

# Town of Clarence

One Town Place, Clarence, NY 14031

## Planning Board & Town Board Joint Meeting

### Master Plan Revision Process

July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013 at 6:30pm

## Agenda

### 1. Role of the Master Plan



#### Public Opinion Data

- a) Satisfaction Survey 2009
- b) Satisfaction Survey 2013
- c) Parks and Recreation Master plan of 2009
- d) Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan of 2012
- e) Master Plan Updates from 2001 through 2013, Inclusive
- f) Land Use Access Management Plan of 2004
- g) Clarence Hollow and Clarence Center Hamlet Visioning Sessions
- h) Open Space Preservation- Assimilation of lands preserved to date and future projects
- i) Fiscal Trends and Prospects Study by Samina Raja
- j) Historic Preservation and Landmark Preservation Designations since Law Adoption in 2007 and Intensive Level Historic Resources Survey of 2009
- k) Census data (2010) and updated housing and subdivision approvals (on-going)
- l) "SWOT" Analysis as Developed by the Planning Board and the general public via several visioning sessions in 2013/2014 (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

## **2. Ongoing Master Planning Issues**

- a) Preservation of Greenspace
  - Agricultural Land Preservation
  - Natural Land Preservation
  - Subdivision Design
- b) Preservation and development of Valuable Commercial/Industrial Lands
- c) Protection of Existing Residential Neighborhoods
- d) Connectivity
  - Pedestrian (sidewalks, bike paths)
  - Vehicular
- e) Traffic Congestion
  - Road segments
  - Intersections
- f) Parks and Recreation Planning
- g) Sewer Capacity Prioritization
- h) Historic Preservation
  - Hamlets
  - Landmarks
- i) Growth Constraints (floodplain, wetland, escarpment and natural areas)
- j) Consistencies between the Master Plan and Zoning

## **3. Master Plan Goals Mission Statement**

*The goals of the master plan need to balance landowner's developmental interests with protecting the environment, preserving rural culture, protecting existing residential homes and neighborhoods and creating an attractive, convenient and walkable community.*

## **4. Master Plan Goals**

**Preserve and Protect the Open Character of the Town through the Development of an Open Space Plan**

## **Implementation Strategies**

After Master Plan 2015 was officially adopted, work began on code updates which are consistent with Master Plan goals. These updates included the adoption of a comprehensive Zoning Law and Map that preserves a protected agricultural zoning classification that requires a larger minimum lot size for residential uses and also works in conjunction with the density flood zone to protect against future flooding. The adoption of a new comprehensive Subdivision Law also was developed to protect the open spaces of the community by not allowing for unregulated growth without public sewer access and the requirement of Planning Board review for every lot split. The focus of both pieces of legislation puts a high priority on open space and natural feature preservation, including the provisions of open space design development for sewer areas. The Town also passed the Open Space Bond Act or Greenprint Program to acquire valuable lands for long term preservation. Actions to preserve and protect open space and natural areas should continue as the community grows. In reviewing new projects that induce growth, the Town should always have an eye to overall Master Plan 2015 goals, including open space preservation as well recreation amenities and connectivity.

**Maintain and promote the Historic Character of Clarence Hollow, Clarence Center and Swormville As well as Historic Landmarks not located within these districts.**

As an integral part of the new Zoning Law and Map, the Town identified a distinct Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Classification. This TND identifies smaller, more traditional hamlet scale lots and setbacks. A grassroots overlay district was also developed to ensure that neighborhood values and designs became standard in Clarence Hollow and Clarence Center. In support of this goal the Town undertook an intensive historic resources survey, adopted a Local Historic Preservation Law and appointed a local Historic Preservation Commission. The Town also became a Registered Certified Local Government to aid in the protection of Historic Landmarks throughout the community. While much work has been done, the level of investment in the hamlet areas of the Town remains a long term concern for community sustainability.

**Develop an Official Map that identifies future Public Service Infrastructure Upgrades**

The Town has undertaken significant actions towards upgrading public infrastructure, including road and intersection upgrades, sewer extensions, coordination on a regional basis, consolidated water system, recreational trail development and stormwater management. Maps have been generated that identify road and intersection areas of concern as well as future extensions for traffic calming. Traffic will continue to be an issue in the future development of the community and regional cooperation will be essential in managing the overall system. Involvement with the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (GBNRTC) and local road providers and adjoining communities must be maintained. The adopted Land Use Access Management Plan (LUAMP) should be further explored and developed. Concerns as outlined in MP 2015 remain and traffic analyses will be critical in future project review.

Sewers will remain the most prominent infrastructure in controlling growth. A comprehensive master sewer plan should be developed with identification of private contributions to offset long term costs. The 2007 MP 2015 amendment to prioritize future sewer capacity will remain an important tool in future growth control.

The Bike Path has become a most important community wide recreational amenity and development of a coordinated and comprehensive trail system to connect all public lands in the Town should remain a priority. Continued extensions in conjunction with project review and approvals are necessary to offset overall costs to the public sector.

**Preserve Existing Greenspace Through the Redesign of Land Use Regulations and Guidelines**

The protection of existing and future residential areas, development of existing commercial properties and the protection of agricultural and natural areas will continue to be the underlying directive. Land Use Regulations should be designed/maintained to achieve this goal.

**Maintain the Town's Strong Recreation Program and Park Facilities in Proportion to Growth**

In 2005, the Town undertook development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This study included an inventory of existing facilities and long range plans for sports leagues and individual parks. This study did not have the opportunity to examine all parks and this study should be completed going forward. The Town was originally criticized for the identified ratio of 9.9 acres of park/recreation land per 1000 residents. This ratio was identified as a baseline and should be examined to ensure that an acceptable amount of per capita parkland is maintained. As the population grows and demographics change, demands for fields and infrastructure will change. Through the years, different priorities have been given to various recreation activities. Year round facilities have been envisioned and partially developed through the private sector. In undertaking the individual parks studies (mini-master plans), the cost of future development becomes the overriding concern. As with infrastructure, private investment will be necessary to achieve all goals.

**Maintain a High Quality School System**

Continued cooperation and sharing of information and resources will become even more critical as the burden on property tax payers increases. Adoption of Adequate Educational Facilities Local Law is an example of how the Town and School District can cooperatively work for the sustainability of the community. Enforcing and continuing with a balanced growth plan will be critical in maintain a quality school district. Utilization of SEQRA and the Adequate Educational Facilities Local Law should maintain the lines of communication for project review.

**Provide Consistent Enforcement of Land Use Regulations**

Legislation, including Sign, Zoning, Subdivision, Landscape and Tree Conservation local laws as well as Floodplain Development, Stormwater Management, Satellite Towers, Clearing Filling and Grading, and TEQR all work to ensure current regulations that are in keeping with changes to the economy and public desires/demands. In addition, the public notification Policies of the Town have been upgraded to ensure that adequate notification is the norm. This includes notification within 500' of all projects up for review.

**Adopt an Orderly and Balanced Growth Plan which Protects Existing Residential Areas**

Balanced growth will continue to be an ongoing process. The Zoning Map and Law were updated in 2005, with several additional modifications through the years. The annual public hearing on MP 2015 has aided in the identification of needed amendments. A growth cap policy was put in place and the Town Board has the ability to amend this policy and adjust to changing times/demands. The practice of holding an annual review of the adopted master plan should continue.

**Coordinate Planning Efforts on a Regional Basis**

At the time of original adoption, Master Plan 2015 was consistent with the "Guiding Principals" as adopted by Erie County to identify regional goals. In the subsequent years Erie County has adopted the Plan for Regional Growth. The Master Plan 2015 remains consistent with regional goals. In addition, the Town routinely coordinates project reviews with various regulatory agencies to ensure that project review is compatible with regulatory requirements and capacities. The sewer capacity prioritization study, as perfected by the Planning Board, has helped to address project prioritization in terms of sewer capacity and remains an important tools in project review. The adoption of the town Agriculture and Farmland Protection Plan is a key regional asset and will continue to play an important role as the community and region evolve. The amendments to the Zoning Law to prioritize and encourage hamlet development, consistent with historical development of the community, remains a significant part of the community development. Road systems are the most identified infrastructure under constant impact and the town will need to ensure that proper planning and coordination with service providers remains in force to address future concerns. Protection of open space and natural resources should continue for the long term sustainability and health of the community. (Greenprint, Flood Plain, Stream corridor protection, Historic Preservation, Parks and Recreation, Affordable Housing all need to be coordinated). Protections are ensured under the direction of the Town Board in collaboration with the Planning Board.

**5. Proposed Public Hearings**

- a) October 2013
- b) April 2014

**6. Planning Board/ Town Board joint meeting on changes to Goals for Master Plan 2015**

October 2014