

**GORHAM TOWN BOARD MINUTES**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE PUBLIC HEARING**  
**September 8, 2022 7:00pm**

The Gorham Town Board held a Public Hearing on September 8, 2022 at 7:00pm at the Marcus Whitman High School Auditorium, Baldwin Road in Rushville, NY.

Present were Supervisor Fred Lightfoote, Councilmembers; Brian S. Case, Jake Chard, Phil Curtis and Brian Lazarus.

Town Officials in attendance; Code Enforcement Officer Jim Morse and Town Clerk Darby Perrotte.

Senior Planner Linda Phillips, Committee members Allison Adam-Anderson and Lizabeth Rasmussen.

Community members in attendance; Oswald Vasquez & Susan Shurn, Jack & Sonny Lightbody, Jeff & Margaret White, Mike & Linda Roche, Bob Hultz, Judy Davies-Hayes, Reni Madara, Margie O'Shea & Kevin Bain and Kathy Bromby.

1. Call to Order/Pledge to the Flag – Supervisor Lightfoote opened the meeting and led the Pledge to the Flag.

2. Public Hearing – Supervisor Lightfoote opened the public hearing. Town Clerk Perrotte read the legal notice as it appeared in the official newspapers of the Town.

Linda Phillips, Senior Planner, Ontario County Planning Department, said this process has been going on since the summer of 2020. There was a community survey in 2020, Committee members brought a draft land use plan to a series of meetings at the Gorham Fire Company. Committee made some changes to that a narrative was drafted and that was presented at the most recent meeting in August 2022. Between the survey and the land use plan there was also a Community Vision. All of these items are on the project website. There is a link to the project from the Town of Gorham Website. Mrs. Phillips brought paper copies to the public hearing. There are copies available at the Town Hall and also at the Gorham Free Library. Ms. Phillips said a summary of the survey question that asked residents what one word they would use to describe their vision for Gorham.

Ms. Phillips wanted to review some of the changes since the last comprehensive plan.

This Comp is very much a continuation of longstanding policies of the Town to protect the Lake, to preserve farm land and rural character particular by supporting viability of agriculture while also accommodating development. She said Gorham residents, elected officials and property owners will never be done with those tasks. There will always be more to do in terms of protecting the character of Gorham. She is hopeful that this Comprehensive Plan will guide the Town and other private investments in the right direction.

Ms. Phillips said since the last Comprehensive Plan, best management practices in water quality management has changed. There has been significant planning for how to address aging municipal water lines, pressure deficiencies and to meet new NYS requirements for water and sewage treatment.

Ms. Phillips addressed the survey reflecting the top reasons people live in Gorham are, the affordability and the Lake.

Since the last time the Plan was presented there was a clause added to the Plan about the health of Canandaigua Lake. The vision is set up with six topic areas with a number of strategies set up under each area. The ones that were added are; pursuing opportunities for field buffers and reconnecting drainage ways, clarification encouraging Long-Term Rentals and working with NY State to expand broadband service.

Ms. Phillips turned the floor over to Lizabeth Rasmussen, committee member to talk about the Vision and the progress.

Mrs. Rasmussen spoke about the importance of our scenic and rural community. She said it is so important to get residents feedback and comments. She also went through slides of strategies within the Comp Plan. A lot deal with the farmland, water quality, housing and economic development. Encouraging businesses within the community and making sure those businesses are sustainable. Infrastructure upgrading is of very high importance. Looking at community engagement along with regional and inter-municipal cooperation so the Towns can save each other money. Committee members realize it is important to look at these plans to recognize whether or not we have accomplished them. Mrs. Rasmussen talked about landmarks and historical building preservation, land preservation, walking trails, water quality and protecting the Lake and streams. Her committee looked at diverse housing options. Making sure affordable units and housing data is reserved and collected. Data is needed to track successes, along with failures, in all of these areas.

Mrs. Rasmussen spoke about educational programs, mailings, number of page uses on the Town website all helps the Town collect data.

Ms. Phillips opened the floor for questions.

Residents asked what the population of Gorham is and how many responded to the survey that was sent out digitally through the Town newsletter.

Gorham has a population of approximately 4500 residents. Ms. Phillips said it certainly wasn't the response the Town would have liked. Approximately 120-130 residents responded. It was a first attempt at a digital response survey in Gorham and didn't get the results the Town had hoped for.

Ms. Phillips said the plan is a continuation of policies for orderly growth and development. One accomplishment since the last Update has been the preservation of Open Space in Gorham.

Some of the long standing objectives are Water and Sewer Plant upgrades. Much of the aging water infrastructure needs replacing or upgrading.

Ms. Phillips turned the floor over to Town Board Councilmember Brian Case to speak about Community Facility Investments.

Councilmember Case spoke about the upgrades required by NY State regarding the Sewer Treatment Plant in the Hamlet of Gorham. He spoke of the aging infrastructure of the water lines. There have already been 16 breaks this year. The Town anticipates acquiring grants to help with the cost of the upgrades. The Town has to start putting money away for the aging water line replacement, water tank replacements and new filtration system.

Councilmember Case said it is very important to have feedback from residents to hear what they want in the Town of Gorham.

Ms. Phillips said the Water Master Plan is out there to address water system deficiencies. The current dollar projected costs are laid out in the text of the Future Land Use Plan.

Ms. Phillips said having a Plan is very important to obtaining grant funding. She said there are plans for an addition at the library. There are plans to add a building at the Highway Garage.

The Town has grant money in hand for additional sidewalk and bike and pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of Easton Park.

Other zoning code changes planned is to add a Senior Housing Floating Zone. The committee talked about vacant land in the Hamlet Residential that would allow developers to consider for Senior Housing. The community must consider if it is in an appropriate area, connected to sidewalks, and other viable services.

Town of Gorham Code Enforcement Officer Jim Morse spoke about properties in Gorham that are dual zoned. The Town will change that because properties are subject to both regulations. He said they are basically trying to clean up a gray area to make R-1 and R-R properties more user friendly for property owners. He spoke about upcoming Short Term Rental Laws. He has gone through significant training regarding Short Term Rental Laws. The Town formed a committee, they spent approximately 2 years drafting an extensive Local Law for the Town of Gorham that is currently being acting on by the Town Board.

Code Officer Morse said owners will have to fill out an application that registers the Short Term Rental. The Town Board is starting the process with a public hearing to be scheduled for October 12, 2022 that will determine the term limit on the registration and the fee for the application. The Local Law will help protect the Town, property owners and neighboring property owners.

Code Officer Morse said there will be an update to the Docks and Moorings Law which is for all municipalities on Canandaigua Lake. There are a few loopholes in the current law that are being addressed. A majority of the regulation will stay the same.

Residents asked about Solar Regulations. Ms. Phillips said communities are revising their regulations. For the larger scale solar farms, which are approved by the State, it is important for Towns to have their laws on the books. If the community hasn't put their concerns on the table, in their zoning code, there is limited opportunity to raise concern if someone were to propose a very large scale solar farm.

Code Officer Morse said Ms. Phillips is correct. The Town doesn't have a detailed Solar Farm Law on the books. The Town is currently working on a more detailed law regarding large scale Solar Farms.

Ms. Phillips talked about conservation and development for certain land. Implementing Conservation Priorities.

Residents asked if the Town could require potential conservation parcels to be a certain size or density.

Ms. Phillips said the Committee working on the Comprehensive Plan or the Town Board can make zoning regulations changes in conjunction with the plan or anytime in the future but zoning for 5 acre lots in an agriculture area doesn't necessarily get a community where it wants to be. It can result in conversion of more land from agriculture to residential and ultimately detract from the rural character by having a lot of strip residential lots.

Ms. Phillips said the committee did look at changing zoning, in the scheme of accommodating future residential development, she said accommodating it where there is public sewer and water has its advantages.

Ms. Phillips said the Implementation Plan is being presented by Allison Adam-Anderson.

Mrs. Adam-Anderson said there is a very aggressive action item plan. She listed lots of the short term implementation action items. Mrs. Adam-Anderson said they are very, very interested in resident's thoughts.

Residents asked if there were any detailed information on the action items listed.

Ms. Phillips said yes if they look through the Land Use Plan. The order of things in the Implementation Plan is the order in which they occur in the text of the Future Land Use Plan, you can find additional narrative.

Ms. Phillips added that Ontario County, perhaps at their next meeting, will have a consultant under contract to do a County Wide Housing Study.

Additional trail ideas would be through Fire Company property and cemeteries. Those are additional bicycle and off road trail opportunities.

Ms. Phillips said, in closing, there are public comment forms. Please get any comments in by September 22, 2022. She will circulate back to the Committee all the written comments that are received. The Committee will meet again in early October and decide whether any adjustments to Plan narrative or Plan maps are needed, based on public comments. She will put all of the pieces together into one Comprehensive document and when the Committee is satisfied that it reflects what they would like to present to the Town Board for adoption, they'll turn it over to the Town Board. The Town Board will have another public hearing before the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. If there aren't substantial changes it may be November or if there are changes and the committee needs to meet it may be early 2023.

Supervisor Lightfoote closed the Public Hearing at 7:55 pm.

On the motion by Councilmember Chard, seconded by Councilmember Lazarus, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm. Motion carried unanimously. 5-0

5- Ayes Lightfoote, Case, Chard, Curtis, Lazarus

**089-2022**

Respectfully Submitted,

Darby L. Perrotte  
Town Clerk