga PLAN and has recused herself from discussions and not participated in any decisions regarding anything related to the Comp Plan.</p> <p>Casey Holzworth disclosed he owns property at 49 Park Street. He is also an employee of NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation (OPRHP) whose office is in the Saratoga Spa State Park. He is a Board Member of Saratoga PLAN and a Board Member of Sustainable Saratoga. He has recused himself of any discussions relating to the Comp Plan.</p> <p>Tom Denny disclosed he and his wife own 205 East Avenue. He is also a board member of Sustainable Saratoga.</p> <p>Sonny Bonacio disclosed 54 properties aloud and also provided a written copy to the City Planning</p>	
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	<p>Department.</p> <p>Todd Shimkus disclosed he and his wife own property at 139 Jefferson St. He is also employed by the Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, a Board Member of Saratoga Economic Development Corporation, a Board Member of the Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau, and a Board Member of the Greenbelt Trail Committee.</p> <p>Mark Torpey disclosed he owns 53 York Ave. and 111 George St. Mark also serves at the Chair of the City Planning Board and is a Board Member of Sustainable Saratoga.</p>	
<p>Item #4 Review / Decision Draft Action Items: Community Character</p>	<p>The Committee went through a matrix of draft Action items provided by the Consultant. The matrix included where the origin of the Action (i.e. 2001 CP, public) as well as items not proposed for inclusion in the Plan, which were crossed out.</p> <p>The discussion that ensued is summarized by the revised Action Items document, which is attached.</p>	<p>Consultant to revise based on the Committee's discussion and comments.</p>
<p>Item #5 Future Land Use Map</p>	<p>The proposed Future Land Use map reflects the 2001 map, with some minor changes</p> <p>A member asked if the Consultant can go over what was changed.</p> <p>The Consultant indicated the map was prepared and printed on Thursday, before the Chair sent changes on Friday.</p> <p>The biggest change was land added to the Parks designation. An "Equine" designation was also added.</p> <p>The Chair indicated there were a few map revisions needed; would like to start with map that is the same as the existing Land Use Map.</p> <p>A member suggested the CP C discuss geographic focus areas, where they left off last time.</p> <p>The Chair referenced a chart he made on Friday. Thinks CPC needs to deal with nodes and the Country Overlay. Geographic focus areas should be the main topic. The CPC needs to focus on that and let Consultants do their job.</p> <p>The Chair indicated the Consultants did not receive his materials on Friday and their materials don't match what he is proposing.</p> <p>A member indicated he doesn't have time to go through materials received on a Friday over the weekend. Had</p>	<p>Consultant to make revisions to Future Land Use Map</p>

graduations this weekend and even the public says we're going too fast. There is no time to digest information and we're getting into the things that are really, really important. Appreciates schedule/budget, but quite frankly could care less- it's more important in getting it *right*.

Upper South Broadway (south of intersection)

Remove two-story restriction.

But that's zoning, not on the Land Use map.

Zoning must be consistent with Comp Plan and map.

Restriction is stifling development.

In last 13 years, has that section of S Broadway redeveloped how we wanted to?

Thirsty Owl, Duo, and County Facility have all been redeveloped.

Change from Core Commercial (CC) designation to something else? Or let zoning address?

McDonald's looks good, but the required second story is empty. This was a corporate choice, not City or Zoning.

What allowed Healthy market to develop how did? It was in a Special Development Area (SDA).

How is that different from a PUD?

It's very prescriptive, allows for mixed uses.

Trying to provide for Core, *not* compete with Core.

Buildings are full, single story, area is lacking an anchor.

Had the opportunity to have Healthy Living Market on South Broadway but couldn't make it happen.

On track for good clear vision, remember GAPS report confirmed existing zoning is good.

Members indicated these are good discussions the Committee needs to be having, don't want to be rushed.

The City Planner explained the code calls for the two story space to be utilized. With that being said, the City may have approved exceptions. Part of the reason for the two story requirement is design form, what we want to see. Idea is to have flexibility to increase height, and have more multiple uses in buildings. Single uses in two stories have happened. McDonalds and Healthy Market are partially two stories but largely single in use.

The Chair noted that he tried to take a vote on this already.

A member expressed that the CPC is not there yet. This is very important discussion.

	<p>It is totally uneconomical to build two stories and leave the second story uninhabited. This is a mistake, let's not repeat it.</p> <p>Heard a lot of concern from downtown neighborhoods with growth going east/west. Could we bring core down [south] S. Broadway, but bring neighborhoods back in [east/west] and change Core Commercial on S. Broadway to Core. Could also reduce neighborhoods to Traditional Neighborhood (TN) with nodes.</p> <p>Still can do single story if right use. Retailers that are interested want a walkable area.</p> <p>The Chair proposed to separate downtown neighborhood to HD-1 and HD-2.</p> <p>Likes the idea of CC being higher intensity use. Likes two stories, but understands issues. Can we change definition of CC? "Increase flexibility, different heights to accommodate different types of retail"?</p> <p>A member suggested tabling the discussion.</p> <p>A member asked the Consultant to work on a revised definition of Core Commercial?</p> <p>Is it or isn't it forbidden to have a one story building?</p> <p>The requirement is for two stories, but has some flexibility.</p> <p><u>Mid South Broadway</u></p> <p>Has opportunity as campus setting. Would it be bad to have true office campus type of setting?</p> <p>Appearance is important. Setbacks, spacing of buildings, etc.</p> <p>Not opposed to office buildings.</p> <p>Unique in character, but different from S Broadway.</p> <p>Is it appropriate for specialty zone? (similar to SDA) We can explain why it's unique.</p> <p>Is this an activity node/activity corridor?</p> <p>The SDA's worked well.</p> <p>Would like to continue rural character, especially with tree nursery. Want to get the feeling you are entering Saratoga Springs. Even if we have uses that are hidden or buffered. Need road and pedestrian improvements.</p> <p>This is already covered by Gateway zoning. Three SDA's, each one unique to geographic circumstances.</p> <p>Could lower Route 50 and lower Route 9 be grouped?</p> <p>Mid-Broadway on its own.</p>	
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	<p>Do we have consensus on Route 50 piece? Doesn't feel like you're in the country. Really lacks gateway feeling. Do we want more commercial?</p> <p>How would we define as a special use area that's different from other two?</p> <p>Should think long term, develop more revenue.</p> <p>The Route 50 CDTC linkage study made a lot of suggestions to change [the actual] gateway. But we still need to take care of things further south.</p> <p>Has motor oriented feel, railroad on right side.</p> <p><u>Route 50/Price Chopper</u></p> <p>(Block below Finley and Lincoln)</p> <p>Currently must use variance</p> <p>Consider making northern tip of RN-2, north of Finley, Core Commercial (CC).</p> <p>Consider making frontage on the north side of Route 50, near Hamilton and Union, Core Commercial.</p> <p>Whole area is affordable housing; concern that will be lost if it is changed from residential.</p> <p>Look at proposal from existing business from beginning of CPC process asking for land use change.</p> <p>The Chair asked if everyone agreed with the two changes: 1, frontage along Route 50 CC and 2, north of Finley CC.</p> <p>The CPC all agreed.</p> <p>The Chair noted there is a third area to look at: the thin strip of land behind the Price Chopper Plaza, paralleling Aletta St. that is currently shown as Industrial. To the west of this strip is residential and to the east commercial (Price Chopper).</p> <p>Thinks we would rather expand the residential into that area than the commercial.</p> <p>Area also includes Railroad Run Trail. Okay with Traditional Neighborhood (TN) or Downtown Neighborhood (DN), but not anything commercial.</p> <p>Makes more sense to make DN and connect to others.</p> <p><u>Union Avenue</u></p> <p>(Area bordered by Union, East, Nelson and Mitchell)</p> <p>Previously MDR-2, perhaps bring up Equine area?</p> <p>What does Equine mean?</p> <p>Is this a "node?"</p>	
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	<p>The Chair indicated he sees a few options: 1, track related; 2, higher density residential (extend DN?)</p> <p>Horse racing is changing, need to accommodate things like offices with stables.</p> <p>Area is across from oldest race track for 6 weeks a year, but the rest of the year it's mostly residential. Hard sell for other 10 months of year. Traditionally, restaurants. Brook Tavern still in existence. Serves neighborhood more during off season. Scale match for other 10 months of year.</p> <p>Don't want to limit Fasig Tipton either.</p> <p>Extend to Racing Museum on Union, extend DN all the way down.</p> <p><u>Marion Ave</u></p> <p>Isn't covered by HMA but there is a Maple Avenue residential group.</p> <p>They've requested very strongly to not change anything near there.</p> <p>CPC was in agreement to leave it as is.</p> <p>A member suggested since it was 8:45 and we still have public comment, to call it a night.</p> <p>The Chair continued through the last few geographic focus areas.</p> <p><u>Division Street</u></p> <p>Change to DN/link existing DN's.</p> <p><u>Beekman</u></p> <p>Leave it as is?</p> <p>Consensus on Beekman is to leave the same (translate to new categories).</p> <p>The Chair noted there are two key areas left: near the harness track and the Saratoga National Golf Course area.</p> <p>Spring Street/Lincoln Ave as well.</p> <p>Charles motioned the meeting end and go to public comment. The CPC agreed.</p>	
<p>Item #6 Public Comments</p>	<p>Comment #1: Thank you for listening to us and putting up with us. We appreciate it. Would ask to please add "residential" to "Downtown (Residential) Neighborhood"</p>	<p>Consider adding "residential" to "Downtown (Residential)"</p>

		Neighborhood”
<p>Item #7 Schedule</p>	<p>The next scheduled meeting is next Tuesday, May 27 (since Monday is Memorial Day).</p> <p>The Committee will finish the map and geographic focus areas discussion. The proposed land use designation and definitions will also be discussed.</p> <p>A member noted the Consultants are not getting paid and this is a holiday weekend. Let’s give everyone time and not meet on Tuesday.</p> <p>Another member expressed they also do not want to be here next Tuesday.</p> <p>Wants to see Country Overlay District on Future Land Use map.</p> <p>It was suggested to have a short meeting on Tuesday to just finish the map and geographic areas discussion.</p> <p>Doesn’t think it’s realistic to have homework over the holiday weekend.</p> <p>Doesn’t think we should have a meeting without everyone here.</p> <p>It was agreed to continue using the Meeting Wizard; at least nine members must be available to hold a meeting.</p>	

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:

Jaclyn Hakes / Sarah Quandt
 MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
 cc: City Planning Staff, CPC, File



COMMUNITY CHARACTER - Draft Action Items

Last Revised: 5/27/14

COMMUNITY FORM/DESIGN/QUALITY

1. Maintain and promote the “city in the country” form that includes an intensively developed urban core, vibrant central business district, well defined urban edges and an outlying area comprised of open lands, landscape or rural character and low density development.
2. Continue to work to enhance the vitality and success of the City’s downtown area.
3. Maintain the greenbelt by restricting in compatible uses and the intensity of development.
4. Preserve the rural greenbelt of the community concept by maintaining an urban design character in the core area of the city and a rural character in the outlying areas.
5. Discourage destination type resorts that compete with the downtown core.
6. Identify priority gateways into the City and develop/review guidelines for appropriate area-specific amenities and treatments such as Route 50 and South Broadway.
7. All development and rehabilitation should be respectful of the original community character.
8. Increase public and private plazas and meeting spaces to enhance the sense of community.
9. Promote the reuse and reoccupation of vacant and underutilized buildings and strengthen the new vacant building registry.
10. Create new landscape design guidelines for neighborhoods that add safety, comfort, and beauty, while maintaining or enhancing ecosystem neighborhoods.
11. Improve the availability of information on land use activity by expanding the City’s geographic Information System (GIS).
12. Evaluate and assess models for form-based zoning as a means to achieve desired community character, improved development expectations and predictable review procedures.
13. Develop an interactive digital mapping system to convey information about community events, facilities and resources to citizens, tourists and the general public.
 - a. Identify all the historic features and amenities with links to directions, hours, and additional information.
 - b. Identify all the “art” resources (Beekman Street, SPAC, Dance Museum) with links to directions, hours, and additional information.
 - c. Identify all the cultural assets with links to directions, hours, and additional information. (Schools, libraries, museums, etc.)
 - d. Identify the historic district and properties that require regulations and procedures. Provide link to these requirements, electronic forms, and where to find additional information.
 - e. Create themed tours and trails such as a historic tour and art trail. Include names of sites, directions hours, special promotions (if applicable), and website links and more information. Partner with other public/private organizations
14. Continue to locate most citywide civic facilities in core area of the community.
15. Continue to provide linkage between and among community neighborhoods.

16. Continue to provide linkages and interconnection with and among all the various social, employment and commercial activity centers.
17. Create an attractive downtown streetscape that has significant tree canopy, street furniture and other pedestrian amenities that add comfort and interest for shoppers and visitors.
18. Allow for and encourage community gardens, rooftop gardens, urban gardening and backyard agriculture and sustainable agriculture within the city limits.

HISTORY & HERITAGE

1. Continue effort to establish creative mechanisms to protect historic properties in all areas of the community.
2. Promote the institutions and events that highlight the rich heritage of the community.
3. Continue effort to promote the equine-related activities in the area along Union Avenue and East Avenue to tie together the activities at the Racecourse, the National Racing Museum, Fasig Tipton, the Oklahoma Track, etc.
4. Continue to implement the City's adopted Historic Preservation Plan (2001).
5. Periodically review the City's adopted Historic Preservation Plan to determine if it needs to be updated or revised.
6. Expand educational efforts relating to historic resources in the City to market heritage tourism.
7. Encourage the public to assume a stronger role in the protection of the community's historic resources by providing educational materials, technical assistance, and financial resources.
8. Increase coordination and strengthen partnerships among all agencies and organizations involved in historic preservation.
9. Ensure consistency between various local governmental policies that affect the community's historic resources.
10. Provide special training sessions for members of the Design Review Commission to remain in compliance with Certified Local Government standards.
11. Pursue funding opportunities and provide incentives to sustain a range of preservation activities.
12. Survey historic resources within our community on an ongoing basis to identify which resources are significant and are worthy of preservation.
13. Expand the local Historic District to match the boundaries of the various historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
14. Periodically review the City's architectural guidelines to determine if updates are needed.
15. Support and enforce local legislation and code enforcement to address buildings being threatened by demolition by neglect.
16. Expand City Urban Heritage Center programming in cooperation with museums and educational and other institutions.

ARTS & CULTURE

1. Promote access for all citizens to the community's museums and cultural facilities to residents and visitors.

2. Promote volunteer opportunities and participation in all sectors of the community.
3. Promote cultural diversity programs and events throughout the community
4. Support arts and cultural festivals as well as the various organizations that work to organize
5. Support cultural organizations by offering operational support such as parking and traffic control for not-for-profit arts organization events and publicizing and participating in cultural arts venues on city-owned street signs and banners.
6. Support the development and vibrancy of areas where artist and work and promote their arts.
7. Implement creative placemaking tools to engage residents and contribute to a healthy sustainable community.
8. Use creative placemaking as a tool to animate public and private spaces, improve public safety, and bring diverse people together.

EDUCATION

1. Encourage community interrelationships with higher education institutions.
2. Encourage more coordination and sharing of all public and private educational and institutional facilities to complement community and neighborhood needs.
3. Promote more sustainability-based and civic curriculum with all the community education facilities.
4. Support community education programs and outreach efforts of the public library.
5. Foster coordination between school district and local/regional businesses to provide the training and skills that meet the needs of today's employers.
6. Promote more participation in cultural and educational opportunities schools offer
7. Provide opportunities for higher education students' involvement in the community.

HOUSING

1. Encourage a range of residential opportunities that will be available to all residents to promote the social and economic diversity vital to a balanced community.
2. Actively promote affordable housing of all types and tenure throughout the City and avoid overconcentration in any one area and to reduce the potential for isolation of income groups.
 - a. Promote diversity of housing types in close proximity to employment centers, like downtown, the hospital, Skidmore College, the racetracks, etc.
 - b. Encourage the development of higher density residential alternatives within the urban core including the conversion to residential use of upper floors in commercial districts.
 - c. Make greater use of City-owned properties for affordable housing and consider acquiring additional properties for this purpose.
3. Promote the implementation of the City's "Consolidated Plan" to achieve identified community development objectives and increase the availability of safe, affordable housing.

4. Support existing and consider new partnerships to address housing needs. Continue supporting collaborative efforts to develop additional affordable housing with organizations such as the Saratoga Affordable Housing Group and Saratoga Springs Housing Authority.
5. Rehabilitate and develop affordable housing via a "whole-site approach" with attention to site location and layout, façade design, pedestrian movement and accessibility, adequate infrastructure provision, and sensitivity to historic preservation and neighborhood context. This will also assist to revitalize and/or preserve existing neighborhoods.
6. Assist At-Risk Persons with housing needs.
 - a. Provide adequate temporary shelters for the homeless and at risk population.
 - b. Increase supportive housing and services that enable persons with special needs to live in dignity and independence.
 - c. Assist homeless and persons at risk of becoming homeless in obtaining affordable housing.
7. Promote more effective development incentives.
 - d. Consider incentives, such as density bonuses, temporary property tax relief from building setback and parking requirements, to encourage affordability.
 - e. Consider providing infrastructure incentives for developments with affordable units.
8. Address procedural items related to housing City-wide.
 - f. Review zoning, subdivision, building codes and develop policies to actively encourage affordable housing construction or redevelopment.
 - g. Permit conversion, building and permanent residential use of accessory buildings such as carriage houses and garages.
 - h. Promote more aggressive enforcement of housing codes and zoning regulations.
9. Identify funding resources to assist the City and its residents in meeting its housing needs.
 - i. Consider establishing dedicated funds (e.g. development fees, non-profit PILOT programs, etc.) or land trust for affordable housing development, land acquisition, construction subsidies, etc.
 - j. Maximize participation in Federal and State funding programs for the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental and homeowner units.
10. Provide housing opportunities to support an aging population.
 - k. Encourage construction of senior housing in proximity to transit service as well as health and community services.
 - l. Allow for new types of senior housing such as: cooperative housing, concierge housing, senior rooming houses.

PUBLIC SERVICES

1. Investigate the feasibility of a centralized public safety facility.
2. Work to ensure that all areas of the community are adequately serviced by fire, police and emergency medical response.
3. Diligently enforce public safety and welfare matters such as truck traffic, speed limits and illegal use of property.

4. Support continued provision of economically viable emergency medical service.
5. Support the expansion of neighborhood watch programs.
6. Continue and improve the coordination and delivery of a wide range of support services for special needs population, including seniors, such as accessibility, medical, social, transportation options, security, recreation and delivery of information.
7. Develop, maintain and promote employment opportunities.

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