

1 Comprehensive Plan Review

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3 Periodic review of a Comprehensive Plan is required by Chapter 64 § 7-722.10 of New York State
4 Village Law.

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6 The Village’s current Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2014, recommends
7 (page 62) that the Plan should be reviewed and updated as needed in ten years to ensure that the
8 Plan still reflects the Village’s needs and that it facilitates the continued provision of services to
9 Village residents.

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11 At its April 19, 2023, the Village’s Board of Trustees passed a resolution meeting requesting that
12 the Village’s Planning Board review the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and, based on that review,
13 recommend whether the Plan should be revised.

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15 Over the past twelve months, the Planning Board has reviewed the Comprehensive Plan. In
16 conducting its review, the Board focused on the seven sections contained in Part 2 of the Plan,
17 Goals and Objectives (page 45). Those sections are titled Quality of Life, Community Character,
18 Ecology and Scenic Assets, Economy, Housing, Transportation, Public Services and Utilities. The
19 Board reviewed these sections, evaluated whether the Goals and Objectives had been met and, for
20 those that had not been met, whether they required revision.

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22 Following is a brief summation of Planning Board findings regarding the Goals and Objectives of
23 the 2014 Comprehensive Plan:

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25 The “Quality of Life” section focuses too much on looking backward rather than looking forward.
26 Although the Olmstedian vision of the Village as a residential park contributes significantly to its
27 sense of place and it is important to preserve its residential character moving forward, priorities
28 and the times have changed. Since the Plan was adopted in 2014, environmental sustainability
29 and climate change have become much more significant concerns and a revision of the
30 Comprehensive Plan is required to better reflect them.

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32 The “Community Character” section in many ways echoes the “Quality of Life” section. The two
33 sections should be combined.

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35 Many of the Goals and Objectives recommendations contained in the “Ecology and Scenic Assets”
36 section have been accomplished and, where they have not, the priorities articulated continue to be
37 relevant. Thought should now be given to modifying the recommendations associated with those
38 Goals and Objectives. For example, if reducing stormwater runoff remains a priority, then the
39 Comprehensive Plan could recommend regulation of impervious surface as a means to limiting
40 runoff. Similarly, improved signage for recreational amenities such as the trails at Kendal and
41 Palmer Woods could promote and encourage their usage and accessibility.

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43 The “Economy” section focuses on the Community Corners area and in particular prioritizing its
44 re-vitalization. There has been considerable development in the Village’s Commercial Zone since

45 2014, but the scale of that development was not fully anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan and
46 the proposed redevelopment of the former Ithaca Country Club presents additional challenges.
47 Because few vacant lots exist in the Village, the Commercial Zone is the area in the Village most
48 susceptible to redevelopment. Revision of this section is therefore warranted to articulate the type
49 and scale of future growth that the Village wishes to occur in the Community Corners area.

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51 The “Housing” section builds on the Village’s residential character referenced in the “Quality of
52 Life” section. While the Village should continue to be a quality residential community, there is a
53 need to offer increased housing options and to provide additional housing units in response to the
54 current housing crisis. This is no simple task since the Village is nearly “built out” with few vacant
55 residential lots. Therefore, facilitating more diversity of housing types should be reflected in the
56 Comprehensive Plan and the Plan should be revised with stronger language encouraging
57 additional housing options, including more affordable ones.

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59 The “Transportation” section’s Goal of reducing vehicular traffic, diversifying transportation
60 infrastructure, and creating a more walkable community still applies and does not need updating.
61 However, many Objectives in the section have yet to be achieved. Consideration should be given
62 to revising the strategies recommended and/or implementing new ones. For example, retrofitting
63 The Parkway into a bike boulevard similar to Tioga Street in the City of Ithaca is an idea that was
64 not included in the Comprehensive Plan but should be discussed as one possible step in reducing
65 reliance on automobiles and creating a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly community.

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67 The “Public Services and Utilities” section is similar to “Transportation” in that its’ Goal of
68 maintain and improving Village services and infrastructure remains relevant as does the section’s
69 emphasis on environmental sustainability. However, since 2014, circumstances associated with
70 some Objectives and recommendations have changed. In particular, several metrics related to
71 sustainability are no longer current and should be updated.

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73 After conducting its review and based upon its findings, the Planning Board has decided to
74 recommend to the Board of Trustees that the Comprehensive Plan, whether due to changes in the
75 Village’s needs and priorities or the fact that many of its Goals and Objectives have been met,
76 should be revised.

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78 The Planning Board has also found that the Comprehensive Plan contains Goals and Objectives
79 that remain relevant but which for whatever reason were not implemented. It recommends that a
80 revision of the Plan should consider the factors that may have impeded implementation and revise
81 the Plan accordingly.

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