

TOWN OF TICONDEROGA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

KICK-OFF MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Location: Ticonderoga Town Board Room
Date: July 9, 2025
Time: 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Brian Ledger, Chair
Scott Hearburg
Doug McTyler
Ash Alexander

Joe W. Vilardo
Margaret Lauman
Mark Wright, Supervisor

Consulting Team

Jamie Konkoski, LaBella Associates

SUMMARY NOTES

1. Committee & Team Introductions

The Committee and Consulting Team introduced themselves.

2. Review Scope of Work

- Jamie provided an overview of the comprehensive planning process, which is funded through a grant from NYS Department of State (DOS) Smart Growth Program. The process follows the work plan outlined in the contract between the Town and DOS. Each phase of the planning process will incorporate Smart Growth principles:
 - Phase 1 Project Initiation includes the kick-off meeting, Community Participation Plan, Review of Local and Regional Plans, and Community Profile.
 - Phase 2 Visioning includes a Community Survey, Stakeholder Interviews, and Public Workshop #1
 - Phase 3 includes a Vision, Goals & Recommendations Report, Public Workshop #2, Draft Plan, CPC Public Hearing and referral of the plan to the Town Board

- Phase 4 is the adoption process which includes referral to the APA and County Planning Board, SEQR, Town Board public hearing, Final Plan and local adoption by resolution of the Town Board
-
- Reviewed the preliminary schedule
 - Month 1=July 2025 Kick-off meeting; month 15=September 2026
 - Schedule is subject to change if committee needs more time for tasks or to accommodate holidays and vacations as needed.
 - Group decided to conduct the community survey first and then use the results to inform Public Workshop #1 which will be moved to December/January.
 - The next Committee meeting will include a tour of downtown to look at areas that are NOT receiving funding from DRI.

3. Summary of Discussion of Priorities, Issues, Concerns

Challenges/Issues

- Economic development and housing (need more jobs and places to live)
- Attract big or small businesses
- Redevelop vacant areas – old Grand Union plaza, Lowes, former drug store that is used for storage, others sites TBD
- Need year-round recreation
- Address walkability issues
- Lack of restaurants
- No livery services
- Population decline
- Loss of assisted living at hospital created a gap in continuum of care for seniors

Assets

- Fort Ticonderoga
- Star Trek attraction
- School athletic fields and track
- Educational facilities (school district and NCCC)
- Ice rink
- Municipal airport (used for private recreation aircraft)
- Senior housing
- Nursing home/rehab center
- Health care facilities now affiliated with UVM – updated equipment; quality health care
- Airlift services at medical center
- Multiple anchor employers – Sylvamo, hospital, school, NCCC

Opportunities

- Need to update zoning code; may need to adjust some districts or district boundaries
- Plans for 60 new units behind Walmart have been approved by Planning Board. May include a childcare facility or other commercial use. Development will be added to the sewer district. Developer is seeking funding from HCR.

- Create more community events
- Attract retired snowbirds to Ti for summer months
- Need to diversify economy with more tourism focused on outdoor recreation and history/heritage tourism
- Expand NCCC offerings
- Add amenities at the beach
- Low-hanging fruit: enhance community aesthetics by fixing leaning utility poles and road signs
- Library wants to expand

Draws to the Community: fishing, lake, boat rentals/marina, campgrounds, Star Trek, Fort

Recent Investments

- Town has made significant investments in infrastructure, including sidewalks, roads, water and sewer

4. Review Public Participation Plan

- Jamie provided an overview of the Public Participation Plan.
 - 6 committee meetings will be structured as works sessions
 - Project webpage is available on the Town website; meeting summaries and reports will be posted after they are approved by the committee.
 - Consulting team will conduct stakeholder interviews and up to 3 focus group meetings. Committee will identify stakeholders at next meeting.
 - There will be 2 public workshops. All materials presented during the workshop will be posted on the project webpage along with a link to an online survey so anyone who could not attend in person can provide input. Those surveys will be available for 2 weeks after each workshop.
 - To promote the Community Survey LaBella will prepare and send a postcard mailing to town addresses. The postcard will include a QR that links to the survey.
 - All public input opportunities will be promoted through social media, flyers, press release, project website, and email blasts. Committee members are encouraged to share information among their networks. All outreach materials (flyers, social media posts, etc.) will be provided by the Consulting Team.

5. Review List of Existing Plans/Laws

Local Plans

- Town of Ticonderoga Strategic Revitalization Plan (2002)
- Town of Ticonderoga Comprehensive Plan (2006) – document provides a detailed summary of town history that can be carried over in the appendix of the new plan, so we don't have to rewrite that section. The community profile will be updated. The vision and goals will be reviewed and updated based on guidance from the Committee.
- Ticonderoga Destination Master Plan (2009)

- Montcalm Street Streetscape & Gateway Enhancement Plan (2018) – this project is funded under the DRI.
- Town of Ticonderoga Zoning Law (2019)
- Ticonderoga Market Analysis (2020)
- Ticonderoga DRI Strategic Investment Plan (2023)
- DRI Funded Projects (2024)

Regional Plans

- Essex and Clinton Counties Waterfront Plan (2010)
- Building Balanced Communities for the North Country – Regional Housing Plan (2023)
- Essex County Data Report (2024)
- Essex County Farmland Protection and Food System Plan

LaBella will provide a summary of existing planning documents and the land use code. Key takeaways will be summarized for each document. Vision statements, goals, priorities and recommendations will be identified. The status of any recommendations will be reviewed by the Committee so we can determine what has been accomplished, what is no longer relevant, and what to carry over in the updated plan. This information will inform the vision and goals for the new plan.

6. Community Profile Outline

- Jamie provided a brief overview of what will be included in the Community Profile report.
- Demographic data will be compiled from the Essex County Data report, DRI SIP, and Census data. The section on the Economy will draw from information in the Ticonderoga Market Analysis, DRI SIP, and Census data. Comparison communities for demographic, economy and housing sections will be:
 - Schroon
 - North Elba (Lake Placid)
 - Bolton Landing
- Land use and zoning data will be requested from the County.
- Existing conditions for water/sewer and stormwater infrastructure will be compiled by SDA.
- The Committee will be asked to provide some information that is not available in public data sets (e.g. recreation, health and emergency services etc.)
- The existing conditions, opportunities and challenges will be assessed through a Smart Growth lens.

7. Next Steps:

- CPC Meeting #2: September 29th at 5pm in the Town Board Room. Agenda will include the following:
 - Review draft survey questions
 - Identify stakeholders for interviews and focus groups
 - Review summary of past plans report

- Review key findings from draft Community Profile
- Tour of downtown

ITEM	ACTION ITEM	OWNER
1	Set up monthly core team calls	Jamie
2	Summary Report: Existing Plans, Studies & Regulations	Consulting Team
3	Draft Community Profile	Consulting Team
4	Send Committee Worksheets to Jamie	ALL
5	Summarize input from Committee Worksheets	Consulting Team