

MEMORANDUM

To: CSC Reviewer

From: CCE Tompkins Energy Team

Date: June 18, 2018

Subject: Town of Ulysses Action Submission, PE6: Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements

The Town of Ulysses produced a comprehensive plan in 2009 that weaves sustainability throughout its pages. The following memorandum explains how the plan fulfills PE6: Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements and requests 9 points towards this action.

Required Elements:

- I. Support alternative modes of transportation (including strategies for bicycles, pedestrians, public transit, and electric vehicles)
 - Objective #2.3 of the comprehensive plan is “Enhance the existing roadway system and provide additional opportunities for people to utilize alternative modes of transportation, including public transit, bicycles, and walking” (page 23 – 24).
Actions to achieve this include:
 - “Promote safe bicycling routes along roadways in the Town. Use recommendations of local, state, and national bicycling coalitions as guidelines, as appropriate for the type of roadway. Create designated bicycle routes in the Town” (page 24).
 - “Require new developments to include sidewalk networks to connect adjacent, established commercial and mixed-use areas, for appropriate population densities” (page 24)
 - “Incorporate sidewalks into the future design of the hamlet of Jacksonville” (page 24).
 - “Coordinate with regional transportation agencies, such as New York State Department of Transportation, Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council and Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, to

monitor changes to roadways, transit routes, and usage. Address any changing needs as they become apparent” (page 24).

II. Promote smart growth principles in land-use policies

- Policy area #2 of the plan is entirely about sustainable land use and development, and states that “Sustainable growth and development shall be encouraged through the implementation of sound land use planning principles. The rural landscape is an important attribute of the community; the preservation of this landscape must be balanced by thoughtful residential and commercial growth that is focused around targeted development nodes. The Town will support development patterns that conserve its unique natural resources, reduce energy consumption, and strive to enhance land values within the Town” (page 22).
 - Objective #2.1 of the plan is “Provide a high quality of life for all residents through proactive planning that supports the goals of the local community, complements the existing rural character of the Town, and protects the value of natural and environmental resources” (page 22).
 - Objective #2.2 of the plan is “Limit future commercial development to designated areas as defined on the Future Land Use Plan including Transitional Commercial and Office and Technology Mixed Use” (page 23) and includes actions such as:
 - “Promote redevelopment and reuse of existing vacant buildings using mechanisms such as streamlined site plan review and approval for types of development the Town seeks to encourage” (page 23).
 - Objective #2.5 of the plan is “Plan for adequate and varied options in housing to meet the needs of current and future residents” (page 25) and includes actions such as:
 - “Locate high-density housing, such as apartments, senior housing complexes, and townhouses, in multi-use nodes with proximity to goods, services, employment, and public transportation” (page 25).

III. Conserve natural areas (including strategies to designate open space and protect it from development)

- Objective #1.1 of the plan is “Preserve and protect the town’s natural and environmental resources” (page 19) and includes actions such as “Develop and implement an Open Space Plan to identify and protect open space in the Town” (page 19) and “Investigate and implement various mechanisms to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes, wetlands, Unique Natural Areas, mature forests and important wildlife habitats in all Land Use areas” (page 19).
- The plan includes a future land-use policy that designates many spaces in Ulysses as protected for environmental reasons, including:
 - “Natural Areas/Parkland”, stating “It is important for the Town to preserve and protect its existing parks and natural areas for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. In addition, the Town should look for opportunities to create new parks and natural areas. Development on lands adjacent to these areas should be appropriately scaled and carefully designed to mitigate any potential adverse impacts” (page 45).
 - “Environmental Protection Areas,” stating “The land within the Environmental Protection Area in the Town includes agricultural, rural residential, and forested land uses, intermixed with steep slope, headwater stream, and wetland natural features. This land use designation is intended to ensure that future development in this area is congruent with the natural character and surroundings. While the Environmental Protection Area may not require the same level of protection as the Conservation Area, measures must be taken to ensure that future development does not harm or negatively impact natural resources” (page 46).
 - “Conservation Areas,” stating “The Conservation Area warrants a high level of scrutiny and consideration with respect to new development that has the potential to impact the existing natural environment” (page 47).

IV. Promote a healthy and safe community

- Policy area #4 of the plan concerns “Community Services,” and describes this policy area by stating “Community programming seeks to provide safe, healthy,

and enjoyable ways for residents of the Town to enjoy the natural, cultural, and historic resources, which contribute to the overall landscape of the Town” (page 29).

- Objective #4.1 states “Maintain and expand park and recreation facilities for the continued use and enjoyment of residents and visitors of the Town of Ulysses” (page 29).

V. Foster equity (including strategies for housing, schools, transportation, recreation, food, and environmental exposures)

- Objective #2.5, Action B states: “Promote the development of affordable housing by designating areas in the Town for smaller lots, such as in the Village Residential and Mixed-Use Hamlet areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan” (page 25).
- Objective #4.3, Action B states: “Expand community educational and recreational programs for all age groups within the Town through the Trumansburg Central School District. Coordinate efforts to allow for the utilization of school facilities for community programs for students, adults, and seniors” (page 30).
- Objective #4.5, Action D states: “As new development occurs in Jacksonville or other hamlets and mixed-use areas create a series of pedestrian and bicycle networks that provide access to all goods and services, transit locations, and housing that is accessible to all users” (page 32).
- Objective #4.3, Action E states: “Engage local seniors and active senior groups to identify the need for expanded programs, services, and facilities. Deficiencies specific to this population segment should be examined, including housing options, food services, transportation availability, and social programming” (page 30).

For an additional 6 points:

VI. Foster the efficient use of natural resources (e.g., water conservation) (+3 points)

- Objective #1.2 in the comprehensive plan is to “Protect existing water resources and maintain water quality” (page 20) and includes several actions such as:

- “Review and revise existing Town regulations to more adequately protect streams in the Town through buffer zones, setbacks, or other protection mechanisms such as a stream protection overlay zone” (page 20).
- “Ensure that effective Town-wide stormwater management and erosion and sediment control regulations are in place, and that there are sufficient resources to effectively enforce the regulations; at a minimum the regulations need to ensure that rates of runoff from new development are no greater than pre-development rates, and erosion control measures effectively prevent sediment from entering streams and roadside ditches during construction and other soil disturbing activities” (page 20).
- Objective #1.3 in the comprehensive plan is to “Protect existing air resources and maintain the air quality for the health and safety of Town residents” (page 21) and includes the following actions:
 - “Ensure, to the extent possible, that all animal agriculture operations in the Town are managed so as to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the Town” (page 21).
 - “Enact regulations that address and reduce air quality impacts of outdoor furnaces” (page 21).
 - “Enact regulations that address and reduce air quality impacts of industrial operations” (page 21)
 - “Work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Tompkins County Health Department to enforce the ban on open burning of trash and other noxious materials” (page 21).

VII. Decrease dependence on fossil fuels and support energy efficiency and renewable energy production (+3 points)

- Objective #2.4 states “Identify alternative energy sources and energy-reduction techniques to assist the Town in reducing its energy consumption for the benefit of current and future generations of residents” (page 24) and includes actions such as:

- “Work with New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to identify funding opportunities for feasibility analysis and funding assistance associated with small-scale renewable energy projects. These may include wind power, biofuel, geothermal, and methane recapture for residential, commercial, and agricultural uses” (page 24).
- “Evaluate existing Town facilities to identify opportunities for reducing energy consumption through Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) practices and green building technology upgrades” (page 24).
- “Implement measures to reduce net energy consumption by Town buildings, vehicles, and other facilities, if design, development and implementation has a 10 year or less pay back. Consider adopting an emissions reduction target similar to those of ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) – Local Governments for Sustainability” (page 24 – 25).
- “Encourage the location of research and development companies that conduct work associated with renewable energy resources to locate in the Town, as defined on the Future Land Use Map. Of particular relevance would be companies that are focused on energy programs associated with agricultural communities and natural resources” (page 25).
- “Adopt appropriate zoning regulations to allow residential and commercial alternative energy generation” (page 25).
- “Explore opportunities to promote or allow alternative energy development to provide the Town with its own energy source” (page 25).