



Summary

The Town of Mount Pleasant Public Engagement Summary presents and explores comments received at the May 30, 2018 Public Workshop to inform the Town's comprehensive plan update process. The report documents the participants' goals, objectives, and vision for the Town. The consulting team consists of Cleary Consulting, the Land Use Law Center, Sullivan Architecture, and Adler Consulting.

To promote attendance at the meetings, consultants and Town staff, including the Town's Steering Committee, solicited participation using several advertisement methods. At the meeting, facilitators asked participants for feedback regarding six land use discussion themes: Built Environment; Economy; Mobility; Community, Culture & Education; Natural Resources & Open Space; and Sustainability & Resiliency. For each discussion theme, facilitators asked: "What is good now, what is not working, and what are some strategies to overcome what is not working?" As participants discussed each theme, facilitators recorded exact responses on flipcharts. For each meeting, staff also collected private comment cards and handouts from participants on topics that they might not have been able to participate in due to time limitations. Once the meetings concluded, staff compiled all recorded comments and handouts and organized them by discussion theme.

May 30 Workshop Overview

After informing the Mt. Pleasant community about the workshop, the consulting team held its first public meeting on May 30, 2018 at the Community Center and Pool from 7:00 – 9:30 pm. The Land Use Law Center facilitated these meetings, which followed an agenda. The meeting had a welcome table, where Steering Committee Members distributed name tags, index cards for private comments, and agendas. Following registration, the Supervisor welcomed all participants and introduced the Consulting Team and Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Pat Cleary presented an overview of the importance of a comprehensive plan and presented the planning process and framework, and existing conditions of Mt. Pleasant. The Land Use Law Center staff then explained the meeting agenda, discussion questions, and ground rules, noting the importance of collecting information from participants.



Participants divided into small groups to enhance effective conversation with participants. A trained facilitator led each small group of 15-20 participants, asking the same three questions for each of six discussion topics. The small groups discussed each topic for 30 minutes then groups rotated to a new facilitator and topic. For each discussion topic, a recorder recorded all responses using a large paper flip-chart, markers, and easels. Participants were able to attend three stations during the allocated time.

The small groups discussed the following topics regarding the land use themes:



Economy

Fiscal condition, tax base & Village budget
Economic development strategy
Employment & workforce
Tourism
New economy (co-working, light industry)
Potential redevelopment sites
New developments and school impacts

Community, Culture & Education

Historical & Cultural Resources
Community Facilities & Services
Arts & Culture
Health & Wellness
Educational Institutions & School Impacts
Community Safety & Emergency Services

Built Environment

Land Use & Zoning
Housing Affordability & Choice
Historic Preservation & Districts
Utilities & Infrastructure
Accessibility

Mobility

Transportation infrastructure – roads, rail, sidewalks
Transit systems & system integration
Congestion & parking
Ridehail & carshare
Wayfinding & street design
Bicycles
Walkability

Natural Environment & Open Space

Natural & Environmental Features
Critical Environmental Areas
Natural Resources
Local Controls Protecting the Environment
Open Space & Recreation

Sustainability & Resiliency

Climate mitigation
Resource consumption
Green & passive buildings
Climate adaptation





For each of the above discussion topics, facilitators asked participants the following questions:

- What's **good** now?; What do you like?; What should be maintained?
- What **issues** remain?; What do you dislike?; What needs to be changed?
- What are some **strategies** to overcome what is not working?; What **new things** can we do to make it better?; What exciting **ideas** do you have?; Where can we make these ideas happen?



After participants discussed three topics, the public meeting concluded, and participants were able to provide input on the topics that they weren't able to attend during the time period by filling out worksheets for that topic. Participants were thanked and attendees were encouraged to visit the website for future meeting dates. In addition to the small group discussions, staff collected exit surveys.

After collecting all recorded comments and comment cards, staff compiled them into the various themes. Below, the section presents these comments and their consolidation of all sessions. Staff grouped identical and equivalent comments together under the discussion themes. Each discussion theme records the frequency of some comments to reflect how often each comment occurred.

Next Steps

All material from the May 30th workshop can be found on the Town's website. Future public engagement sessions will continue over the summer. Once these outreach methods are concluded, the consulting team will draft a final public engagement report consolidating all comments received.

Mt. Pleasant Comprehensive Plan – Workshop 1, May 30, 2018

Economy

Positives

Taxes

- Reinvestment in area
- Reasonable taxes (2)
- Was newly reformed

Businesses & Employment opportunities within Town

- Employment in town
- New small businesses → creates jobs for youth
- New Audi dealership on gA (Hawthorne)
- Biotech/ Regeneron (2)
- EF Academy

Services in Town

- Recreational services
- Town services (Facilities)
- Local chamber of commerce
- Grassland medical facilities
- New printing business in former nursery
- Easy access to highways and trains
- Medical and dental school
- Historic Hudson Valley events and sites
- Metro-North

Tourism

- Through dam and cemetery visits

Challenges

Parking & Roads

- Parking in downtown Valhalla, including train station
- Parking enforcement
- Traffic issues, circulation
 - Four Corners area, Commerce St. (Thornwood)
 - Dam closure
 - But also, a positive for walking
- Need for improved local, county, and state roads (2)
- All three hamlets have limited road access in/out and lack of parking (3)
- Increased traffic related to development

- Road drainage
- Car traffic congestion in Valhalla so difficult to visit businesses

Walkability

- Not walkable around town
- Lack of connection between homes and train → cannot walk
- Big wall on Columbus Ave going to Valhalla → town or county wall?

Housing

- Lack of housing for seniors, all, and new residents (2)
- Affordable housing for younger workforce (2)
- Need for housing for variety of incomes, ages, and workforce
- Need to plan for redevelopment on larger properties
- Need to plan for associated infrastructure (2)
- Need opportunities to improve revitalize existing housing stock
- Lack of housing by trains and business districts
- Homeless shelter at County Grasslands facility impact on services

Town/Business Redevelopment

- Need for character improvement at Hawthorne train station
- Increase shared services with municipalities (be careful of reduction in services)
- Development impact on schools (2)
- IDA investment, but loss of investment by businesses leaving
- Reliance on corporate office space/ office parks
- Empty stores/buildings for too long (3)
- Empty Gas station on 9A - Hawthorne
- Need to support small businesses
- Tax incentives
- Lack of coffee shops/ places to hang out
 - Lacking business district
- Little business diversity (2)
- Need to attract business, business marketing
- Major non-taxable properties
- Displacement of animals from development
- Better restaurants, like Pleasantville

Town Outreach

- More local voice and power in county and state matters
- More transparency for town employment services, planning and opportunities (2)
- Need better town outreach for planning and town issues
- Corporate-town collaboration
 - Community representation at corporate institutional facilities

- Troubled youth schools → impact on town services

Tourism

- History Tours
 - Connection with historical sights and groups
- Need for town tourism/ attractions

Strategies

Train Improvements

- Hawthorne and Valhalla train station access and parking
- Improve buffering zones between trains in Thornwood and Hawthorne
- Build central train parking garage (2)

School District Improvements

- Shared services among schools
- Combine Westlake and Valhalla school districts
- Adjust school taxes to whether one is sending their children there or not
 - Those not sending should not have to pay school taxes
 - Idea had lots of opposition

Business and Development Improvements

- Better code enforcement to improve character in hamlets/ curb appeal
- Focus on filling office space
- Improve (streamline) new business application process
- Better methods to utilize existing buildings
- Downtown development in Hawthorne and Thornwood
- Require new corporations to be a part of chamber of commerce
- All new construction gets solar
- Walking bridge over parkway from Valhalla

Improve character of the town

- Improve character through design
 - Signage, lighting

Town Activities

- Better plan for connecting communities
 - Town wide events

Taxes

- Reassessment of property taxes

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Community, Culture, and Education

Positives

Community

- People
- Community all works and are raising their own kids
- Community safety
- Great history – want to do something with it
- Empathetic community
- Residents who grew up here

Schools

- Schools
- Within schools there is a balance of options
- Communication from school and town (emails and texts)
- Active school boosters and school's found action
- High School Sports
- Westchester community college
- Accessibility to schools

Health Services

- Choices of health and wellness
- Hospital (2)
- Senior care at Bradhurst Centers for Seniors with Dementia
- Volunteers firefighters and EMS (3)
- Close proximity to hospitals, urgent cares, children's hospitals

Recreation

- Recreation department classes
- Pool (3)
- Recreational center (2)
 - good for all ages, Parent's Night Out, Mt. Pleasant Day, community kid events
- Music, Arts and Sports in the schools – band
- Music in the Park
- Kensico Dam (2)
- Stone Barns
- Outdoor concerts
- Active senior community
- Excellent senior programs (2)
- Youth Sport Programs
- Collaborations with Sleepy Hollow
- Restaurants are nice – need more (2)
 - Various ethnic restaurants
- Public Library (2)
- The Examiner
- Rockefeller paths

- Farmer's market at Pleasantville
- Jacob Burn's Cinema (in Village of Pleasantville)

Transportation

- Railroads
- Proximity to everything

Challenges

Land Uses

- Controls on uses and types of uses and balancing them
- Focus more on historical significance

School Districts

- Consolidate school districts (in close proximity)
- School programs that teach trades and life skills
- Strategy to reimagine BOCES
- Safety in schools
- Elementary school crowded
- Infrastructure upgrade in school (2)
- Lack of transportation for after school programs
- School should have a partnership with local corporations
- Volunteer system for alumni of school districts (keep graduates connected)
- Need to connect seniors with our youth

Recreational Needs

- Use recreational center for kid's activities (under-utilized)
- Entertainment/sports complex (similar to Mt. Kisco's)
- Utilize private buildings for entertainment
- Don't have enough for Arts and Sciences – use venues for this (2)
- Sports programs taking away from Holidays/family time
- Target young people for volunteer positions
- Better sports fields (drainage, turf) (3)
- Look outside of community for ideas
- Place for teens to hangout – open gym to keep kids off the streets (2)
- Kensico fireworks – partnership with county for better experience
- Need more access to local fields and facilities
- Open access to the recreational center during winter months
- Farmer's Market in town
- Branch library doing after school programs
- Health and nutrition education in community center
- Loss of soccer field not being replaced by development

Businesses & Restaurants

- More incentives for evening jobs for kids out of college
- More night life – more "hip" activities
- More diverse restaurant options (2)

Transportation/Town Services

- Need for a town jitney
- Garbage on streets
- Need for garbage cans
- Greater incentives for firefighters and EMS volunteers
- Crowded streets and travel
- No connection between community and arts
- Temporary parking for railroad
- Lack of fire hydrants
- Community unity under wellness umbrella
- More walkable areas

Strategies

Community programs

- Get people to adopt a traffic island (Similar to Mt. Kisco)
- Spring clean-up Earth Day event
- Bring in corporations to assist with programs for kids after school
- Senior/youth programs at the community center

Land Use

- Set aside land for future growth
- Outreach programs to private under-utilized properties
- Balance uses (ex. 4-5 urgent cares)
- Large corporations and large developments required to give back for field space, roads
- Open Kensico Dam to traffic

Improvement within schools

- Trained security or law enforcement in high school
- Pool available to high school in winter
- School district working with organizations to get volunteers for fire dept., EMS and town camps
- Incentives (monetary or academic credits)
- Academic credits to decrease disconnect between school and community

Recreation & Services

- Update Pavilion (Stone Gate) can be used for new fields
- Shared services with school
- Utilize unused office parks and unused land owned by the towns for fields (3)
- Use of community center for teen programs
- Indoor pool, fitness area, gym
- Seniors work with after school programs
- Farmer's market
- Combine Town pool and Westlake adult swim and enclose it for winter

Housing Opportunities

- Affordable housing to maintain volunteers and workforce

Town Communication

- Town representatives on Board of Hospital
- Need more community idea events (use more technology, website)

- Communication to people in town for emergencies
- Use of Facebook to communicate with community

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Built Environment

Positives

Community

- Friendly communities in close proximity
- Generational (multi) residents
- Nice place to live
- Positive community legacy (people stay)
- Opportunity for good decisions
- History
- Low-density small-town character
- Historical cemeteries
- Historical preservation
- Stability based on single-family homes

Transportation & Connectivity

- Train Stations (3)
- Convenience to parkways
- Accessible
- Physically connected neighborhoods
- Infrastructure is good

Recreation

- Parks/Playgrounds
- Recreation center (2)
- Variety for community uses
- Bike and hike trails (Rockefeller)
- Community center and pool
- Can walk on closed road to top of dam
- Kensico plaza (2)

Housing

- Mixed commercial and residential
- Utility
- Rosehill shopping center
- Mostly residential
- Smaller homes
- Housing opportunities for young families
- Affordability (2)

- Public services (2)
- A lot of housing styles
- Greenspaces on Columbus Avenue
- Houses of worship

Safety and Wellness

- Police and volunteer EMT
- Access to medical care
- Excellent town services
- Medical care

Natural Resources

- Running water (access to good water) (2)
- Lots of open space (4)
- Greenspaces

Businesses and Opportunities

- Quality commercial development
- Large companies bringing people in
- Access to shopping centers
- Variety of utility companies
- Lower taxes compared to neighboring towns (2)

Challenges

Community improvements

- Lack of culture
- Lack of historical context
- No feel to the community – drive thru and it feels dated and not appealing

Roads & Walkability

- Condition of roads (2)
 - Roads built for lower population
- Lack of sidewalks and walkability (4)
- Reopen road on top of dam

Schools & Development Pressures

- Accommodating new children in schools after the development
- Children generation from development → negative school impact b/c of increased taxes

Housing

- Not enough diversity in housing stock

- More diversity in housing and renting
- Housing for seniors
- Assisted living
- Abandoned homes
- Oversized homes
- No housing for young people
- Always angry over housing to offset taxes – companies need places for people to live

Infrastructure and Development Needs

- Aging drainage infrastructure
- Inadequate transit services
- Lack of fire hydrants (2)
- Flooding on Elwood
- Coordinating utility improvements
- Guidelines/performance standards
- Drainage on West lake Drive
- Condition of route 141
- Enforceable building regulations
- Antiquated infrastructure
- Underground utilities
- Overhead utility lines
- Physical limitation of train tracks
- Additional density in hamlet needed

Recreation

- Not much to do w/in community
- Aesthetics of the hamlet
- Increase in construction
- Inconsistent development
- Not enough activities for teens
- Lack of restrooms at town parks
- Lack of restrictions on camper, mobile homes, and boats
- Not enough indoor and outdoor recreational areas

Issues with Zoning

- Antiquated zoning
- Zoning enforcement
- Lack of flexibility in zoning
- Over-development and modifying development
- Lack of current zoning
- Failure of code to encourage alternative energy sources
- Balancing act between development and open space

Business/Hamlet Development

- Appearance of stores in hamlet
- Not a lot of variety in businesses
- Lack of diversity in retail
- Vacancy in Valhalla (all over)
- Isolation of office parks
- Extending gas distribution
- Complete hamlet
- More character in the hamlet

Traffic & Parking

- 141 and Broadway traffic congestion
- Institutional uses have negative neighborhood impact
- Congestion on Stevens Avenue
- High taxes
- Truck traffic on roads
- TOD near train stations
- Traffic in Valhalla
- Lack of parking (2)
- Train station parking

Natural Resources

- Displacement of wildlife
- Well-water charges
- Preservation of historical landmarks
- Lack of tree maintenance (power outages)

Strategies

Transportation

- Reduced auto dependency

School Improvements

- Combining middle and high school
- School district and town collaboration

Government & Tax improvements

- Proper allocation of taxes (accountability for taxes)
- Whether tax abatements benefit the community
- Overlapping govt. jurisdictions

Land Use Improvements

- Mixed use development in hamlet (2)

- Repurposing office parks for public benefit
- Redevelopment of Commerce Street
- Green buildings (2)
- Building maintenance enforcement
- Design guidelines in hamlet
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Collaboration between county and state
- Comprehensive 311 complaint system
- More interactive town website
- Underground utilities
- More density near transit hubs
- Intermunicipal coordination
- More transitional uses

Business Development

- Renovating existing buildings
- Repurposing/renovating office parks
- Holding business owners accountable for their property
- More selective with businesses
- Reevaluate retail zoning

Housing

- Senior housing (affordability) (independent living)
- Diversity in housing stock
- Allowing additional building height (4 stories)
- Open space required in development
- Coordination with county and state govt.
- Overtaxed infrastructure
- Green-building housing
- Character of existing

Parking

- Parking at train station
- Parking garage at the hamlet
- Day-parking by train
- Additional public parking in hamlet
- Ticket illegal parking at train

Recreation & Open Space Preservation

- Indoor/outdoor sports facilities (outdoor field space)
- Pavilion (re-open it for public)
- Bonus density for land preservation
- Preserving the remaining open spaces

- Maintaining open space and privacy
- Open spaces in hamlet

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Mobility

Positives

Sidewalks and infrastructure

- Sidewalks good in Valhalla
- Legion Drive sidewalk is a model for good sidewalk
- Hawthorne sidewalks from train to Chelsea
- West Lake, Columbus Avenue—sidewalks connect
- Well-lit streets/town

Location

- Close to NYC—trains
- Good access to major highways/parkways (2)
- Proximity in County (2)

Services, Parking & Beautification

- Convenient commerce
- Park-like parkways
- Caring community
- Free parking in commercial area
- Easy to get to commercial area by car
- Quick snow removal—no ice, good sand/salt application
- Hawthorne and Valhalla train stations have adequate parking

Connections

- Interconnected local roads
- Roads through cemetery
- A lot of older road networks maintained
- Sometimes Hawthorne and Thornwood use crosswalks

Transportation Choices

- Bee line system (2)
- Train stations (2)
- Good vehicular transportation
- School bus system (Stotz)
- Seniors' vans
- Good public transport
- Getting to Rockefeller preserve

Negatives

Sidewalks and infrastructure

- Sidewalks are not good in Hawthorne and Thornwood
- Hawthorne train station—no sidewalk for people walking to train
- Frankfort needs sidewalks—people are parked all over, no meters
- Sidewalks, kids could get to school, etc.
- Need sidewalks on Commerce street (2)
- Going North from station—no sidewalks
- Main streets not geared to pedestrians—ease and safety
- Limited/no sidewalks/not connected (2)

Services, & Beautification

- Columbus Avenue crosswalks need new paint/maintenance
- Need numbers on houses—can't find when delivering, hard to find someone's house
- Some areas not inviting/need beautification (2)
- Commercial areas need improvement
 - Unlit
 - No walkability
- Ability/expensive to get day pass for train (3)
- Hawthorne train—crowded, dirty, unkempt
 - Need sidewalks, no walkability
 - Whole network train-business

Parking

- Commuter parking is lacking (2)
- Free parking in commercial area can be a negative for businesses
- Enforced short term parking for commercial areas—commuters, not shoppers, are using street parking here
- Hawthorne train lot FULL daily—not a safe walk, residents have to go out of district

Transportation Choices

- More bike trails
- Too much focus on vehicular transport
- Need bike racks, especially at stations and shopping district
- Roads dangerous for bicycles

Transportation Safety and Enforcement

- Hawthorne has bad street conditions, especially need ADA safe access/passage
- Hawthorne - no enforcement for speeding/traffic
- Hawthorne potholes all over

- Hawthorne train station unsafe—can't walk, unlit
- Thornwood cut-through off Commerce Street, speeding through neighborhood
 - Potholes
- Valhalla train station—on Cleveland Street, pedestrian safety is poor
- Need crosswalks
- Legion Drive/Broadway stop signs—too many trucks
- Liberty Street and Manhattan—need 4 way stop sign
- Bad road conditions
- Nannyhagan Road potholes
- Fort Washington—too many commuters parking and speeding
- Unlit intersections—need traffic lights too
- Personal safety on roads (2)
- Speeding—no enforcement (2)
- Regular basis for traffic studies—blind spots

Traffic

- Congestion—balance with future development in Valhalla
- Dam passageway closed to traffic—jams Valhalla in morning community
- Lack of attention to Valhalla traffic
- Avoid traffic over parkway when leaving Valhalla train station
 - Inadequate parking
 - All stations have this issue
- Bradhurst Avenue morning traffic—new development, worse?
- Need traffic study for potential closings—need good plan
- Commerce Street/Elwood Road congested, unkempt, dangerous (2)

Strategies

Sidewalks and infrastructure

- Connect sidewalks between hamlets (2)
- More obvious crosswalks—for e.g., paint them green

Services & Beautification

- Need bus service between hamlets
- Improve wayfinding system

Parking

- Parking structures at stations
- Allow parking on Thornwood
- Hawthorne vacant spaces create into parking lots (2)
 - E.g. Bel-Paese site—paved and empty, make it a parking lot
- More train parking behind station or Town garage (2)

Transportation Choices

- Bike racks, trails, sidewalks
- Bike racks at train stations
- Car sharing
- Path to connect to bike trails—eliminate driving to trails

Transportation Safety and Enforcement

- Need crosswalk or stop signs at Commerce Street/Elwood Road (2)
- Enforcement—speed? Bumps?
- Control non-resident parking
- Cameras at Hawthorne station for safety
- Cameras for traffic enforcement
- Light at end of Legion drive at fire department

Traffic

- Cops stop traffic at other stations, not here
- Traffic calming tools
- Need combo overpasses
- Need South entrance for Valhalla station
- Pedestrian bridge? (ADA update)
- Stevens Avenue traffic—better navigation
- Drop box outside post office to decrease congestion
- No through traffic?
- Connect modes of transit, especially at peak train times
- Fisher Lane entrance to 287

Studies & Government Role

- Follow through for studies
- Base evaluation of road conditions
- Valhalla full traffic analysis—why are people always going through?
 - Broad WHY's
- Comprehensive traffic overhaul and study
- Traffic studies
- Look to old plan
- More involvement from elected representatives
- Communication channel to get these concerns realized—one in each hamlet
- Push elected officials on dam issue—want it reopened

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Natural Environment and Open Space

Positives

Parks and Trails

- Bradherst Park
- Kensico bridge, plaza, dam (3)
- Rockefeller Preserve (2)
- North County Trailway (3)
- Rockwood (2)
- Carol Park (3)
- Lake Side Field
- Broadway Field
- Sherman Park
- Rockefeller State park preserve
- Kingsland Point Park
- Graham Hill County Park (2)
- Cranberry Lake & Preserve (2)
- School open spaces/ball fields/playgrounds (2)
- Cemetery—Babe Ruth
- Community center/pool (3)
- Hardscrabble wilderness
- Old Town Pool

Natural Resources

- Reservoirs and access to them (2)
- Wildlife/Birds/Bird Watching (2)
- Riverfront
- Wetlands and preservation of undeveloped land
- Trees and forested areas
- Nature interface between community and nature

Civic Groups/Organizations

- Stone Barns
- Garden club
- The Native Plant Center at Westchester Community College

Protective Regulations/Measures

- Sewers (not septic)

Challenges

Development Encroachment

- Displacing animals b/c of development (2)
- Developing around fields—negative/commercialized
- Need thoughtful development
- Increased and population construction in past 10 years which is ruining the open spaces (2)
- Need balance between new development and improving existing housing
- Re-purposing existing develop/reutilization
- Hawthorn need refurbishing
- Increased communication about development
- Screening between residences (natural/fences) – deer eat natural screens

Mobility/Access

- Lack of accessibility
 - Interhamlet and open space connectivity (2)
 - Have to drive to open spaces (2)
 - Limited parking (2)
- Need for more sidewalks (2)
- Need for bike paths
- No walkability in hamlets (2)

Beautification

- Parks integrated into natural open space
- Need for downtown beautification
- Leaf collections sitting on street

Flooding

- Drainage/storm water maintenance (4)
 - Flood by metro north—Bronx River Parkway
 - Brady Ave and Marble Ave (3)
 - Flooding of sports field
 - Flooding on Linda Ave leaves debris
 - Flooding near Westchester Medical Center
 - Flooding by four corners (diner); Walgreens
 - West Lake Drive – flooding (drainage issue, natural runoff, storm water management issue)
- Enforcement of maintaining storm water on property
- Sub pump West Lake Drive

Maintenance

- Outdated/lack of public facilities
- Carol Park (2)

- Geese in parks
- Carol Park pond needs beautification
- Lack of maintenance
- Salt leaches into ponds and limits ice skating.
- Cleaning streets—lake side garbage

Field, Parks, Trails

- Need more multiuse/recreational sports field (3)
- Need another pool
- Need to maintain green spaces
- No traditional family parks – picnics/playground (2)

Natural Resources

- Wetland preservation/steep slopes
- Invasive species, vines (2)
- No law requiring native plants—could provide habitat value
- Tree preservation (3)
- Threatened water table

Alternative Energy, Energy, Infrastructure

- Solar and alternative energy choices
- Street lights needed in Rolling Hills Subdivision
- No access to town water in rolling hills
- Natural gas lines wanted—oil tanks contamination of property
- Utility and town communities communication

Strategies

Downtown/Hamlets

- Infrastructure in downtown and between hamlets
- Landscaping/connectivity of green space between hamlets
- Strategies to keep hamlets quaint/connected
- Beautify vacant/decaying lots/parking
 - Reutilization—farmers market, grass
- Greenery in hamlet
- Want trees in downtown (2)

Flooding

- Deepen river bed/maintenance
- Increasing green space/infrastructure to help with flooding (3)
- Alternatives to imperviable surface
- Dredging

- Compel people who have commercial property via land use – don't pave everything, etc.
- Preserve rain through rain gardens (2)

Alternative Energy

- Wind turbines
- Utilize commercial space for solar

Parks & Trails

- Splash pad for parks
- Skate parks
- Full sized swings at parks
- Create community gardens
- School fields should be allowed for public recreation
- Consolidate parks – centralize and link them
- Allow for use of reservoirs, boats, fishing, tourism, etc.

Regulations/Policies

- Creating wildlife corridors
- Open space fund—protect existing open spaces
- Cluster development need to encourage (2)
- Educate on native and non-native species
- Use town website to put up guide to native plants
- Encourage accessibility of native species (2)
- Need education—development/construction issues
- Increase landscape requirements
- Using native trees on street scape projects
- Requirement of preservation/set aside of open space for community use w/development (6)
- Legalization of rain barrels
- Incentives – bonus density for open space preservation
- Enforcement measures with regulations in residential areas
- Relook at provisions for wetlands and steep slopes – potential of relaxing site specifically

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Sustainability and Resiliency

Positives

Transportation

- Bus and public transit is pretty good here. Access to Metro North here is great.

Natural Resources & Recreation

- Cluster subdivisions often maintain open spaces (2)
 - Open space due to cemeteries (2)
- Protected wetlands are very important ecologically.
- Preventing development on steep slopes and wetlands.
- 50- foot buffer outside of wetlands. Consider increasing the buffer.
- Native plant use – let's codify this.
- Conservation
- Green spaces and preserves (e.g. Rockefeller) are great.
- Kensico Dam is 1/3 of the town of Mt. Pleasant.
- Dog parks are great, there are a couple here.
- App through district where you can monitor your water use.

Regulations

- Green Building Code (more effective use of codes)
- Pervious regulation: the inspector was actually concerned when I called to talk about building. Most people in most towns are not.
- Requirement to discharge water was financially onerous but positive

Recycling

- Schools are teaching recycling at a young age.
- Recycling Program (3)
 - Pleasantville Recycles Education program. They have a festival every year to educate, and the festival is zero waste.
- They take our yard waste and turn it into mulch.

Sustainable energy

- Seeing more solar panels; it's positive that we have tax breaks for it. (2)
- Solar orientation implemented into the comprehensive plan.

Challenges

Walkability & Biking

- More sidewalks on the main roads (Chelsea, Franklin)
- A lot of open spaces but difficult to get to them e.g. can't ride bike to many.

Roads, Transportation & Traffic

- Mt. Pleasant doesn't really have a main road. Improve that condition.
- Lots of local employment like Pepsi and the hospital, but increased traffic means increased congestion, air pollution, and gas emissions.
- New housing development is good to mitigate the number of empty office spaces, but the traffic is becoming dangerous for pedestrian traffic. I question the traffic studies done there.
- Need increased walkability, sidewalks and bike paths.
- Better traffic studies and dissemination of that information.

Local Government

- Need some form of an environmental or sustainability committee. We need a group of people thinking about these topics and releasing information to the public.
- Don't see the town addressing climate change.
- Outsourcing our local composting to a town in Connecticut.
- Lack of energy efficiency.

Landscape needs

- Landscapers have technology that's very harmful to the community. Some zoning to phase out the machines that are both bad for the environment and very loud. They drone on all day long.

Drinking water issues

- There are microorganisms and bacteria that aren't filtered out of the water.
- There are too many water districts.

Food sources in schools

- Our school food is very bad. Localize it.

Protection of natural resources

- Climate change is creating weather, like the recent F5 tornado, that is uprooting beautiful old oak trees.
- Community is not looking into removing trees.
- Con Edison destroys the tree and doesn't know how to prune them.

- Need information and education, don't know how to protect water systems from fertilizers when trying to landscape our yard.

Strategies

Preservation

- We need to preserve our environment.
- Urban forestry management. There are huge old trees dying out and no one is planting new trees.
- Native plants and stop allowing invasive species. Make these restrictions applicable to residential areas. Everyone's focused on public land.

Green Construction

- We need passive buildings and green building
- Sustainable building incentives
- Applications for building should have environmental questions. Not a single one.
- Lots of old houses here; find adaptations for these old houses.
- There is huge development along the Hudson: are they considering the flood walls and infrastructure designed to prevent damage from impending storms due to climate change.

Greater energy efficient options

- Think solar.
- The town should be setting an example by installing solar on their buildings.
- On-site energy requirements e.g. at least 5-10% energy use of structure produced on-site. Look at Oxford, England's regulations.

Increase education in the community about sustainability

- Information dissemination on the effects of climate change and pollution. People understand the effects.
- People won't consider ideas if they think they're expensive. Let's get information out there as to why they are financially feasible.
- Offer guidelines to businesses and community events on how to make them more environmentally sustainable.
- Legality of collecting rainwater. Education on collecting rainwater would be great.
- Some kind of ambassador or committee that can consult with local homeowners on how to be sustainable

- Green Ribbon is a school sustainability program that we should think about adopting.
- Encourage the use of local materials. Even national material is good.
- Composting program.
- In addition to collecting yard waste, collect food waste and add it to the compost program.
- Pesticide use regulations and eventual elimination.
- Think about homeowners getting their own chickens. Should be easier to raise livestock