



## MEETING SUMMARY

**PURPOSE:** Public Open House #2

**DATE/TIME:** September 30, 2019, 6:00-8:00 PM

**LOCATION:** Red Barn, 100 Town Park Road, East Greenbush Town Park

**ATTENDEES:** See Attached Sign-in

The Town of East Greenbush, as part of the public engagement component of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update process, held their second public open house on Monday, September 30, 2019 at the East Greenbush Town Park. The meeting was attended by over 70 residents and stakeholders making up multiple generations. The meeting was started with Jack Conway the Town Supervisor introducing Jaclyn Hakes (M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.) followed by a brief update on the comprehensive plan and the introduction to the round table discussion. The attendees then proceeded to one of five tables for an open discussion on a relevant subject going over three main questions. Each facilitated table discussion lasted 10 minutes and the participants moved to all 5 tables throughout the evening. Below are each of the subjects with corresponding questions and participant remarks from the 5 rounds.

All participants were also encouraged to participate in the ongoing planning process and help spread the word about public engagement opportunities and the ongoing survey.

### Transportation & Mobility Table #1:

**1. Should there be better pedestrian connections from neighborhoods to commercial nodes along Route 9/20 and Route 4? Where and how?**

- Resounding yes. Residents feel there is currently no dedicated pedestrian space and that access to future and existing trails is important.
- Lighting improvements (or new installations) are needed both in neighborhoods and along the major corridors,
- Complete streets – residents feel that implementation is best suited for the 9/20 corridor (for now).

- Support was voiced for sidewalks on Gilligan Road – at least between Rts 9/20 and the Middle School. Residents feel that pedestrians do not have safe access to the baseball fields.
- Sidewalks are needed on 9/20. Pedestrian travel is especially dangerous at night due to lack of dedicated space and lack of lighting.
- No opposition to increase connections.
- Pedestrian signals and sidewalks are needed – there are currently none on Routes 4 or 9/20
- Access to existing bike facilities should be considered – including the proposed Albany Hudson Electric Trail
- 9/20 SW: Fucillo
- Residents were concerned and curious who would be responsible for maintenance and ownership of sidewalks, should they be installed.
- Yes, connections are needed to the Rts. 4 and 9/20 corridors, and also to 3rd Avenue Extension.
- Support was voiced for bike and pedestrian accommodations along – Elliot Road, Michael Road and Community Way since people frequent travel these roadways to access the YMCA, Library and Town Park.
- Support for connections was provided.
- When discussing bike lanes along the 9/20 corridor, safety concerns were voiced.
- Neighborhood connections to the commercial corridor can only be made if pedestrian accommodations are installed on 9/20 first.

## 2. What areas of Town could be better serviced by public transportation?

- A Park & Ride within East Greenbush could be utilized
- Shelters are needed along the existing 9/20 CDTA route
- A Town-operated or privately-owned shuttle running between 9/20 to the north would be very helpful for the elderly and disabled, and possibly others.
- The existing CDTA line does not run full time. Can service be extended to the full day? (Correction – service runs intermittently throughout the day).
- Some type of public transportation, likely bus route, would be useful on Rt. 4.
- A Town-oriented shuttle service would be utilized by residents to extend beyond where the CDTA route travels.
- The need for public transportation was suggested between Route 4 and the YMCA
- Varying levels of support for an East Greenbush park and ride was heard
- Suggestion: Could Regeneron be asked to sponsor a shuttle service or host park and ride on their property?
- Support was voided for a senior bus service within the Town
- A CDTA employee and resident that has occasionally used the CDTA bus service in Town noted that CDTA ridership is somewhat low. An increase in CDTA services (routes or frequency of stops) would need to be justified by increased ridership.

- If a new Park and Ride lot is considered, it should be coordinated with an existing or new bus stop.
- Public suggested that CDTA timelines/ schedules could be adjusted to better fit commuter's needs.
- Public transit would be useful in the north/south direction to access the Library/ YMCA area.
- A new park and ride within the Town would likely benefit neighboring towns (North Greenbush Park and Ride is heavily used)
- Consider a park and ride at Price Chopper on 9/20 (Columbia Plaza)

### 3. How can traffic along Route 4 be improved?

- The roadway should be widened to increase capacity
- There is a need to synchronize the traffic light operations
- The existing roundabout at Mannix Road has helped but traffic is still backed up at rush hours
- 4 lanes should be extended through the entire corridor
- Egress / ingress improvements are needed at FedEx
- Future planning and designs should have consideration for back access to commercial areas/plazas – especially to Rt 4. Back connections between commercial areas would remove traffic from Rt 4.
- The most significant traffic delays were noted between the Mannix Road roundabout to Route 43.
- Concerns were raised regarding the Regeneration development. Was there a traffic study done? Will there be alternate access to the property?
- 4 lanes should be extended through the entire corridor
- The corridor would benefit from public transit and bike infrastructure
- There is an existing bottleneck at the 3rd Street Extension intersection
- Add turning lanes
- 4 lanes should be extended through the entire corridor
- Coordinate signal phases
- Not on Route 4, but students and other residents noted that there is a need to improve capacity at the Route 151 intersection with the Columbia High School entrance.

### Economic Growth Table #2:

#### 1. Should the Town focus on creating a Town Center? Where?

- Like the idea of smaller centers because they have identity
- One center gives sense of community
- One main w/ several smaller
- Rt. 4 / Columbia: historic center
- Structure supports smaller centers
- Make a town center with small centers

- Rt. 4/20
- Hayes / 20
- Sherwood Ave
- Big town center
- Surrounding neighborhoods can come together
- Recreation "The crossings" example
- Fire house was a hub years ago
- Commercial hub – along bike path
- One main town center would be difficult
- Hannaford plaza
- Develop places that are already developed
- (to support D.S.)
- Sherwood Ave – making a comeback
- Kmart (future)
- 9/20 near weathervane
- Other things need to come 1<sup>st</sup>
- More dev. On 9/20
- Mixed use
- Self contained seniors
- Town center – one center
- 9/20
- Bring people together
- Library and YMCA
- Connect to surrounding neighborhoods
- Would like to see at center
  - farmers market
  - tourism/ info kiosk
  - bike racks

**2. If economic growth occurs, where should that growth be focused?**

- More growth 9/20
- Traffic Rt. 4 daunting
- Need to improve 9/20
- Small property sizes make difficult
- Old buildings
- Beautification can help attract growth
- Keep agriculture
- Columbia turnpike
- 9/20 and Rt.
- Vacant properties
- Anchors P.C. and Hannaford
- More business near pnt

\*\*Nobody knows where East Greenbush is. Signage; visualization

- Columbia turnpike

- Rt. 4 (near soccer fields)
- Near library and YMCA
- Performing arts
- Temple lane
- Keep where growth is
- River and industrial
- Along 9/20 (reduce taxes)
- More restaurants, etc.
- End of Rt. 4
- Keep concentrated
- Concentrate growth
- More vibrant
- Protected open space
- Reuse existing
- Hampton Manor
  - sense of community
  - dense
  - connected
- Port is untapped for more industrial
- Keep rural area rural

**3. How should the Town foster local business growth and entrepreneurship?**

- Partner with county IDA
- Create own town IDA
- Target focus on business
- Person/ office to support business + encourage business
- Business hub/ incubator
- tax breaks
- Improve development review process
- Up front costs to develop
- Incentivize re-use + historic preservation
- Reduce light
- Pilots
- German bakery
- Create predictable process
- Easily repeatable
- Defined timeline
- Encourage more variety (not more auto oriented business/ repair shops)
- Wayfinding/ gateway

**Neighborhoods & Housing Table #3:**

**1. What challenges exist related to housing? (Supply? Quality? Type? Cost? Location?)**

- Maintain rural feel
- Provide affordable housing
- Balance encroachment of community into residential neighborhoods
- Maintain quality of neighborhoods – despair Hayes Rd. area
- Affordability – for younger generations
- Proper maintenance – enforcement
- Regeneration driving up the cost of living
- Not enough variety – need more townhomes
- Build where there is more infrastructure
- Lack of new inventory
- Property maintenance / code enforcement
- Need more affordable housing for young people – residential
- Students coming back after college
- Need more senior housing
- Townhomes and condos
- Have enough housing
- Smart commercial development
- Need for community spaces
- Job opportunities for young people (teens)
- Type – not enough mixed use or apartment rentals
- Mix of quality housing
- Property maintenance
- No sense of community
- Small community center
- Empty housing – owned but vacant
- Taxes too high – cost of development
- More apartments
- Walkability

**2. What types of housing should be prioritized? (Rental apartments, multi-family, single-family, senior housing, etc.)**

- Variety of senior housing – (rentals and condos)
- Single family – smaller houses
- Variety of all types
- Town center
- Mixed use on 9/20
- Not a need for more high-density rentals
- Need community-based housing
- Higher density rental apartments
- Transitional housing – age in place
- The Spinney at Van Dyke – Delmar – combination of rental / owned
- Mix of housing
- Multi-generational

- Variety
- Walkability around schools / neighborhoods

**3. Where should new residential development be concentrated?**

- Need transportation
- Western East Greenbush- keep eastern area rural
- Southern portion of 9/20
- rental apartments
- Michael Rd. – townhouses/ row houses
- Higher density – Columbia/ Rt. 4
- 9/20 – 4 corridor apartments
- Ridge Rd down to 9J – trail system

**Recreation, Agriculture & Natural Resources Table #4:**

**1. Should open spaces, agricultural lands or natural areas in the Town be conserved?**

**Where?**

- Yes – all should be conserved
- Conservation should be balanced with Industrial, Commercial and Recreation
- Town should discuss conservation with landowners
- Preserve Papscanee and Eastern part of Town
- Public access to Papscanee should be improved
- Preserve aquifers
- Work with schools to utilize existing facilities
- Preserve forest and wildlife habitat
- Consider conservation easements
- Golf course on pheasant hollow

**2. What recreational opportunities/facilities are missing?**

- More and larger recreation areas
- Pools
- Swimming
- Walking course
- Dine-in theatre
- Pocket parks along the new planned trail
- Historical points along the new planned trail
- Recreation fields incorporated
- Have businesses donate to recreation areas
- Extend the Town park
- Sensory garden
- Restore swimming at the Town Park river

- Town owned intramural sports field (track, football, lacrosse, track) that is open year round
- Bike and walking trails for all abilities
- Affordable indoor recreation
- Park similar to the Crossings with athletic/basketball fields
- Tennis
- Farmers markets
- Teen center
- Senior center
- Community center for all ages
- Improve existing trails
- Cross country skiing trails
- Town support for biking along bike trails (such as free air station, fix-a-flat, bike racks, etc)
- Roller rink
- Campground
- Build more playgrounds in existing parks
- Build Environmental Center with educational displays at current open areas
- Drive-in theatre
- Create a centralized inventory of the parks and recreation opportunities in town
- More places for kids to play
- Cicadi center?

**3. Should the Town focus on developing new recreational facilities, focus on improving/expanding existing recreational facilities, partnering with others, or a combination?**

- Improve facilities at existing town parks
- Develop new facilities
- Foster partnerships
- Partner with Regeneron to conserve land and create bike/ped trails similar to Rensselaer Tech Park and Global Foundries in Malta
- Centralized vs fragmented sports complex
- Farmers market that's larger and better advertised
- Partner with Hudson Valley Community College
- Work with YMCA to bring pool and hockey rink
- Improve public relations – advertise activities better
- Better access to Town Park



## Governance & Infrastructure Table #5:

### 1. Are there current gaps in needed services locally? If yes, what services?

- Waste management
  - Battery disposal
  - Hazardous waste day
- Recycling options around town
- Chemical recycling
- Garbage company control
- Electronics recycling
- Storm water/ flooding is concerning
- Sidewalk expansion - make more walkable
- Yard waste collection (more frequent)
- Leaf pickup
- Town engineer is needed
- Stormwater capacity is deficient – flooding occurs frequently
- Population at schools/ parking at Red Mill school
- Lawn waste pickup
- Ensure sewer system is adequate for development
- Storm sewer separation
- Repairs to aging water system
- Internet costs - negotiate lower
- Underground infrastructure is aging and a long-term plan should be considered
- Cleanup of Hampton Lake
- Green infrastructure
- Fiber around town
- Adequate street lighting in neighborhoods is desired
- Enhance pride in greenspace in East Greenbush
- Tree inventory program would be beneficial
- Teen center
- Senior center
- Garbage service
- Fiber
- Stormwater improvements need on Luther Rd. and Haze Rd.
- Old storm systems in older neighborhoods
- Maintenance of storm ponds
- Cellular service needs improvement on Miller/ Luther Roads
- Public safety (fire, EMS, police)

### 2. Should water/sewer service be extended? Where?

- Water and sewer services should be provided in the same locations

- Quality of wells in some areas is not acceptable
- Some desire for water and sewer expansion
- Water/sewer extension is needed in portions of the town
- Low well yield in places
- Safety/ walkability to schools
- Consider water and sewer extension
- Extend water/ sewer up Luther rd.

**3. Should the Town consider design guidelines for the Route 9/20 Corridor?**

- Make area inviting for visitors
- Sign guidelines would be beneficial
- Code enforcement of existing businesses is important to improve aesthetic of primary business/retail areas
- Tree requirements
- Design
  - Public square
  - Places to gather
  - North portion of 9/20 corridor should be more residential and walkable
  - South portion of 9/20 corridor should be commercial
  - Attract more unique businesses
  - Current lack of planning – the Town seems RANDOM
  - Bikability
  - Street crossings are needed to improve pedestrian safety
- Road diet on 9/20
- Code enforcement of existing properties would be beneficial
- Yes - build character but consider developers cost
- Keep any requirements simple/ clean
- Economic balance
- Yes!
- Need consistency
- Code enforcement is paramount
- Trees are needed
- Green Bushes
- Design Guidelines should include:
  - Lighting
  - Sidewalks
  - Landscape/ greenspace
  - Safety
  - Snow storage

All additional comments left in the comment box included the following.

- Good gathering of various age groups. Lots of great ideas.
- No one addressed how “pay” for all the improvements.
- Town currently needs to “address” business owners or apartment owners to keep their properties up to snuff! For example the corner of Greenwood Dr + 9&20 – Elia’s Pizza weeds along sidewalk.
- Code enforcement needed now!
- We need lots more support to promote walkability
  - More sidewalks/ bike paths
  - More streetlights
- How about starting by adding sidewalks in neighborhoods directly adjacent to our public schools and also linking neighborhoods to 9/20 & Rt. 4
- Consider, in addition to better CDTA service, having the town invest in a “trolley” to transport residents and visitors among town highlights – (YMCA, library, town, park, ball fields, malls) The goal would be to reduce car use.
- Along these lines, really working forward to the new bike trail. It would be great if the new trail could link to these community sites.
- Traffic on Rte 4 could be improved if there were better public transportation throughout the area. Maybe people could take a shuttle from store to store along Rte 4 and have their large parcels shipped to them at home – thinking ahead, in fact, retail is changing so fast, it is hard to predict how traffic along Rte 4 will change.
- We need more commercial tax base, to lower residential taxes.
- Get developer to widen Rt 4 near Target (northbound)
- Roundabouts! Love couse Corners & Mannix
- I like my well water – off of Best Rd
- Preserve the agricultural land and avoid building on the land used for those purposes.
- Anchor institutions seem to be tax exempt status or big tax breaks for several years – at the expense of tax paying residents.
- Retail is pretty much non-existent along Rts 9+20. Bookstore, shoe store, convenient store, etc seem to be pretty much out of the question so far.
- Too many banks, car service areas, gas stations, drugstores, markets not much else. We need more restaurants – not chains, but independently owned.
- Senior housing seems exclusive – no moderately affordable areas for long term residential.
- Regeneron has exploded – yet our taxes haven’t gone down. If it weren’t for senior Star exemptions, we couldn’t live here – after 48 years it is outpricing us.
- We are a white bread ton – we need to encourage more diversity – we need to be more welcoming and encourage new families from all ethnicities

- We need retail!
- Town park – getting there – but so much more could be done – Water in lake is polluted, we could use a theater type area for summer programs, swimming Etc.

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

Submitted by: Andris Blumbergs/ Jaclyn Hakes, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, CPSC, Town Planning & Zoning Department

DRAFT

