

Town of Ovid Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting #2 Notes

June 22, 2016

Committee Members Present: Paul Engineri, John Hubbard, Joe Borst, Carrie Smalser, Tobias Hertzler, Jean Currie, William Dalrymple, Pamela Armitage, Rodney Winkleblack.

Notes from May meeting were reviewed and accepted unanimously.

Future meeting information and the agenda will be emailed to committee members in advance of the meetings.

Website Presentation: Diana Smith, from the MRB Group /EDR team, provided a review of the project website, www.TownofOvidComprehensivePlan.org, to the committee. The website is now available online. It contains 4 pages designed to assist the committee in project objectives: The main page provides meeting announcements and an update; a Status Page provides project status information; a “Meet the Committee” page provides contact information for committee members; and a “Contact” page provides a vehicle for contacting the committee directly, via email.

John Hubbard indicated the Town website, currently being revised, will be completed in approximately 2 months. In the meantime, he will ensure that a link is added to the existing website to connect to the project website.

A communication protocol was established for occasions when a committee member is contacted directly: anyone receiving emails or calls will forward that information to Diana Smith, who will ensure it is shared appropriately and addressed at the subsequent meeting.

In the interests of finalizing a Public Participation Plan, the committee confirmed that in addition to open steering committee meetings (for public attendance), there are four scheduled public participation meetings: a public presentation that is an introduction to the process; two workshops/charrettes designed to foster public interaction; and a public hearing to gather resident comments on the plan draft.

The initial public presentation was scheduled for the July Town of Ovid Board meeting on July 13. MRB Group/EDR will prepare and lead a PowerPoint presentation and Committee members will be there to support the presentation and demonstrate that the process will be directed not by “outsiders” but by the local, resident-based steering committee.

It was established that Focus Groups will be utilized to gather additional public input, with 7 groups identified for targeted emphasis. The groups/representational focuses are: Lake Residents, Business Development, Municipal Services / Interjurisdictional Perspectives; Agricultural / Environmental, Amish Community, Youth, Senior Citizens.

It was decided that a target participation level is 7-10 members for each group. It was also established that 1 hour meetings would be proposed, with an absolute limit of 1.5 hours, in order to demonstrate respect for the value of participants’ time.

Committee members will bring to the next meeting their suggestions and contact information, if possible, for proposed participants for specific Focus Groups.

AT the previous meeting, MRB Group/EDR posed a KICKOFF QUESTION / HOMEWORK: "What do you value most about living in Ovid? OR - What is it about the community that you value so much that you would not want to see it compromised -- nothing would convince you to give it up?" Committee members shared their personal responses, which included:

- Little to no traffic
- Open space, agricultural atmosphere, laid back, lack of development, rural, access to the Lake
- Right to farm law: This should stay, but needs to be addressed. There is arbitration law.
- Sense of community: because there is community group involvement
- Small town / "old town" feel (architecture, slower pace, minimal crime, rich history)
- Lack of gun restrictions: residents can legally discharge a firearm for practice / hunting
- Living on the lakes (there was some related discussion about concerns: high taxes, pollution of the lake (algae), trees taken down, Dean's Cove - horrible smell, water quality for the drinking water supply)
- The people of Ovid and family farms

Several additional topics arose regarding concerns about the Ovid community, including:

- What can we do to keep young people in the area??
- What can be done to energize the community?
- Loss of population, lack of housing, people leaving school, land is hard to get tough to build
- Seneca Lake: no public access within the Town of Ovid (only Lodi point, Sampson)
- Cayuga Lake: not much available, privately owned, there are remains from a Town-owned boat access at Sheldrake Point, but it is small and there are current issues with the property.

Other resources were mentioned:

Harriet Haines has indicated her willingness to participate as needed, as County Planner. She will be added to the Municipal Services/Interjurisdictional Focus Group list.

MRB Group/EDR will be reaching out to STEPS: Seneca Towns Engaging People for Solutions, as a resource for information.

Next meeting is scheduled for July 27th at 6pm in the Fire Hall.