What makes an inclusive, sustainable community?
THE DELEGATION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The State Legislature

Town/ Village Board

Local Boards
The New York State land use enabling act delegates authority to LOCALITIES to:

- Adopt comprehensive plans
- Zone
- Approve subdivision and site plans
- Issue special use permits
- Award variances
ROLE OF LOCAL GOV’T & PLANNING

1,550+ local jurisdictions in NY
With land use authority

Source: NREL
Legislature
- Adopt Land Use Laws and Plans
- Site Plan Approval
- Subdivision Approvals
- Special Permits

Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Office
- Building permits
- Zoning Determination

Zoning Board of Appeals
- Variances
- Interpretation
- Special Permits

Planning Board
- Advises on Zoning Adoption
- Site Plan Approval
- Subdivision Approvals
- Special Permits
• Zoning Must be in Accordance with the Comprehensive Plan
WHAT WE USE THE LAND USE SYSTEM TO ACCOMPLISH . . .

“Among our most important powers of local government is the responsibility to undertake comprehensive planning and to regulate land use to protect the public health, safety and general welfare.”

N.Y. Town, Village, General City Law
WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

Planning helps individuals and communities prepare for the future. Planning also helps communities adjust to new needs—such as changing technology.

A written document formally adopted by the local legislature that contains goals, objectives and strategies for the future development and conservation of the community.

“Comprehensive planning is society’s insurance that the public welfare is served by land use regulation.”

Pace Land Use Law Center: The Comprehensive Plan – The Foundation of New York’s Land Use System
TIME FOR A NEW PLAN

- Request for Zoning Amendments
- Social and community needs change
- Local, national, international shifts
APPOINT A TASK FORCE/COMMITTEE

- Charge an existing task force/committee
- Create a new Comprehensive Plan Committee
- Must have a planning board member on your Comprehensive Plan Committee
WHO SITS ON THE COMP PLAN COMMITTEE?

- Municipal Officials
- Chamber of Commerce
- HOAs
- Environmental/Non-profit Community
- Historic Preservation Representative
- Developers
- Landowners & Farmers
- Housing Advocates
- Religious Leaders
- PTA
- Planning Board Member (required for Comp. Plan)
WHAT IS THE COMMITTEE’S ROLE?

• Conducting studies & performing research
• Partnering with adjacent communities
• Leveraging state and federal technical assistance grants
• Developing a community engagement process
• Amending the comprehensive plan
• Considering regulatory changes
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STRUCTURE

Then

Now
SUSTAINABILITY AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- APA Comprehensive Plan Standards for Sustaining Places
- LEED ND Rating System
- NYS Climate Smart Communities Certification Program
- STAR Communities Rating System
MAJOR THEMES

Livable Built Environment

Harmony with Nature

Resilient Economy

Healthy Community

Responsible Regionalism
Goals and Actions:

Goal 4: Provide a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population throughout the community

• Review existing housing legislation and development incentives and revise to address current housing needs.

Goal 3: Locate a range of housing types affordable to a diverse residential population in or in proximity to the hamlets

• Strengthen zoning code to encourage the provision of a range of housing types in proximity to the hamlets
LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Goals and Actions:

Goal 5: Encourage the placement of housing units of various economic value throughout new multifamily and mixed-use developments (i.e. market rate units next to workforce/affordable units)

• Revise zoning code to ensure that affordable housing units are interspersed among those that are market rate, as opposed to clustered together or physically separate from other housing units, in all zoning districts which accommodate residential development
Collaborative Decision-Making and Community Engagement
Imagine...
Minimum or Maximize?
1. Application/Plan Submitted
2. Application/Plan Reviewed
3. Public Hearing
4. Decision Announced
The Required Decision Making Process...

- **DOESN’T** prevent or avoid challenges from being made by the public
- **DOESN’T** help create conversation between local boards, developers and the affected public
- **DOESN’T** reduce the possibility of opposition
- **DOESN’T** get community support
Stages of the Required Decision Making Process

1. Application/Plan Submitted
2. Application/Plan Reviewed
3. Public Hearing
4. Decision Announced
What is Citizen Engagement?

- Citizens of a community are “engaged” when they play an effective role in decision-making.
- They are actively involved in defining the issues, identifying solutions, and developing priorities for action and resources.
• The solution is **NOT IMMEDIATELY CLEAR** to all the parties

• The parties **FUNDAMENTALLY DISAGREE** on the best solution

• The decision is likely to have **FAR REACHING IMPACTS**

• The decision is likely to be **CHALLENGED**
Community Engagement

Principles

- Engage Early
- Listen & Learn First
- Be Inclusive & Involve Many
- Build on Interests, Not Positions
- Design an Effective and Positive Process
- Be Transparent & Responsive
- Use a Skilled Facilitator
Engage Early & Listen

- Plan a Meeting
- Brainstorm the goals and objectives
  - What’s working? What resources are important to the community?
  - What’s not working? What are challenges in our community?
  - What are strategies to overcoming these challenges?
POSITIONS vs. INTERESTS

What are POSITIONS?
Parties’ assertions, wants, demands, offers, and solutions

What are INTERESTS?
A person’s needs and concerns
SUBSTANTIVE
Content of the Decision

PROCEDURAL
Reflects a parties’ need to follow the “correct procedure”

PSYCHOLOGICAL
How parties are treated in the process
Design An Effective Process

- Hold Multiple Meetings
- Schedule Meetings to meet the needs of various stakeholders
  - Select convenient and accessible venues
  - Select varying dates and times
  - Publicize meetings
Create a Positive Environment

- Distribute Detailed Agendas
- Establish Ground Rules
- Offer Refreshments
- Distribute Meeting Summary
- Discuss interests instead of positions
Be Transparent and Responsive

- Post meeting notes and technical information
- Find ways to continue to receive input/feedback
- Continue to ask, “who else should we inform & update?”
- Schedule future meetings
- Give feedback
Be Creative and Get Out There

- Community Meetings/Education Session
- Interviews, Polls & Surveys & Hotlines
- Websites, Email, Social Media & Texting
- Focus & Advisory Groups
- Neighborhood Walks
- Newspaper Article
- Municipal Meeting
- Brochure/Fact Sheet
Choose creative locations that will attract diverse stakeholders and get mobile:

- Trains
- Parks
- Bars/Restaurants
- Schools
- Shopping Centers
- Homeowner Association Meetings
- Senior and Recreational Centers
- Business locations/restaurants
- Town Pool/Beach
Pleasant Valley Community Picnic

Build your own Town Center!

Free Food and Fun!

Rain or Shine!

Learn about our history!

Meet Your Neighbors!

Come join us as we celebrate our community and imagine ways to revitalize our hamlet! Connect with families, neighbors, and businesses for an evening of merriment as we consider how our downtown can better serve us.

Wednesday July 19, 6-8pm
@ Cady Field/Town Hall
1554 Main St, Pleasant Valley, NY
Your Role in the Land Use System

- Join a Land Use Board/Housing Committee
- Comprehensive Plan Committee involvement
- Host a meeting regarding neighborhood planning – issues and concerns
- Support zoning proposals and/or zoning changes involving multifamily housing
- Future site identification
- Support affordable housing development
- Attend Public Hearings