

Appendix A
Summaries of Public Meetings

HELP PLAN FOR THE COMMUNITIES' FUTURE

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

FOR THE

WILSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MONDAY, MARCH 15TH, 6:30 PM

Wilson Senior High School Auditorium



**To Discuss the Issues and Opportunities That Will Guide
The Future Growth of our Community**

<i>Revitalization</i>	<i>Economic Development</i>	<i>Community Character</i>	<i>Waterfront</i>
<i>Quality of Life</i>	<i>Recreation</i>	<i>Farming and Agriculture</i>	<i>Public Services</i>

MEETING SUMMARY

SUBJECT: Town and Village of Wilson Comprehensive Plan – Public Information Meeting
DATE: March 17, 2010

The Public Information Meeting for the Town and Village of Wilson Comprehensive Plan was held in the Wilson High School Auditorium on March 15, 2010. The following are the comments that were received from the public during the course of the meeting:

General Comments

- People are the greatest asset in Wilson – residents, workers, tourists, etc.
- No one comes to Wilson by accident – there are reasons why they are attracted to this place.
- People and the community atmosphere, which is what makes Wilson a good place.
- Focus on what's realistic in order to achieve change.
- The community must commit to this plan.
- Close proximity to Canada is an asset.
- Don't copy other places that are going nowhere; find our own niche and take advantage of the assets we have that set us apart from other places.
- Use the force of the people in this community to make things happen.
- Try new things, be creative; don't just focus on the same old stuff which has not taken us anywhere.
- Don't let this plan flounder like the one that was done in the 1960's.
- Need government leaders to be open to more ideas; set politics aside and don't cater to special interests.
- Need to change the mindset of community leaders.
- The people in this community are great organizers.
- No one knows about Wilson – where it is, what it's about, etc.
- People who move to Wilson want to be close to the Lake Ontario.
- Have to be creative with what we are doing and embrace unexpected sources of ideas.
- Those in this community that want to do legitimate and creative things will be listened to.
- The Village and the Town are one entity; need to work together and share services.
- Wilson is very seasonal; the harbor only helps in the summer; we need to develop activities that attract people here in the off season.
- Unlike other communities, being located on the lake, we only have a "180 degree draw".
- Wilson needs two positive seasonal events to succeed.
- We have a lot of small things scattered around that need to be tied into one bigger event.
- Find ways to make Wilson unique and different.
- This region offers so many choices for higher education; this is a benefit for the Town.
- Publicize the next meeting better.

Waterfront

- Wilson has a gorgeous harbor.
- The waterfront is the main attraction in the community.
- Scuba diving tourism – take advantage of the lake in more creative ways.
- There is a lack of public access along the shoreline; no good places to get to the shore.

- The sewage treatment plant blocks important waterfront access.
- The only means of access to the water is by boat.
- The overlook cuts off access; add stairs or some other means of getting to the lake.
- The harbor is very well developed and utilized; the State park is underutilized.
- The harbor needs more transient slips/temporary dockage in the harbor.
- The harbor should be expanded into the park to provide more room for dockage, especially transient slips.
- There is no walkable connection from the harbor to the Village.
- Need improved public access.
- Olcott and Wilson harbors are different; Wilson is more of a recreational marina area (Olcott has more charter fishing).
- Locations of fish cleaning stations and other such amenities are not well delineated or known; signage/postings and publicity would help.
- The launch area in Wilson harbor is limited.
- Bait and tackle shops in the harbor can draw business, but many have come and gone over the years; it has not proven to be highly profitable.
- Ice fishing – we need a winter tournament.
- Need to find other (creative) ways to get people from the harbor to the Village.
- Can we take advantage of the Youngstown regatta or do something similar?
- There are three yacht clubs in the harbor that are big assets.
- The harbor is utilized mostly by sailing vessels.
- Hold a stakeholders' meeting with interests from the harbor area.
- Shoreline stabilization is an issue (need to be able to install erosion protection).

Community Facilities

- The State should not close Wilson Tuscarora Park; the Town should regain ownership of this important community and waterfront resource – it is a “gem”.
- The rail corridor offers potential for a bike path.
- Need a good area to plan and undertake a regional event.
- Wilson – Tuscarora Park is underutilized; it has vast potential for public use and revenue generation.
- Wilson should take the park back and make it like Krull Park.
- Wilson's greatest treasures are the harbor, farming and the school district.
- The school district is, by far, the best in Niagara County.
- If the State park reopens this year, they will do nothing with it.
- The school district is great, but taxes are too high; it's hard to support the school with no commercial tax base.
- The library and fire department should not have prominent locations on Main Street; they should be moved to other locations in the Village.
- Make better use of the fire company property in the Village.
- Need to take better advantage of the market that we have and offer more wintertime activities; promote cross country skiing, snowmobiling, sleigh rides, etc.
- Snow mobile trails are not as active as they used to be.
- Bull Head Point, at the southern end of the park, is stunning; a trail goes through there, but it is not well maintained.
- Horseback riding is not allowed in the State park, which is a disadvantage.
- The summer recreation program for kids is outstanding and serves 200 to 300 kids annually; parents of the kids who participate in this program are a potential market (they visit stores, etc. in the Village).
- Curling – there is nowhere in the Town to do this; curling and pond hockey are cross border connections that could draw more tourists to the Town and Village.
- Lots of people bicycle; need better mapping of travel routes and better signage.
- The harbor and the Village business district are too far apart.

- Supervisors from Porter, Wilson and Newfane are cooperating to possibly apply for a grant to develop a cross-town bikeway (a good greenway project).
- Need to be more diverse with summertime festivals (can't just have car and motorcycle events).
- Is there a way to have better and wider use of the Historical Society fairgrounds?
- We need a stand alone, public place for community events.

Development/ Growth (residential)

- Taxes make new housing development difficult.
- Some housing in the Town is seasonal; seasonality makes lodging a problem (what do you do in the off season).
- There are people buying homes here from outside of the State (many from Canada are buying here); retirees also buy summer homes in this area.
- Look for ways to entice people to build homes in Wilson; what can be done to encourage building in the community?
- You need to have natural gas, cable TV and other amenities to make Wilson attractive for residential development.
- Expand infrastructure to draw more housing development in close proximity to the Village (smart growth – don't sprawl housing throughout the Town).
- Residential development must be undertaken in a manner that does not threaten the agricultural industry in the Town.

Development/ Growth (commercial)

- Parking is key.
- Need enough square footage for stores to be profitable; shops in Wilson may not be big enough.
- Must have more than one "leader" shop – need a critical mass.
- Town is a good site for distribution centers, whether its for agricultural products or other things.
- Retail business in the Village cannot be sustained all year long.
- The zoning in the Village stymies the potential for business development; need rezoning to expand the boundaries of commercial use.
- The recreational fishing industry is the backbone of Town, along with agriculture.
- The Primate Sanctuary is trying to get organized in the Town, which has potential for tourism, among other things.
- Business increases significantly in the summer season.
- Town residents spend their dollars outside of the Town; need to support local business if you want it to be successful.
- Most retailers hire staff seasonally.
- We need more business diversity; don't put all your eggs in one "business" – it is fails, so does the Town.
- More small businesses are better than one large industry.
- Route 18 by-passes the Village; signage may help direct travelers to the area.
- Not a lot of shopping opportunities in Niagara County.
- Have other commercial districts (neighborhood commercial) at cross road locations south of the Village for residents to take advantage of as they commute to work or travel outside of the community, such as gas stations.
- The community needs fast food restaurants (McDonald's and Mighty Taco).
- Revitalize and reuse former industrial (brownfield) sites.

Agricultural

- Agriculture in the Town is great but we need to advance into new crops and products.
- Wineries and breweries are good possibilities; hops used to be grown in this area and we should do it again.

- Wilson has a perfect climate for agriculture.
- Horse farming and equestrian are growing industries in Western New York and Wilson is a good place for these activities.
- There is one large, commercial farm operation that is ruining property values in the area.
- We need to protect family farms.
- Investigate opportunities for organic farming in Wilson.
- Local farmers grow apples, peaches, soybeans, corn, blueberries and strawberries; apples and corn are two of the bigger crops.
- Corn is used for ethanol (1000's of acres being grown).
- The weather in Wilson is not favorable for organic farming (favorable for insects).
- Organic farming is a long term process and it is difficult to achieve certification.
- The school district and some local stores buy local produce.
- Wilson needs a farmers market.
- Agricultural lands in the Town are one of the greatest treasures.
- Agriculture in Wilson is probably the largest industry in the County.
- Agriculture in the Town needs to be supported and protected; don't expand development into prime agricultural areas.

Utilities/ Infrastructure

- Is there a way to relocate the sewage treatment plant? It is a terrible "welcome mat" for the harbor and there are better ways to utilize this prime waterfront site.
- The sewage treatment plant is an eyesore and it smells.
- Is there a good upland location for this plant? It doesn't have to be directly on the waterfront.
- The sewage treatment plant was built in 1985 and was obsolete the day it started operation.
- Need massive investment in the plant now; over \$400,000 is needed to make basic improvements to the sewage treatment plant; this is an opportunity for the community to find ways to upgrade our infrastructure. It is not cost effective to keep improving this plant.
- With the closing of Pfeiffer, the plant is not operating at full capacity; no problem servicing residential demand.
- The personnel needs of the plant are the same no matter what volume of wastewater is being processed at any given time.
- Can we consolidate waste treatment services with the Town of Newfane; their treatment plant is not operating at capacity.
- Must determine how to tie the Newfane and Wilson systems together; would it be the most cost effective solution?
- A joint effort (shared services) should garner us more points for potential grants funding.
- The Town needs to develop a legitimate long-term plan for all infrastructure in the community.
- Don't be crisis oriented.
- We need to take advantage of new technologies.
- Need "wi-fi" in the Village (is available in the harbor area but not in downtown or at a local bed and breakfast establishment).
- Cell phone coverage in the Town and Village varies.
- Look at what is working with green technologies and determine what might be good in Wilson.
- Wilson is a good location for wind energy systems, but not all residents would support it.
- Consider other green technologies, such as solar or geothermal.
- Some parts of the Town do not have cable TV or DSL service.
- Must consider that in 10 to 15 years the telephone service providers may abandon land line service altogether.

Press Release – for immediate release

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Town and Village of Wilson Continues Planning for the Future

A Public Focus Meeting to continue discussions and visioning for the Town and Village of Wilson Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for -

Tuesday, July 20, 2010 – 7:00 P.M in the Wilson High School Auditorium

The purpose of this second public meeting is to provide local residents and stakeholders the opportunity to view the progress on draft Comprehensive Plan and confirm their vision for the future of the Wilson community, including a review of draft goals and objectives to set direction for the Plan. This Public Focus meeting follows a Public Information Meeting that was held on March 15, 2010, which generated a lot of good ideas. The Focus Meeting will build upon, and strengthen, those ideas to help generate a clear vision for the Communities' future.

The Town and Village are interested in developing this plan to help guide future growth and manage land use in an effort to improve the overall quality of life, provide better economic opportunities, protect and preserve agriculture, evaluate ways to improve public services and reduce the tax burden on residents. Comprehensive planning is one of the most important tools that a community can use to establish a vision and guide future land use decision making.

The Town has hired Wendel Duchscherer (pronounced - “when-dle do-sharer”), a Buffalo-based architecture, engineering and planning firm, to assist with the preparation of the plan. Residents and other interested parties are encouraged to come out and continue their involvement in this important project to continue planning for the future of the community.

HELP PLAN OUR COMMUNITIES' FUTURE

PUBLIC FOCUS MEETING

FOR THE

WILSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Tuesday, JULY 20th at 7:00 PM

Wilson Senior High School Auditorium



***Come to Continue the Discussion of What Is Important for Wilson
To Help Guide the Future Growth of our Community***

Economic Development

Community Character

Waterfront

Revitalization

Quality of Life

Recreation

Farming and Agriculture

Public Services

Town and Village of Wilson Comprehensive Plan "The Planning Process"

