

Ballston Spa's Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee has discussed major topics the village will face over the next 10 to 15 years. Below are summaries of each area which has been explored. Minutes of its meetings follow the summaries.

You are encouraged to attend a meeting on August 30, 2022, 7 to 9 PM either online (link to be announced on the webpage) or in person at the County Special Facilities Building across Bath Street from The Presbyterian Church.

At that time, you will participate in exercises to formulate a vision for Ballston Spa's future.

GOVERNMENTAL BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE: December 2021

The village must first inventory its properties and determine priorities of what is needed. There should be a strategic plan carried out over a 5, 10, to 15-year period. It is imperative to move to proactive planning for maintenance, which requires a major shift in the culture of the village. Departments have been operating as they are for a long time. It will require a sustained effort, not unlike turning a ship.

To ask for money from grants and taxpayers, the village must define what needs to be done. To be proactive there must be resources. A capital fund should be created in budgets to be carried over from year to year.

UNCONTROLLED FORCES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: January 2022

As various climate change impacts (to the village) manifest themselves, village leaders should devise a process identifying actions to prevent or minimize adverse effects and exploit the positives.

The village must develop a holistic IT Plan that centers around a position responsible for operating, updating, and securing all the uses of IT by the village and for on-going training of village employees. The Plan needs to be updated periodically, as technology changes. (A secondary issue was discussed concerning the need for greater intergenerational connections. While a non-governmental issue, village organizations will have to segue from assumptions born in an analog/paper world to an electronic reality.)

BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF THE VILLAGE:

February 2022

The variety of architectural styles in the village create the image of the community and attracts people to visit, live in, and invest in the village. The village's significant green canopy should be protected. There needs to be an effort to inform property owners of valuable aspects of their properties and to present guidelines for them to follow. Esthetics are very important, and the village's historic appearance should be protected and, especially, through enforcement of existing codes. While there is a need for restrictive laws to protect properties and investments downtown and in the historic district, regulations should not be so restrictive as to discourage people wanting to move to or invest in the village to enhance its image.

The current village code seems not to conform with the realities of a village that has grown over generations. The code should be broad and general and not too restrictive and designed to keep character and charm of properties

HOUSING:

March 2022

Serious enforcement of realistic codes is necessary to preserve the character of this village, which contains people of a wide socio-economic range, and to improve residents' quality of life. The expansion of uses in residential areas by allowing, in appropriate neighborhoods, home businesses, work from home opportunities, accessory residential structures, accessory apartments, Airbnb rentals, etc. will make housing more affordable for homeowners, provide lower income housing for young people, seniors, and those of modest means.

To prevent this flexibility from being exploited by residents, absentee landlords, and large corporate entities, state and (to be devised) local property maintenance codes must be proactively enforced. To be successful in a village, enforcement should begin with incentives and rapid response to small infractions like trash-strewn lawns, un-shoveled sidewalks and excessive noise, involving the homeowner, landlord, and/or tenant.

UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE:

April 2022

Village information technology needs to be more sophisticated to facilitate accessible, easy-to-find information, and trusted communication between residents and government (in both directions), and delivery of services. It should be used as a tool to keep track of infrastructure, how it is utilized, and can be improved. Rapid technological change requires the village to have an operating IT plan that is updated periodically. Residents need high-speed access to the internet.

The overall management of infrastructure of the village, not just water and sewer, will benefit by expanding and formalizing the ad hoc DPW capital plan, and updating it and resetting priorities periodically. Design requirements for buildings should prepare property owners for the shift in state and federal government energy policies, by encouraging green practices and promote mindfulness of restrictions in village infrastructure to minimize future tax burdens. Until those latter requirements are in place, potential weaknesses should be addressed on an interim basis.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT: **May 2023**

After addressing immediate concerns of sanitary crossovers and failing catch basins, a full-system audit of the storm sewer system is to be done, followed by a capital plan to support the measures identified in the audit. As time, money, and talent permit, modern evaporation, storage, and absorption techniques can be constructed, given limitations of soil types in the village.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS: **June 2022**

A village position can be created to focus on public affairs and communicate with residents as well as businesses. The ideal would be an apolitical person who understands the ins and outs of the village and is not only able to help people navigate policies but advocate for changes when needed.

Ballston Spa is centrally located within the region's economic activity. Saratoga County is prosperous and growing. Ballston Spa distinguishes itself as a residential oasis in which people can still afford to buy a home and residents value the village, the school, and the community. The region's population has moved up the Northway from Albany to the point where Exit 12 is an acceptable drive to and from the Albany area. These factors support our downtown and determine demand for housing. The continued economic health of the village requires we build on these strengths.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS: **July 2022**

Collaboration, not just between government and organizations but among organizations, is important to foster communication among residents and supporters of the village and improve village amenities and delivery of services. Whether accomplished through a paid liaison or otherwise, a robust, inter-related network of non-profits is essential to bring up-coming generations into leadership positions in the

government and community. As the volunteer base increases, so will the known talent pool for governmental positions, allowing them to turn over regularly.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Social Considerations II
July 21, 2022**

Present in Person: Mathew Ercoline, Jared Iacolucci, Karen Martell, and Jackie Pelliccia.

Present on Zoom: Carrie Chapman, John Cromie, John Hearn, Marilyn Stephenson, and Amy Fitzgerald

Excused: Scott Burlingame, Monique Cohen, Nafeesa Koslik, Peter Martin, Ellen Mottola, and Jon Taisey

Observers in Person: Liz Kormos and Bernadette
Observers on Zoom:

Meeting was called to order by Karen Martell at 7:07. Jackie Pelliccia moved that the minutes of the last meeting be approved as presented; Mat Ercoline seconded; passed. The meeting was turned over to Jared Iacolucci and Jackie Pelliccia to continue the discussion. During a review of the prior meeting's subjects, Jared noted a significant fact is the large number of residents over 50 and the ramifications of an aging demographic. That fact leads to the question of how to incorporate younger residents into the fabric of the village, to have them included on boards and committees, so they will be in a position to take over the reins from those who are aging out.

Limits on the number of positions a person could serve in and creating an environment where one-term service is expected coupled with advertising of open positions would go a long way to opening up village service. Voter lists can be used to identify recipients of advertising of open positions. A well devised system will create a population more aware of village operations and knowledgeable future leaders.

A Zoom option for meetings is very important to attract a broader number of people. Our own meetings have shown it to be a viable function that helps parents with young families to be involved.

Another subject from last meeting was the benefit of all the greenery throughout the village and how the trees and shrubs make the village pleasant place to walk. Jared reported on a

recent meeting of Malta Avenue School administrators, neighbors, and village officials at which safe sidewalks were discussed. A common refrain was the need for painted crosswalks and signage. Speed bumps and dips to slow traffic were also discussed. Past experience has indicated not only lack of enforcement but also lack of understanding by enforcers.

A question was raised if committee/board seats are open and the village needs to fill them? The two attending trustees indicated current committee and board seats are filled but there will be ad hoc committees needed in granting processes when the village receives grants. A second question asked if positions are currently filled by a who-knows-who process or if there is a system in place to generally solicit residents. In response, it appears there is no system, positions may be posted on a Facebook page, but people are often selected through personal associations.

It was noted there appears again to be a communication issue. If there is insufficient publicity then people do not hear of a chance to participate, and valuable participation of newer or younger residents will not happen.

In response, it requires extra work to solicit participants, and it is natural human action that appointments are filled by who knows who, not just in Ballston Spa, but everywhere. The Master Plan Committee was originally named that way. There being no system to fall back on, the two open seats of the Historic District Commission were filled that way. Also, there are relatively few seats on governmental boards and committees. Other committees of residents could be established, like a budget committee or ad hoc groups to sift through issues in major topics for Village Board decision making.

In a discussion regarding vacant buildings and enforcement of codes, it was noted that vacancy isn't a problem as much as the appearance of a property. It depends on who the village wishes to attract. Like 'success breeds success' if properties have unkept lawns, siding falling off buildings, derelict autos, people will be put off from investing in the village. Enforcement mechanisms are in place to discourage property neglect. There must be a willingness to use those mechanisms.

In some circumstances blight may result due to homeowners not having the wherewithal to maintain their properties. Fines become punitive and ineffective in those situations, which may be better addressed through partnerships with entities like Rebuilding Together. Our local organizations can bring

residents together to help the aged, the single parents balancing family and job, the economically stressed, and others who wish to maintain their property but cannot. Other communities have organized days when volunteer work parties took on such tasks. The village could do the same.

Barring a door-to-door survey, there is no accurate way of determining if blighted properties are due to out-of-town owners, homeowners facing challenges, or other causes. The results of any survey would become quickly dated. In most communities, property upkeep has little correlation to age group or any other demographic. Process will have to be addressed on a case-by-case basis through enforcement.

When considering parks at the last meeting, it was obvious the one park area that has remained undeveloped is Victory Circle. Its development will be a benefit to residents of the northern portion of the village. One Colonial Hills resident had suggested the circle include a playground and a dog park. Increased use of Victory Circle will probably necessitate sidewalks be planned to accommodate pedestrians from other parts of the surrounding community and Colonial Hills itself. Due to the speeds on Greenfield Avenue being in the 35 to 45 mph range, there is a much higher risk of fatalities than if speeds were topped at 30 mph.

The Eastern Avenue Recreation Field is another recreational resource of the village. It is owned by the school district, not the village, but is used by residents. It could be used to extend the Zim Smith Trail into the Village. However, the major focus is its need for sidewalks. The speed of autos along that section of Hyde Blvd. is of special concern. Signs with flashing lights can be erected to alert motorists to pedestrians, and they work.

The lack of stripped crosswalks, signage, recognition by law enforcement all affect the walkability and desirability of the village, impacting residents and visitors, alike.

A major concern is how to bring in the younger residents of the community not only into village government but also into social organizations and non-profits. If current community members are not willing to pick up the slack as the older generation pulls back, the future will be problematic. Perhaps government and non-profits should partner and yearly or semi-annually hold an event to showcase the opportunities to volunteer and take part in the non-profits and government.

Village volunteer groups have been seeking to increase membership, but traditional methods are failing. Perhaps use of the electronic media can be centralized and the position of business liaison discussed in an earlier meeting can be broadened to include interaction with the public. However, responsibility to grow a membership belongs with each organization and it is important to cue its leadership to methods of member solicitation and publicity. The Garden Club, through the leadership of a new member, was able to triple its membership.

To entice younger residents, membership efforts have to focus on where they are, such as school events, village celebrations and the like. An effort is beginning to do just that with the ice cream social and band concert, which will feature village non-profits. The Malta Ave. PTA's motto this year is to "Reconnect with Community." That group is uniquely able to develop community leadership.

The survey is out and for the first week there have been 135 responses. So far 200 survey forms have been printed and laminated posters with the QR code are ready to put in store windows. The village office and library have posters and forms. The survey will be mailed with water bills.

It was noted the County government is contemplating moving its operations to the former State Farm Insurance site at Exit 12. There is little the Comprehensive Plan Committee can do to address that specific potential loss to the village other than to provide guidance for future action that will make the village a more attractive place for investment and families.

Provision of up-to-date information technology infrastructure is a major need to attract families moving into the area due to expansion of the chip plants and other reasons. When people opt to move to the Capital Region and look over communities, whether its high-speed internet or charging stations, Ballston Spa should not be lacking.

As an example, the Town of Milton is planning on charging stations at the town hall, but Ballston Spa hasn't discussed with the town or applied for those grants to have charging stations in the downtown, which would encourage people to shop while their car is charging. Fiber optics are essential for people working from home. Marilyn offered to work on grants for these items.

Collaboration, not just between government and organizations but among organizations, is important to foster

communication among residents and supporters of the village and improve village amenities and delivery of services. Whether accomplished through a paid liaison or otherwise, a robust, inter-related network of non-profits is essential to bring up-coming generations into leadership positions in the government and community. As the volunteer base increases, so will the known talent pool for governmental positions, allowing them to turn over regularly.

The visioning workshop will be held for two hours, 7 to 9 on August 30 at the county special facilities building auditorium. It was decided Land Use will take two meetings, September 15 and October 6, and the last meeting to discuss how our proposals may fare in the real world will be October 20. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

John J. Cromie, Secretary

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Social Considerations I
July 7, 2022**

Present in Person: John Cromie, Mathew Ercoline, Jared Iacolucci, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, and Jackie Pelliccia, Steve Springer.

Present on Zoom: Bob Bush, Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Mathew Ercoline, John Hearn, Marilyn Stephenson, and Amy Fitzgerald

Excused: Scott Burlingame, Nafeesa Koslik, Peter Martin, and Jon Taisey

Observers in Person: Liz Kormos and Frank Rossi
Observers on Zoom: Anne M. and Jeff

Due to power problems with the computer, the meeting was delayed until 7:20, at which time it was called to order by Chair Karen Martel. Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Motion made by Ellen Mottola to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Jared Iacolucci; passed.

Karen introduced Jared and Jackie Pelliccia who will be leading the discussion on Social Considerations. The topics to be discussed are Demographics, Social Organizations, Culture and Education, Transportation and Parking, Parks and Public Spaces, and Coming Challenges.

There are slightly more than 2,300 households in the village of which a bit more than half are families. Children raise the average family size to 2.79 individuals as compared to 2.1 for all households, indicating village families are of a modest size. The existing conditions report shows 56.6% of the households are owner occupied and 36.6% are rented.

The largest household income level is \$100,000 - \$140,000 at 19%, but it is 3.1% smaller than the proportion in Saratoga County. About 1/3 of village households exist on \$50,000 or less, which exceeds the county percentage. 6.3% of the households make over \$200,000, which is 5.2% less than the county. The takeaway is that Ballston Spa, overall, is a middle-class community with a large lower income segment. It

also comes as no surprise that the village has very little racial diversity.

95% of the residents have a high school diploma or greater education, which exceeds the national average. However, only 35% of the residents have a graduate or professional degree, which is lower than the national average. In any case, the education level may be the reason why there is only a 2.2% unemployment rate. About 2/3 of the workers are classified as white collar; 14% blue collar, and 20% in unskilled service jobs. The median household income at \$71,000 is higher than in most communities. The village has twice the national rate of educators and librarians and three times the number of architects and engineers. The median age is 41 years, which is three years older than the national average. The village has fewer residents under 14 than the national average and more over 65 than the national average. It can be concluded the village has an aging population. Of those over 50, almost 60% own their homes and over half of the homeowners live in non-family housing, meaning these people, as age impinges live style, may not have family to assist them. Due to this dynamic, social organizations may have increased importance in the near future.

As the older population ages, younger residents will have to take over. About a third of the village is between 18 and 49. A positive technique to encourage the up-coming generation will be to have procedures in place that bring them into decision making. Many in this age group are busy with kids and jobs and have little time. But it is important that boards and committees make room for these people, perhaps through term limits.

Of the social organizations in the village, there are a couple that serve the lower income population, especially Life Works and Rebuilding together. Both have a county-wide scope, but are easily available to village residents. Veteran and community housing seeks housing for veterans. Job link helps people seeking employment.

While diversity is usually viewed in racial and ethnic terms, the village's diversity is economic and to a lesser degree relates to disabilities. However, Life Works does have programs for immigrants and migrant laborers.

Service groups like Rotary and its exchange program give the community opportunities it would not otherwise have. Rotary is currently exploring a partnership with its Interact to introduce students to community projects.

With its schools in or adjacent to the village, BSCD as well as the village library bring families from adjoining towns into the village, providing a major resource for downtown businesses and community organizations. It helps to have that large proportion of educators and librarians within the village population. The village benefits from its two museums which bring people into the village and promote the history of the area. The abundance of daycare possibilities provides an array of early childhood education which is important to young families, allows parents to be more productive, and attracts people to reside in the village. Attention to the arts, culture, and history is important to the quality of life in the village and is inculcated from one's early years by the school district.

The vast majority of village residents who travel to work drive their own autos. About 10% carpool and relatively small numbers walk, take taxis, or a bus. At the time of the report, 2019, around 4% worked from home. That pre-pandemic figure probably understates the number of people today working from home. Approximately 90 households do not own a car and depend on public transportation or family and friends. About 20% have one car, making it difficult to handle two work schedules. A large majority have two or more cars (77%). Given the people who do not have cars or those who don't have access because the one car is being used elsewhere, there is a good number of people who depend on the walkability of the village.

Rte. 50 carries about 15,000 cars a day and Rte. 67 handles about 8000 cars along West High Street. Greenfield Ave & West Streets, Rowland Street, Malta Ave., East High Street, Ballston Ave., and Fairground Ave, carry a significant number of cars. Traffic congestion on Rte. 50 is most likely related to the growth of Saratoga County in the last few years. The population increase is a momentum swing for the village, and the community should carefully consider how to engage that increase of population.

Much of the traffic comes from or goes to the Northway from the rapidly growing areas north and south of the village. Rte. 67 South and Northline Road are jammed at times. Milton Ave. is bumper to bumper certain times of day. Traffic congestion's silver lining is that it gives the community a sense of vitality and prosperity. It is preferred to the use of a by-pass, which has damaged other small downtowns.

Motorists are not just driving through the village. They are stopping and parking, making it difficult to find places to park near the popular areas. The Parking Advisory Committee found there isn't a lack of parking spots, but rather insufficient enforcement, people's expectation that they should not have to walk a block or two to their destination, the lack of signage and maps (including online maps), and a need for an overall parking plan. During off hours, the county lot is available, but it is not well posted. Not-for-profit lots could be made available when not normally used, in return for village snow clearing.

CDTA has two routes running through the village. One runs almost 20 hours a day from Schenectady to Wilton Mall, and the other is geared for commuters who work in Albany. Other nearby areas are not accessible to those who do not have car transportation. The commuter run provides one-car households with more options.

The January 2022 pedestrian and bicycle master plan and the Existing Conditions Report of 2021 find sidewalks generally exist in the village but could be in better condition and intersections could be made safer and easier to use. A priority has been established to address sidewalks needed along Malta Ave and to improve sidewalks leading to downtown. As properties are developed or re-developed, sidewalks made part of projects are able to be financed with little impact on the ultimate owner. The current reimbursement program is not working, and something further has to be inaugurated to promote repair and replacement of faulty sidewalks.

Street signage has gone missing over the years and is needed for people to navigate side streets. In the past emergency vehicles had been known to get lost. (Today, fire trucks and ambulances are tied into the county-wide emergency services mapping.) The village has identified 91 missing street signs and is enlisting the aid of the country to replace them.

Smaller parks and public spaces in the village are used more than the larger areas. Victory Circle has little of its potential realized. It could be a gathering/recreation space for the northern portion of the village. Kelly Park is underutilized. The Village Cemetery may not be village owned but is a huge space suitable for passive recreation like jogging and walking dogs. The Cemetery Association wants it used in that manner.

Trees are noted by the US forestry service to increase residential values, make downtowns inviting causing shoppers to spend more, and, if strategically placed, can improve heating and cooling costs. It was noted a conflict exists along Milton Ave between mature trees and sidewalk heaves. Based on the effects of tree removal and replacement by the Lincoln Block, it seems mature trees are more valuable than the sidewalk. The sidewalk should be lifted, and tree roots trimmed every 15 years or so.

There are some serious future challenges to the social fabric of the village. The increase of automation will replace a lot of human labor, greatly affecting 15% to 25% of our workforce. The international move away from fossil fuels to electrification will create major challenges for our older buildings that are not well fitted for energy delivered through electricity. Climate change will cause people to return to the northeast due to extreme weather conditions, rising sea levels elsewhere, economic viability of intensive agriculture, and other changing conditions. Increasing population pressure due to the development of the electronics industry and the generally favorable living conditions in the Capital Region is a force that could damage the village if not recognized and taken on as a challenge.

The best way for the village to prepare to meet future challenges, whatever they may be, is by encouraging residents to become involved in social organizations that will help the community meet the challenges and for decision making in the village to become more inclusive, constantly bringing new members onto boards and committees.

Because of the increasing number of electric cars, the village can make itself more inviting by providing charging stations. The state is funding their erection and they create a cash flow. There are monetary techniques to encourage turnover at the stations.

Challenges of retrofitting housing stock to meet future requirements for energy efficiency as electricity replaces fossil fuels will be formidable. Because such conversions will be expensive, but result in higher resale values, it will be more likely homeowners rather than landlords will take on that challenge. Encouraging home ownership in the village should result in sooner and more successful retrofitting.

National trends are going in the other direction. Large corporations are buying up tracts of housing to rent them out.

New York's 2019 landlord tenant law favors corporate landlords because the required complicated processes and inability to spread the risk of non-paying tenants are pushing the small locally based landlords out of the business.

Major rental projects have been built in the last few years within a few miles of the village, providing a contrast to village life. The village must use whatever means it can to differentiate itself, provide a positive environment for home ownership, and discourage single family homes as multiple or short-term rentals. Local laws exist that require landlords to provide tenants the right of first refusal if the property is to be sold.

Jackie and Jared's presentation ended with the following questions to be discussed at the next meeting.

1. How do we keep diversity in the face of rising housing values and cost of living?
2. As the population ages, how can we assure a good quality of living?
3. How can the village encourage more participation from young adults?
4. How do we support social organizations?
5. What role does the village play in addressing coming challenges posed by technological and demographic changes?
6. How can we best improve transportation in the village?
7. How can we preserve and enhance the parks and public spaces in the village?

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Amy had sent out a draft of the survey to gauge opinions of residents and visitors concerning the topics we have been discussing. It is needed to be finalized before the concert at Iron Spring Park next week. It was decided committee members access the survey on Google Drive, make edits, and send suggestions for changes to Mat Ercoline by Monday night. He will collate the modifications and edit the survey accordingly, creating the final product on Tuesday. Behan will have the survey available through a QR code and print for the concert on

Thursday, July 14. It was suggested we should not depend solely on the concerts for distribution. There should be plenty of copies to be passed around and placed in businesses, library, senior housing, and other locations people go. Behan will make available paper copies for those who do not use electronic media, and electronic versions on the village Facebook page, website and distribution of QR codes for others.

Members volunteered to distribute the surveys at the various concerts.

A concern was expressed that in the minutes of the last meeting, it was noted no one in the village was responsible for press releases announcing the hiring of the consultant and the operations of the committee, it seemed the scope of work by the consultant was not being followed. The consultant is hired to be responsible for public outreach.

The Mayor noted that outreach was on the consultant's invoices and that he was worried that the consultant's product so far does not seem to match its requests to be paid 25% of the contract amount. He is setting up a meeting with the consultant and Karen. Issues like the one just raised should be part of that discussion. The consultant was asked months ago to pull the information and ideas of the committee together, which Amy may be working on. Also, the consultant was to report to the board no later than July, and that has not happened yet. We are in a critical period if we are to be engaging the public in a visioning session in September.

A concern was expressed that the Thursday before the Labor Day weekend is not a good day to expect residents to turn out to take part in a two-hour visioning session. It was suggested that another day be selected. Other dates in September would be equally bad because the community would be getting into its school routine.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:51.

John J. Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Economic Considerations II
June 23, 2022**

Present in Person: Monique Cohen, John Cromie, Karen Martell,
Mathew Ercoline, Ellen Mottola, and Jackie Pelliccia
Present on Zoom: Bob Bush, Carrie Chapman, Jared Iacolucci,
Marilyn Stephenson, and Amy Fitzgerald
Excused: Nafeesa Koslik, Scott Burlingame and Peter Martin
Observers in Person: Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez
Observers on Zoom: Liz Kormos and Anne M.

Meeting was opened by Chair Karen Martell at 7:06. Minutes of the June 2 meeting were reviewed. Marilyn moved they be approved as presented; Ellen Mottola seconded. Passed.

Karen introduced Ellen and Monique Cohen, who continued last meeting's discussion by proceeding to the 2019 Economic Development Plan's fourth goal: "Foster supportive conditions and offer valuable resources to help small businesses and proprietors prosper and grow throughout the village."

Topics to explore are collaboration and communication within the business community, co-working spaces, home businesses, capitalizing on those who work from home, and short-term rentals.

A recent episode illustrated the need for collaboration and communication where businesses were unable to proceed with a plan because of a lack of clarity of rules for use of Wiswall Park. Businesses feel there is a lack of clarifying communication especially from the village. It occurs over signage, display of items on the sidewalk, and, until recently, outdoor dining among other issues. Policies of the village often lack specificity, and there is no established system of communication between the village and business owners. In addition to marketing the village, another BSBPA role is to help businesspeople understand governmental policies and how to navigate them, but the role is difficult because village policies are vague and do not cover many of the questions that come up. Also, for many of the business owners, primary contact with the village is regulatory in nature, when something is wrong. Very few village officials drop in to visit the owners.

An effort can be made to make policies more specific to provide greater guidance. BSBPA and the village could be proactive and develop policies that anticipate requests rather than treating each situation that comes along separately. In addition, a set process can be established to address questions unanswered by the written policies. Establishing policies without addressing real-life concerns can result in rigid, unworkable requirements. Because of the unlikelihood of being able to cover all the bases, rather than trying to do that through policy-making, procedures can be established to workout arrangements beneficial to the village and the business entity. Once similar situations continue to occur, then a policy covering those needs can be articulated.

There seems to be a lot of interest in co-working space. The idea is based on a belief that there is a demand from those working from home for business services unavailable in their homes and for meeting space. The availability of co-working space will encourage the development of more home offices in the village. An increase of home offices and businesses can impact parking and other neighborhood amenities. Village infrastructure must be able to support more businesses, especially a more powerful internet service than that provided by Spectrum, which has a lock on the village. It will be worthwhile to look for competition.

Short-term rentals are not necessarily neighborhood friendly, with people going in and out of a house, creating noise or disruption. They also may take away affordable housing in the village. They provide housing in the village for visitors which is preferable to the construction of a motel, which would likely result in tear downs. Short-term renters will be introduced to the village and may return to shop or live here. The village has no regulations governing short-term rentals and people take advantage of that. If special permits or licenses were issued, they could be taken back for bad behavior.

Ellen and Monique highlighted a statement from a business owner relating to that person's interaction with village government.

It sure would be nice if any village officer would stop in to learn about my business. (Other than one trustee) the only interaction with the village is to make sure I'm complying with zoning and fire ordinances- necessary and I have no issue with that. But it should not be my only interaction with the village in such a small village. It would be appropriate for our police force to reach out to businesses. We are their eyes and ears on

their streets. A few months ago, the liquor store was robbed, and I heard about it on Facebook. As a business two doors down, I would have loved if someone had made an effort to touch base with me. And obviously our motto, "Village of Friends," is not being embraced by our local government. I am not calling anyone out, but I will hold all of them to seek a spirit of collaboration and working to improve our village and not divide our village. I can't honestly feel the village really wants businesses to succeed. I feel they are more interested in policing us. If businesses feel the village doesn't want them to be successful, why would we stay here?

This perspective underscores the need for a liaison between village government and businesses. Someone is needed to work with and communicate with business owners and ensure their needs are addressed when it comes to interaction with the village. In addition, it would be very helpful to foster an awareness among village officials, staff, and volunteers of how important their actions are as representations of our village.

A determination at the last meeting was that the sphere of economic influence from which businesses draw is about a 30 or so mile radius around Ballston Spa. The economic health of village businesses is dependent on the overall economy of the greater capital region.

Two other factors that affect business is the school district with its 800 or so employees and the county offices. It was felt more had to be done to attract those people into the downtown. For some reason there seems to be a barrier between people working around the village and downtown businesses. The recent discussion in the county of moving its offices to the former State Farm offices at Exit 12 is a major threat to the village economy. More work is needed to market village businesses to those who may work three or four miles away from it.

Charts from last year's existing conditions report done for the steering committee indicate the largest employment group among village residents is the service industry (Education, Health, etc.). A bit less than half of the employed are scattered among other working groups. Many of those employed in education are probably working for the school district. But others in education can work for area colleges. Many of those in services and government can be working in Albany. It may be important to ask people how far they travel to their workplace. It may well be that a large number of residents travel 30 or 40 miles from Ballston Spa. It can probably be assumed people work along the Northway Corridor from Albany to Glens Falls, but, primarily to the south.

An interesting statistic from the Existing Conditions report is that the age group with the highest percentage in the labor force is those from 25 to 29. Age groups 20 to 24 and 31 to 34 follow right behind. This indicates a very active, young workforce in the village.

The information indicates Ballston Spa is not a company town and its families are supported mainly by health, education, and government. Those areas are generally stable employment sectors. With a wide range in other occupations, Ballston Spa is relatively protected from economic downturns.

Over a quarter of families make between \$100,000 and \$149,999, as do over a third of married-couple households. The educational level among working adults in Ballston Spa is not as high as among Saratoga County or state residents. Almost half of non-family households live on \$35,000 or less. This includes people living on social security, social services, and subsidized housing (Doubleday Woods). These statistics underscore the wide range of economic levels in the village.

It appears most employed residents of Ballston Spa travel within a 30 or so mile radius from the village. That is the same area from which downtown businesses draw their customers. It is fair to say that Ballston Spa's economic health is tied directly into that of the Capital Region. The model can be described by drawing concentric circles emanating from the village. But it doesn't mean closer circles are more important. For instance, Saratoga Springs and Clifton Park are probably more influential than the immediately surrounding towns.

However, due to social media, it is not uncommon for people to come into the village from the Boston area, Long Island, NYC, Washington D.C., or Mid-NYS. They may not be regular customers, but they show the reach the village has.

Facilities and techniques can be developed that will encourage visitors to stay a few days, including lodging, to more shops, to promoting unique characteristics of the community and surrounding area. Parking areas available for longer-term parking will be helpful.

The conversation reverted back to the topic of the need for a liaison between the village and downtown businesses. It was felt a position could be hired by the village to perform this function. Rather than marketing, the function should be focused on public affairs and communicate with residents as well as

businesses. The ideal would be an apolitical person who understands the ins and outs of the village and is not only able to help people navigate policies but advocate for changes when needed. [Secretary's note: this description resembles the manager form of local government]

The economic drivers that bring money to Ballston Spa are primarily in Saratoga Springs, Clifton Park, and Albany, but are really throughout the Capital Region.

The committee in its discussions over the months keeps coming to the same conclusion. We need to understand what makes us unique. Geographically, Ballston Spa is centrally located among the region's economic activity. Saratoga County is prosperous; it is one of the few counties in the state that is growing. Yet, Ballston Spa must distinguish itself. It is a residential oasis in which people can still afford to buy a home. The fact that our residents value the village, the school, the community is something that should get out and be promoted. In many ways, the Capital Region is defined by Northway Exits. The population has moved up the Northway from Albany to the point where Exit 12 is an acceptable drive to and from the Albany area. These factors support our downtown and determine demand for housing. The continued economic health of the village requires we build on these strengths.

It was noted the village webpage does not have an updated list of steering committee members. That should be corrected.

Jackie and Jered will lead next month's discussion on social considerations. Because concerts at which we wish to distribute surveys happen on Thursdays in August and the general difficulties of meeting in August, the visioning sessions will be merged into one on September 1 for two hours. Discussions of land use and restrictions of reality can be compressed in one meeting each in October.

Amy will develop surveys to be distributed at the concerts and filled in electronically. She will send drafts to committee members. The surveys will draw questions from each of the topics discussed over the months. In addition to the village website, Facebook and other social media, the survey can be handed out through the BSBPA table at the Farmer's Market.

Based on the need for more powerful internet service, the question was posed if there ought to be an effort to contact Green Light and find out what their criteria may be for extending its service to Ballston Spa as a competitor to

Spectrum. Members were asked to get the word out, even though the effort would not be part of the committee's work.

Amy has added information to the steering committee's webpage, but the site is restricted as to colors and techniques and cannot send a link to Behan's website for interactive questions. It was noted there has been no press release on the village's web site announcing that Behan has been hired or that a planning process has been going on. Producing informational releases for the village is no one's job. If they are to be done, they will have to be supplied by someone involved in the Master Plan process (over and above those done by Ellen announcing our meetings in the press).

There being nothing further, the meeting was adjourned 8:15.

John J. Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Economic Considerations I
June 2, 2022**

Present in Person: Scott Burlingame, Bob Bush, Monique Cohen, John Cromie, John Hearn, Jared Iacolucci, Karen Martell, Peter Martin, Mathew Ercoline Ellen Mottola, and Jackie Pelliccia
Present on Zoom: Carrie Chapman and Marilyn Stephenson
Excused: Nafeesa Koslik and Jon Taisey.
Observers in Person: Frank Rossi, Jr. and Liz Kormos
Observers on Zoom: Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez, Dave Womer, and "IPad"

Meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Martell at 7:05 PM. Minutes of the prior meeting had been reviewed; there were no corrections. John Hearn moved they be approved as presented; Peter Martin seconded; passed. It was asked if the Steering Committee will have access to the map, in digital form, which Blue and Ariane are developing. It is expected we will be receiving it when it is done.

This month the committee is looking at the local economy, led by Ellen Mottola and Monique Cohen. Ellen noted that the 2019 Economic Development Plan put together by the former Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership is a summary of a lot of data points relating to the downtown business district. It identified four goals: enhance the CBD, the quality of place, economic development and marketing, and small business environment.

The report includes a series of action items and assigns responsibility for each one. Committee members are encouraged to access the report and Action Plan Matrix on the Village's website. Topics mentioned in the study are similar to those reviewed over the months by this committee.

When people arrive downtown, there should be reasons for them to do more than one thing. If someone comes for a haircut, that person should be enticed to stick around and shop or do something else. For instance, parking time could be extended so people would not have to go to their cars as soon as they do now. It was suggested a major need is public bathrooms, so people do not have to load into their cars and go to McDonalds, Stewarts, or wherever, and leave town. Bathrooms could be made part of the Zim Smith Trail, if it came into town. In the

meantime, bathrooms in the library, Welcome Center (Bottle Museum), and police station could be opened to serve the public.

The plan also envisioned expanding the business district down Washington Street and west on Front Street to Iron Spring Park and Brookside. The portion of Washington Street that dead ends west of Bath Street also holds potential for commercial/retail development.

It was suggested that businesses could be enticed to locate in those areas through governmental financial benefits like tax breaks or other incentives like expedited site plan review. Village taxes and coffers may not be large enough to make a difference. If zoning allows single-family homes in the Bath Street; Court and Walnut Street areas to have home businesses with minor retail uses, they will act to draw people through the areas to be developed as CBD, increasing the likelihood commercial enterprises will open down Washington and Front Streets. Special events in Iron Spring Park will also familiarize potential customers with businesses along western Front Street.

A business Improvement district was suggested in the economic plan. It would form a taxing district, and the property owners would elect representatives to use the money to promote and improve the business area. Troy's is focused primarily on promotions. However, a development district can address hard infrastructure and beautification. Village merchants 30 years ago were willing to form an improvement district, but it was at a period when the legislature was moving from special legislation to general legislative authority, and the opportunity passed.

Saratoga Springs acts as an economic driver for Ballston Spa. People who visit Saratoga Springs often look at the village as another place to experience. They see it as a quaint, not self-conscious, pleasant place.

Clientele of village businesses regularly come from communities 25 or 35 miles away. Business owners have repeat customers from Lake George, Troy, Glens Falls, Schenectady, Niskayuna, etc. One business has customers come often from further down state. Many customers visit from Schenectady area because they want to experience the village. Some people say Ballston Spa is Burnt Hill's Saratoga Springs.

Although Malta tried to create a walking downtown, it is dependent on the automobile. Ballston Spa is the downtown experience for Malta residents.

People look at downtown as a source for goods, services, and entertainment. Having a movie theater would draw kids and families. Providing places for young kids to play and older kids to gather will add to the attraction of the community. Activities like the farmer's market draw people downtown. Wiswall Park is our village green and should be used for that purpose.

Downtown is the engine of our village. The greater the diversity of businesses and of people experiencing the village, the more its attractiveness increases, which in turn draws more people to Ballston Spa.

Responsibility for creating a diversity of businesses falls largely on Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association (BSBPA) and building owners. The government's fundamental role is to provide reliable infrastructure for businesses, ensuring their investments in the community, and secondarily to have an articulated promotional plan that describes its activities to support a positive image of the village. Because almost everything a village does is publicized, it creates an image. By not considering the effects of publicity, too often a negative image is produced unintentionally. Perhaps, if funding materializes, the village could have a designated person as a public information officer.

Much of Ballston Spa's marketing and promotions are carried out by BSBPA. Until the village's past financial crisis, it had contracted with BSBPA to market the village. SEDC has not picked up the promotion assistance that had been provided by Prosperity Partnership. Saratoga Chamber receives the County's tourism funds and the State's I Love NY money, but focuses its funds on Saratoga Springs. While BSBPA belongs to both Saratoga Chamber and the Greater Capital District Chamber and has good relations with them, their money has not been used to fund village promotions. Preliminary efforts by village trustees are being made to encourage the county to assist with promotion.

A necessary element in promotion and marketing is to articulate a simple message that encapsulates a desired image. An effort should be made to find an appropriate moniker for the village. Currently it uses two, "A Village of Friends" and "A Strolling Village." A group had been created to look at

branding or re-branding. But after its first meeting, COVID hit, and the momentum was lost.

Any brand should support the businesses and encourage new business owners. It should also convey the message that it is a great place to buy a home, raise your kids, and have a good life. While looking at rebranding, the current tag line, "Strolling Village" ought not be overlooked. It implies people are downtown window shopping as well as walking through safe neighborhoods. The effort to find a brand for the village should be re-started and focused on where the village should be going in the next fifteen years.

There are 4,100 students and over 800 staff at the schools. This large number of people (including parents) will add to the prosperity of downtown if they can be encouraged to shop and use services in the village. Whether it be through gift certificates or other come-ons, an effort should be focused on bringing those who spend a good part of their day in or near Ballston Spa to the downtown. More cooperative efforts with the school will help.

It is important to be aware of the major gateways to the village. They form a visitor's first impression. To efficiently manage the primary entrances, the village government should seek partnerships with surrounding towns, especially Milton and Ballston. Malta tends to do its own thing, but shares two important secondary entrances to the village.

The remaining goal from the 2019 economic development study, "enhance small business environment" will be discussed at the next meeting, June 23 [not June 16]. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

John Cromie, Secretary

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Stormwater Management II
May 19, 2022**

Present in Person: Scott Burlingame; John Cromie, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, and Steve Springer; From SCCCE: Blue Neils, and Ariane Tanski

Present on Zoom: Carrie Chapman; Monique Cohen, Mathew Ercoline, John Hearn, and Jared Iacolucci

Excused: Bob Bush, Nafeesa Koslik, Peter Martin, Jackie Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephenson.

Observer in Person: Adrian Guadarrama

Observer on Zoom: Liz Kormos

Meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Martell at 7:00 PM. Minutes of the prior meeting had been reviewed; there were no corrections. Scott Burlingame moved they be approved as presented; Ellen Motolla seconded; passed.

Karen turned over the meeting to Blue Neils, Saratoga County Cooperative Extension Associate Community Educator, Stormwater Management. Blue explained his group's maps of the inlets and outfalls for municipalities in the county and how they trace the flow downhill until it reaches an outlet at a stream or wetland or the lines of another municipality, like those in a state highway.

The DEC has published a draft of new standards for municipalities that operate under MS4 permits, like Ballston Spa. There are 6 categories MS4 communities must comply with. The third and sixth have the most on impact Ballston Spa. The third requires mapping from inflows to out flows. The sixth requires cleaning and maintaining the system. Blue introduced Ariane Tanski who works with him producing maps of stormwater systems.

Ariane presented a map with village catch basins, presumed flow, and outflow points. When one clicks on a catch basin, data describing it pops up as well as a photograph. Two common problems exist. First, because sumps below the discharge pipe are not regularly cleaned, when rainwater falls into the basin debris is churned up and flows to the next basin and eventually the outflow. Second, grout around outlets and basin walls has failed, water erodes the soils around discharge pipes and undermines streets and catch basins.

Catch basins at the DPW garage were shown. In one, debris fill the chamber halfway to the top of the discharge pipes, grouting is missing, and a petroleum sheen is on the water. In another, equally filled and with un-grouted connections, has rusty colored water, which indicates water used to clean rusty equipment goes into the storm system. That would be a major red flag when DEC does an audit under the MS4 permit.

Another phenomenon is that many of the pipes from catch basins do not seem to go anywhere. Pipes are directed to centers of streets rather to the Gordon Creek and create a concern they may dump into the sanitary system. Other catch basins seem to have no outflow. The mapping and inventorying is hindered by difficulty entering catch basins in Route 50 without holding up traffic or getting killed.

Because it was developed and modified over a couple of hundred years, the village's stormwater system reflects the inconsistencies caused by overlaying the perceptions of each generation that touched it. Unlike most municipalities, Ballston Spa is in serious need of an assessment of its system. There are at least three suspected sites suggesting sewage discharge into the stormwater system. If that is verified, it must be reported to DEC, and the village will have the expense of tracing to the cause and eliminating the cross-over. The village may be able to borrow cameras from larger municipalities to explore where pipes lead and points of intrusion.

In some portions of the village, it may be cheaper to abandon the system and build one to modern standards. The village may wish to extend the current studies of its water and sanitary sewer systems to include the stormwater system to meet its requirements under the MS4 permit and assess its functionable ability.

Blue and his staff have focused much of their time on larger municipalities that have staff and are more likely to attract the attention of DEC. Because of the master plan effort, they have given more attention to Ballston Spa.

As a MS4 community, the village in 2003 agreed to perform various actions relating to its stormwater system. That agreement is the legal nexus which allows DEC to require those acts be carried out. DEC will audit communities to ensure compliance. When it finds non-compliance, the DEC will issue a notice of apparent violation. DEC is interested in compliance, not punishment, and will work with a municipality. But if a

municipality drags its feet and blows off DEC, significant fines will be levied. Most communities in Saratoga County have been audited. Ballston Spa is on the short list of those who have not.

When a major problem, such as crossover of storm and sanitary systems is verified, the "clock starts ticking." At this time, that means the municipality has to actively identify, trace, and eliminate the problem. There is no set time frame but there is to be no delay. Proposed rule changes would require the source be identified in one day and eliminated in five days. Those deadlines may be eased in the final regulations, but stringent deadlines are anticipated.

Funds are available from the State Revolving Fund for sewer and potable water projects which are also interested in eliminating crossovers with stormwater systems in lower income communities, which Ballston Spa at this point still qualifies well. State stormwater funds may help pay for revamped or redesigned lines and include methods for water retention during downpours. Water Quality Improvement Projects Grants are available. The Environmental Facilities Corporation has an innovation program for storm water. It is a two-step program. If the village lands a grant for planning, it will be in line for funding construction.

Blue's staff can set the village up for its own audit by completing the reconnaissance it has begun as far as they can. Because the village will be able to show all its outfalls have been inspected, it will show compliance with that requirement of the MS4 Permit.

An observation from last meeting was, because certain soils in much of the village are not conducive to basements future, new building in those areas should not be permitted to have basements. Blue noted in much of the country, homes do not have basements. It a peculiarity of the Northeast that people think there should be basements. In flood plains a building's entry has to be 2 feet above the 100-year flood level. In most other countries it is the 500-year flood level. New housing in the Flats and Island may have to be built on piers.

Ballston Spa has weathered some very significant storms and has avoided serious flooding. It is fortunate because east of the village is a very large flood plain that prevents the Kayaderosseras from backing up. Much of the village's flooding is localized and a product of the drainage system. When more than 100-year storms have occurred, there may have been some

flooding at the confluence of the Gordon with the Kayaderosseras, but no significant damage. It was noted the area around the intersection of Mechanic and Ford Street is not in the flood plain and the rise to that area is almost imperceptible.

Multiple springs naturally emerge from hillsides and other places in Ballston Spa which can cause problems for property owners. It is probably best to catch the water and transfer it to the Kayaderosseras as quickly as possible. However, there may be too many springs making a program control all springs unaffordable. Those springs can have a detrimental affect by transporting pollutants from a site, such as Rickett's, onto "downstream" properties. Current testing is beginning to determine the extent of the plume.

It was observed by Amy Fitzgerald of Behan Associates that the discussion has laid out the attention the stormwater system needs and that the comprehensive plan should state goals and how they may be achieved. Particular attention can be given to capturing stormwater before it enters the system. Blue suggested immediate, short-term, and long-term goals: 1)bring the system up to "snuff" with repairs and maintenance; 2)have an assay done to eliminate cross connections, dead-ends, and eliminate what shouldn't be in the system, and 3)look for ways to reduce stormwater from entering the system, respectively, without throwing a million dollars at a ten-cent problem.

Goals may also relate to policies, like bagging leaves, which affects the cost of maintenance of stormwater systems. Changes begin by being able to convey the financial reasons to residents so they will understand, if not accept, policy changes. To be realistic, goals are to be tempered by the degree of infrastructure maintenance and financial support which can be expected of village government.

Blue and his staff will complete the survey of catch basins and out-falls and put together a succinct report of its findings and a list of top-line, red-flag items that need immediate attention.

A holistic goal:

After addressing immediate concerns, a full-system audit of the infrastructure is to be done, followed by a capital plan to support the measures identified in the audit. As time, money, and talent permit, evaporation, storage, and absorption techniques can be constructed.

The format for August meetings will be managed by Behan Associates and will be two visioning sessions with breakout groups including at least one committee member. Breakout groups can be set up through Cornell Zoom

Karen reminded all the second meeting in June will be on the third Thursday the 23rd, because of scheduling conflict for the room. Meeting was adjourned

John J. Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Stormwater Management I
May 5, 2022**

Present in Person: John Cromie, Mathew Ercoline; John Hearn, Karen Martell, Peter Martin, Ellen Mottola, Steven Springer, and Marilyn Stephenson

Present by Zoom: Scott Burlingame, Bob Bush, Jr., Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Josh Frederick, Jared Iaolucci, and Jackie Pelliccia.

Excused: Nafeesa Koslik

Observers in Person: Frank Rossi

Observers by Zoom: Paul Farnum, Gina Marozzi, Shawn _____

Meeting was opened by Chair Karen Martel at 7:00. Minutes of the prior meeting were reviewed. It was noted Marilyn Stephenson's name was incorrectly spelled. Otherwise, motion by Peter Martin to approve the minutes; seconded by Marilyn Stephenson; passed.

Blue Niels of Cooperative Extension who works as Storm Water Consultant for municipalities in Saratoga County was introduced by Karen.

Blue began with a quick history of the Clean Water Act from its genesis in Cleveland's Cuyahoga River fires and enactment in 1972. In 2003, smaller communities like Ballston Spa were brought under the Clean Water Act and required to have a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System or MS4. MS4 Communities are required to use public education, participation, and involvement; detect and illuminate illicit discharges, prevent construction site run-offs, and good housekeeping, in general.

Most construction sites in Ballston Spa will not be large enough (one acre or more) to come under federal and state regulations dealing with construction and follow up, the village has the option to apply the regulations to smaller sized parcels.

Impervious surfaces common in municipalities like Ballston Spa don't let water absorb into the ground. It is collected and sent to streams increasing flood potential. Municipal storm water discharge often carries with it organic pollutants, pathogens, nitrates, heavy metals, and sediment, adversely affecting water downstream. This problem is exacerbated by unprotected construction sites. When in a natural state, much of this storm water sent to streams would have recharged aquifers.

In an area of 75-100% impervious surfaces, runoff is increased 5.5 times and soil infiltration is decreased by 70% from the natural state. For areas of 35-50% impervious surfaces the figures are 3 times and 30%, respectively. Streams become moderately impacted when the percentage of impervious surface in the watershed reaches 15% and highly impacted at 30%. Until they reach the mobile home parks, the Kayaderosseras and Gordon flow through areas of low impact. Between there and the village there is a moderate amount of impervious surfaces. The village is the first major area of impervious surfaces that affect the Kayaderosseras. It isn't until Bog Meadow and Lake Lonely reach the Kayaderosseras that water running from that sub-watershed has a high percentage of impervious surfaces.

It is important to explain to the public and key players: 1) the impact of storm water discharge on waterbodies, 2) the pollutants of concern, and 3) steps to reduce pollutants and contributors of the pollutants. Areas to be reviewed are storm water systems, street and bridge maintenance, winter practices, municipal building & grounds maintenance, and solid waste management. The first flush of a storm washes off the majority of pollutants from impervious surfaces. Techniques exist to capture that water prior to it entering streams. Simple policy changes such as requiring bagging of leaves and lawn waste and having holding areas to dump snow can reduce pollutants in streams.

Municipalities are to have a transparent process through which the public is able to give input, which results in evaluation and responses. People should know who to contact with these concerns, and reports are available for review, usually on the web. The village's consulting engineer usually prepares annual reports. Cornell Cooperative Extension, through Blue's position, works with county and local planning staff to assist 16 municipalities (including Ballston Spa) with storm water management and reporting.

Points of storm water discharge are to be reviewed once every five years to identify illicit discharges but tracing the discharge to a source can be difficult and expensive. Enforcement is focused on having the problem fixed. Techniques such as porous parking surfaces and discharging water through a gutter system into green infrastructure are available to minimize runoff.

Interactive maps are available that show the location of the 100-year flood plain (areas where there is a 1% chance of flooding each year.) The maps are assumed to be accurate. Maps also show soil types, which can be accessed to show where basements will need sumps. (The presented map indicated most all the village's east side and Colonial Hills are difficult soils for basements.)

It helps to minimize flooding if the rate of runoff is slowed down by various methods. Small structures can be built in existing storm drainage lines to impound and slow down water. But it is difficult to do that if the village doesn't know where its lines go and what condition they are in.

Committee members had a lot of anecdotal evidence of failures of village storm water drainage. Chesterwood Court floods during storms and water rises from catch basins, county buildings have no storm water retainage causing water to rush into West High, pool in front of Christ Church, and wash down Low and Springs Streets. In the North and Center Street areas, storm water is not caught in basins and races in a torrent down the streets. In other places street are lower than the collection basin. Although pooling on streets may retain water. the water absorbs heat from the pavement, and when it does reach the streams it can warm water, harming trout.

Blue asked members to list locations where these events occur for his information and to look into the problems. A location and condition inventory of the village's storm water system is essential. Repair and upgrading will require allocation of money.

While the village can act within its boundaries, it is affected by municipal actions relating to upstream and downstream maintenance. For instance, anything that inhibits waterflow into the flood plain near the end of Northline Road may result in village flooding. It will be important for the village to be part of intermunicipal agreements. The critical area that causes flooding is the confluence of the Gordon and Kayaderosseras Creeks. There are a few things that can be done

to minimize water backup, but nothing corrective. Foot's Pond and the high banks of the Kayaderosseras may provide opportunities for retaining flood waters. Ownership issues would need addressing.

A system can be added to existing storm sewers that is essentially a box that catches pollutants in the first flush of rain and allows the water to evaporate or seep into the surrounding soil. The system is bypassed by large storms, but it can result in 0 discharge during minor storms. There is another system that creates a vortex to separate out organics and trash from the water. All of those systems need regular maintenance. Some soils are too wet to use them.

Mayor Rossi noted the village is working inter-municipally on water and sewer upgrades and was able to use the committee's work to help show the village's need for grants.

Although the interactive map shows catch basins and outlets, it lacks information on the condition of the basins or how they are connected to each other. When there is a questionable discharge found, the computer program will then be able to trace back the discharge to its source.

In areas of the village, storm sewers cannot work because of springs coming out of hill sides, shallow naturally impervious layers, and other reasons that are reflected in soil types. These conditions are relevant even in a mostly built out village because of redevelopment.

Except for a general county study, there is no readily available data on natural water sources that cause the village's "water abundance." On site observations, noting wet areas, listening for constantly running storm sewers, and studying soil maps can be done to begin developing a map.

Karen thanked Blue for his presentation and reminded everyone of the village tour next Tuesday at 3:30 beginning at Victory Circle. The second phase will be on the next Tuesday, May 17, at 3:30 beginning at the Village Cemetery near the columbarium. 3:30 was the latest Amy could do it and have it fit in her workday.

Ellen asked everyone to familiarize themselves with the Village of Ballston Spa Economic Development Plan prepared by Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership in 2020, as June's topic will be economic development.

Meeting ended at 8:40 pm.

John J. cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Utility Infrastructure II
April 21, 2022**

Present in Person: Bob Bush, Jr., John Cromie, Peter Martin, Jackie Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephen

Present by Zoom: Mat Ercoline, Amy Fitzgerald, and Jared Iacolucci.

Excused: Scott Burlingame, Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Nafeesa Koslik and Ellen Mottola,

Observers in Person: Donna Martin, Frank Rossi, Walter and Becky Smith, Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez

Observers by Zoom: Paul Farnum, Jeff Gawrys, and Liz Kormos

In the absence of Chair Karen Martell, the meeting was opened by John Cromie, who explained the short attendance is due to spring break. Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed; Marilyn Stephenson moved they be approved; Peter Martin seconded; passed.

Marilyn and Mat prepared a list of recommendations to begin the committee's discussion. Marilyn presented them. They included

A. Obtain grants to carry out recommendations of two studies of the water system, when they are completed, and reassess water loss.

B. Periodically update and carry out the DPW Capital Project plan.

C. Seek grants for remote-read meters.

D. Identify land uses harmful to ground water-fed water supply and restrict uses through zoning.

E. Require new construction design to follow certified energy efficiency standards.

- F. Coordinate sewer permit process with county.
- G. Expand underground electric lines and period lighting with LED throughout CBD.
- H. Seek funding for Level 3 EV charging stations.
- I. Create and periodically review IT capital plan.
- J. Regular system and security audits and training.
- K. Improve electronic communication with village residents concerning infrastructure concerns, accomplishments, payment of bills, and emergencies.
- L. Investigate feasibility of free Wi-Fi in CBD and eliminate cell dead zones.

An excused member offered the following thoughts, which inadvertently were not expressed during the meeting:

The Existing Conditions Report produced last year did not address utility infrastructure, but noted the village is mostly built out and population will not increase significantly.

If the village uses more than 30% of well capacity, now being used, through sales outside of village and the 26.1% loss is decreased, the return on investment (2M\$) for remote-read meters may make a switch feasible.

Water/sewer breaks and repairs are an opportunity to add to mapping.

If financially feasible, move electric utilities underground during street and sidewalk replacement.

The village's information technology design is twenty years behind current trends.

Because the two water studies have not been done, the committee does not have the knowledge to recommend their findings. It will be up to the village board to evaluate and implement.

Metering village properties will better illustrate the amount of water not being billed, whether through leakage or otherwise.

While there may be a grant to install charging stations, National Grid charges around \$275/ month. If that isn't paid by users, it may be too expensive for the village to maintain.

Electrical infrastructure may includes private wind turbines and solar panels. If used by residents, their impacts on neighbors pose their own zoning considerations.

Water/sewer billing for over-charged accounts should be more resident friendly.

The Village needs to create digital maps of its water and sewer infrastructure.

An energy audit of village properties and the overall community will create a base line for future decision making.

An information protection plan is an essential to handle threats and emergencies to online data.

Residents want to receive and pay their bills online, and the village web site's payment process is not user friendly.

The home page should have rolling snippets linking people to specific pages and information for new residents.

Email and Facebook is not messaging most choose. Text sign-up should be offered to be used exclusively for targeted alerts of DPW activity in a neighborhood and emergencies. If not overused the sign-up's existence will spread by word of mouth.

Remote-read water meters are worth while to make a concerted effort to obtain grant funding.

Whether water conservation devices are required by the state in commercial or residential buildings, the village code should reinforce the requirements and not depend on state regulations.

Renewable energy systems for commercial and residential buildings should be encouraged through incentives, some of which may be grant funded in the future.

The village's website should take cues from commercial sites and flash teasers to important information while residents are paying their bills.

The village's outside IT consultants are paid to provide guidance when asked, not deal with implementing procedures and operations.

Care should be taken to accommodate preferences rather than dictate electric uses for all construction.

Improvement to village's IT infrastructure is dependent on rapidly changing technology, making it impractical to suggest specific actions. Rather, village government should continuously evaluate the feasibility and priorities of adding IT services.

Not all the village is on the National Grid circuit that feeds Global Foundries. It would benefit the village's livability if the circuit was extended to include all the village.

Until there are accurate maps of water and sewer lines that show their capacities, developers of large projects should be required to prove to the planning board that existing systems will not be overburdened by the development.

Water source protection studies for village water would have to be done in cooperation with municipalities of Milton and Saratoga Springs as they draw water from the same area and have jurisdiction over the aquifer.

DPW's capital project plan, which identifies projects and sets priorities, should be formalized, adopted by the board, and reevaluated every couple of years

Ballston Spa should work with County Sewer to come up with a universal application for new connections and repairs, which will benefit other municipalities.

When planning consumer amenities, the village should avoid competing with businesses and support downtown. For instance, install slow EV charging stations geared to visitors coming to the village to shop or walk around.

General themes from discussions of the last two meetings:

Village information technology needs to be more sophisticated to facilitate accessible, easy-to-find information, and trusted communication between residents and government (in both directions), and delivery of services. It should be used as a tool to keep track of infrastructure, how it is utilized, and can be improved. Rapid technological change requires the village to have an operating IT plan that is updated periodically.

The overall management of infrastructure of the village, not just water and sewer, will benefit by expanding and formalizing the ad hoc DPW capital plan, and updating it and resetting priorities periodically.

Design requirements for buildings should prepare property owners for the shift in state and federal government energy policies, by encouraging green practices and promote mindfulness of restrictions in village infrastructure to minimize future tax burdens. Until those latter requirements are in place, potential weaknesses should be addressed on an interim basis.

The committee decided a tour around the village for members and representatives of Behan Associates will be valuable. It will last about two and a half hours, and for Behan, it will have to be during the business day. To permit more members to take part, it was decided to have it over two days, beginning at 3:30 pm. The first afternoon will be May 10 and we will meet at Victory Circle. The second day will be May 17.

Meeting adjourned.

John J. Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Utility Infrastructure I
April 7, 2022**

Present in Person: Scott Burlingame, Bob Bush, Jr. John Cromie, Mat Ercoline, Karen Martell, Peter Martin, Ellen Mottola, Jackie Pelliccia, Marilyn Stephenson, and Jon Taisey

Present by Zoom: Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Josh Frederick, John Hearn, and Jared Iacolucci

Excused: Nafeesa Koslik

Observers in Person: Frank Rossi, Jr.

Observers by Zoom: Paul Farnum, Amy Fitzgerald (Behan Assocs. for introduction only), Jeff Gawrys, Liz Kormos, Gina Marozzi, Bernadette VanDeinse-Perez

Meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Martell. Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Jackie Pelliccia moved to approve them as presented, Ellen Mottola seconded; passed.

Karen introduced Amy Fitzgerald, Senior Planner at Behan Assocs., who will be working with the steering committee. Amy noted she will be joining the committee during its second meetings, for six sessions. Her first task will be arranging for public input sessions, which she will present at the next meeting. It was requested that portion of the process be held off until the fall, after the scheduled meetings have been completed. Public outreach has been scheduled for the fall, not the summer. We will begin to discuss it in August. Karen thanked Amy for joining us and that we look forward to working with her at our next meeting. Amy indicated she will be reading our past minutes in preparation.

Karen turned the meeting over to Marilyn Stephenson and Mat Ercoline, who are handling this month's topic of Village utility infrastructure, specifically, water, sewer, electricity, electronic information systems, and how communications are carried out by the village.

Mat noted this session will be devoted to using a power point to lay out information of the subjects so the committee will have the information to discuss and come up with recommendations at the next meeting. [It will be useful for the power point to be read with these minutes.]

WATER

The village draws its water from five wells in the Town of Milton which reach down to a saturated layer in glacial till from the Pleistocene era. 2.57 million gallons are available to pump per day. The water goes to a pump station where it is treated with chlorine gas, fluoride and, a compound to get rid of iron. It is tested for levels of chlorine and fluoride and for e-coli. The village extracts 283 million gallons of water a year from the wells of which 26.1% is unbilled. Some of the unbilled water is due to hydrant flushing and municipal uses like the swimming pool. Some of it may result from inaccuracies in records. Some is from leakage in the system. There has been no comparison of this percentage with other municipalities. There have been no negative water quality or purity issues identified with our water supply.

A wellfield safe evaluation report and water system feasibility study are underway. They will estimate the amount of water which can be drawn from the wells and improvements which can increase the efficiency of the wells and pumping and storage system and position the village for future grants. The cost of such improvements will be more than the village can pay from water fees.

There are no digital maps of the water system. New meters, laterals, shut offs, and the like are maintained for each property on an index card system. DPW has a written plan for infrastructure improvements. It started out as a "wish list" but had been developed into a planning document for DPW. Emergency and contingency plans have not been formalized, although past practices have filled the gap. Several levels of sophistication in meters are in homes. About 18% of residents do not read their own meters, and DPW does not have the staff to read meters. It would cost about 2M\$ for the village to install meters that would not have to be read. Some commercial development may be harmful to the water system's ability to accommodate other development. Those uses may need to be identified and inhibited by the zoning law. Improving the efficiency of pumping facilities is an option.

SEWER

The sewer system in the village is composed primarily of clay tile lines, which can be invaded by tree roots. Past studies have indicated storm water infiltration was not great enough to need addressing under a county consent decree in 1996.

Beginning about 5-6 years ago the county and village have been coordinating their efforts. New hook ups and repairs go through village and county permit procedures, which can be confusing to property owners. A past effort to streamline the process faltered.

There is a plan being developed to replace or reline sewer pipes in the village which can be executed over a five-year period. Unless snakes can be run through clay lines, there is no way to trace above ground where non-metallic laterals run, which can be problematic for homeowners. Many needed sewer improvements are contained in DPW's Capital improvement list, which is available on the village web site. The list is a basis for serious decision making to gauge its completeness, establish priorities and timelines, and procure funding.

ELECTRIC GRID

Electric usage in New York is expected to decrease over the next ten years as usage becomes more efficient and population decreases. However, for the next thirty years after that, as electricity replaces fossil fuels, the demand is going to significantly increase. Because fossil fuels are now used for most heating systems, New York's peak electric usage will shift from summer to winter.

A positive effect of added electrical power having been fed to Global Foundries is that a major part of the village shares the same line, which duplicates an earlier line. As a result, when power goes out, it does so for milliseconds.

Streetlights in the village have been transferred to LED lights. The village owns eleven decorative streetlights on Front Street. As businesses expand down Washington Street and the CBD is expanded, a decision needs to be made if the decorative lights will be installed there also.

Power demands of car charging stations will require major upgrades of delivery systems. It may be important to identify locations for charging stations. At present, much of their installation will be paid for by National Grid. The village has to be in a position to obtain the augmented distribution system

to handle increased future demand. An option for a community to invest in producing its own power through solar exists; it hasn't proven to be cost effective yet. While there is an emergency plan for power loss within DPW, there appears to be no overall plan for the village.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

There seems to be nobody who has overall knowledge of the village's IT systems. People are assigned various tasks, and the village contracts with providers. Many village functions can be improved with available technology. In the short term, the village can position itself to take advantage of IT benefits. It will not take much for security to be upgraded to handle data losses or harmful intrusions. The village can copy business protocols to identify fishing and malware. Insurance companies that insure for loss through the internet have requirements the village must follow.

INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Currently the village uses the USPS for delivery of taxes and water bills and uses those opportunities to deliver information to citizens. Village meetings are public and have a wider viewership through Zoom. Legal notices are in the Gazette and sometimes on the website. Press releases are at the direction of the mayor and sent by the Village Clerk. No one is assigned to take photos when opportunities present themselves. Code violations and DPW notices are generally done through posting notices on individual properties. The village website has been redesigned. Keeping it current is a challenge. The mayor can send out email blasts. About 80-100 residents have signed up for them. Social media presence is somewhat hit or miss. Emergency communications from and into the village have not been developed to assure communications will go to where needed, short of plugging into the county's reverse 911.

At the end of the presentation Karen announced the Village Board appointed Bob Bush, Jr., Peter Martin, and Steve Springer as alternates to the Comp Plan Committee with the proviso that the Committee could accept them as full members. It was observed that the committee is a fact-finding body whose end product is to offer recommendations, and more ideas and perspectives which can be added to the mix the better. John Cromie moved, and Jon Taisey seconded that Bob Bush, Jr., Peter Martin, and Steve Springer be full members of the committee; passed. Meeting was adjourned.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Housing II
March 17, 2022**

Present in Person: Carrie Chapman, John Cromie, Josh Frederick, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, and Jackie Pelliccia.

Present by Zoom: Monique Cohen and Jared Iacolucci

Excused: Mat Ercoline, Nafessa Koslik, and Marilyn Stephenson

Observers:

In Person: Adrian Guadarrama, Liz Kormos, and Bernadette VanDeinse

By Zoom: Christopher Bradley and Gina Marozzi

Meeting was opened by Chair Karen Martel at 7 PM. Minutes were reviewed and amended by adding Gabriel Larocque and Ben Baskin as observers appearing by Zoom. Motion to approve the minutes, as amended, by Ellen Mottola, seconded by Carrie Chapman; passed.

Karen noted this meeting is to come up with something from the observations of the last meeting we can suggest for the future. What items are the most important; what items should the focus be on?

A theme from last meeting was the concern over properties that were not kept up and who would buy them. Is the poorly maintained property more likely to be rented out and not owner occupied? Are there things which can be done to encourage owner occupancy. Should the village determine a balance between non-owner-occupied housing and owner occupied?

Because our housing stock is 100 years old or older, many of the smaller houses are affordable. This housing may be exactly what will attract Millennials to buy and live in the village.

Discussion last meeting dealt with increasing enforcement of the codes through increasing hours and staff.

Accessory structures, which are not allowed in current zoning can provide affordable places for young people starting out or for retirees.

Property maintenance may be incentivized and made a subject of zoning enforcement.

The 20% increase in housing prices in the last year is game-changing and will make it harder for young people to enter the village's housing market. Allowing more two-family homes will make it more affordable for young families to own a home and favor multigenerational residences, if they are owner-occupied.

Perhaps home ownership can be incentivized through rehabilitation grants, which allow the homeowner to do some of the work.

It may be worthwhile for the building-zoning department to provide a quality of housing report on a quarterly or semiannual basis.

Higher village house prices benefit current homeowners because they now have extra equity to improve their homes, pay college costs, or invest.

Last meeting's discussion can be capsulized by two issues, housing affordability and code enforcement. To make homes of increasing value affordable additional uses need to be allowed in the zoning law such as home-based businesses and accessory residences, including new structures like mini houses. The allowance of these multiple uses can lead to exploitation, which can devalue neighborhoods. To prevent that from happening, the codes must be enforced proactively and the zoning law has to be realistic, which the current zoning law is not.

Because what people needed to do to their properties to afford upkeep has not been allowed not allowed, enforcement looked the other way. This has created a large number of "illegal" properties which cannot be "grandfathered" because the non-conforming use can't be traced back to the beginning of zoning or 1949. A solution is for the village to pick a number of years, 20, 10, whatever and deem any non-conforming use to have been in existence that long as "grandfathered."

There can be a mix of incentives and penalties. require the landlord to look after the properties and ensure tenants comply with things like noise ordinances. Use periodic inspection of rental units to ensure apartments are safe and the property isn't over-occupied. Incentives, for example, could be centered around beautification projects and recognition.

Tenants should be held responsible for their conduct. Landlords should be made responsible as well so they will be forced

to pay attention to their property. If landlords are fined for little things like not keeping up the yard or not shoveling sidewalks, they will pay attention to their property and help prevent major neglect.

There has to be a way to prevent an owner of a house with half its wall missing from not being subject to enforcement, (which currently exists in the village). Houses should not be allowed to be overcrowded like a 1,200 sq. ft. house divided into three apartments.

Some municipalities have given tenants a right of first refusal when the landlord is selling. This provides opportunity for village residents to remain living in Ballston Spa and may provide an alternative to speculative investment, as the region grows as a center for high-tech.

We should expect and plan for speculative investment by large firms in our housing. It is happening in metropolitan areas and will spread to this area in time, as the Capital District grows its high-tech industry base.

Airbnb rentals in the village can be abused. If a house is taken for that use, a family is denied homeownership and the village is denied the benefit of that family. Also, guests can abuse the situation by disrupting a neighborhood. Otherwise, allowing Airbnbs guard against a firm deciding to knock down buildings to build a motel in the village. A vibrant downtown needs places for people to stay overnight. Airbnb guests will patronize restaurants and stores. While the business provides incentive for guests and hosts to behave, local regulations may be necessary.

When considering short-term rentals, there has to be care that spillover does not impact track rentals. Those rentals bring people to the village to shop and eat and are depended on by families.

Some areas of the village can have relatively intensive home-business uses such as surrounding the CBD like Bath, Ford, Walnut, and Court Streets and the lower part of Ballston Ave. Other neighborhoods can have home offices where there is little traffic, signage, etc. Areas in between can have moderate-use home businesses. It would be up to the code to draw lines and determine which areas need special permits. This subject will be explored further when the committee discusses village businesses.

A landlord contact list will also help keep landlords responsible because neighbors will know how to contact them. Having a contact's email and phone number will supplement what can be obtained on the County Real Property Tax Service's website.

A positive, informal aspect of a home business is neighbors often receive the benefit of the business' services.

A discussion of parameters for which home business uses may require a special permit will be saved for when the committee reviews economic issues. Quality of life questions will be taken up at that time also.

Because Ballston Spa is the County Seat, many people who do not have dependable transportation are here to obtain services the county provides. They provide an important part of what Ballston Spa is, and we don't want to lose those people. It is important to provide affordable housing in face of rising property values.

Christopher Bradley mentioned he is listening in for "Clean the Air" a non-profit with state money that tries to minimize cigarette smoking. His group can provide landlords with "Smoke Free" signs for their apartments. His group may also be able to help with beautification grants that are connected to discouraging smoking.

Karen reported the contract with Behan Associates has been received and is being review by the village's attorneys.

Summary:

Serious enforcement of realistic codes is necessary to preserve the character of this village, which contains people of a wide socio-economic range, and to improve residents' quality of life. The expansion of uses in residential areas by allowing, in appropriate neighborhoods, home businesses, work from home opportunities, accessory residential structures, accessory apartments, Airbnb rentals, etc. will make housing more affordable for homeowners, provide lower income housing for young people, seniors, and those of modest means. To prevent this flexibility from being exploited by residents, absentee landlords, and large corporate entities, state and (to be devised) local property maintenance codes must be proactively enforced. To be successful in a village, enforcement should begin with incentives and rapid response to small infractions like trash-strewn lawns, un-shoveled sidewalks and excessive noise, involving the homeowner, landlord, and/or tenant.

Meeting adjourned, 8:00

Respectfully Submitted, John Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Housing I
March 3, 2022**

Present in Person: John Cromie, Josh Frederick, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Jackie Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephenson.

Present by Zoom: Scott Burlingame, Carrie Chapman; Monique Cohen, Jared Iacolucci, and Jon Taisey

Excused: Mat Ercoline and Nafessa Koslik

Observers by Zoom: Gabrial Larocque and Ben Baskin

Meeting was opened by Chair Karen Martel at 7:05 PM. Minutes of the meeting of February 17 were reviewed. Ellen Mottola moved they be approved as presented; Jackie Pelliccia seconded; passed.

Karen introduced Liz Kormos, who, with Karen, had prepared a handout for the committee describing village housing and demographics. The handout had been sent to committee members for this meeting's discussion. Liz presented a power point of the handout. Observations during and after the presentation were as follows:

1. The median house value was between two peaks in the bar chart, indicating housing in the village clustered around modest, affordable housing and larger more expensive homes. Few homes exceeded \$750,000.

2. A huge proportion of village home are pre-WWII, with very little building activity in the last 20 years.

3. 16% of the parcels in R-1 are other than single family. All other zones have a greater rate of non-conforming uses: Commercial, 32.4%; Manufacturing, 28.6%; and Central Business District, 18.2%.

4. An income survey found 51% of the village population is classified as low to moderate income, which opens up granting opportunities.

5. Multigenerational homes may become more common due to the costs of childcare.

6. There is visual evidence (on Bath Street) of out-of-state families coming into Ballston Spa. That neighborhood has more children than it has had in 40 years.

7. Other than realtors' experiences, there is no data on the demand for housing in Ballston Spa. At this point, there are so few homes on the market, it is difficult to measure demand. In the past, there have been a lot of families moving to different home within the village. Currently, it is difficult for renters to buy in the village due to the short supply of homes on the market.

8. The Existing Conditions Report concluded village home prices in the \$200,000 range make village housing affordable.

9. Predictions are large investors will be owning a larger share of the national housing stock. The village should temper that trend, encouraging local investment and discouraging large entities to prevent manipulation of rental rates.

10. The social-economic diversity of the village is an important quality, and it should be a goal to keep rents affordable to maintain our community's identity.

11. Accessory units in larger homes can be a source for moderate priced rentals. It would have to be determined what percentage of living area can be set off into one or more units in a residence. Something would have to be done to make those residences unattractive to non-resident owners. A technique might be for the government to make the resident of the larger unit responsible with the owner for maintenance and the like of the property. Most tenants would not want that responsibility.

12. A payment in lieu of taxes for resident-owners to fix up two family homes could be explored. Perhaps a "Homestead Act" giving an incentive to people to buy distressed housing with rental potential. However, a break in village taxes isn't as rewarding as a break in school taxes, which, given realities, is not very likely.

13. It would be beneficial if neighbors know or have a way of becoming acquainted with non-residential landlords. Especially when tenants may be misbehaving. This may be accomplished if the village has a registry of landlords, which exists in some communities, primarily for emergency purposes.

14. Providing a strict building code that is enforced to ensure landlords maintain buildings will encourage investment,

much of which comes from out-of-town investors. Economic resources within the village were not large enough to rehabilitate what has been rejuvenated recently. It only happened because money from places like NYC or Connecticut were invested in Ballston Spa. Those investors want code enforcement to protect their investments.

15. Enforcement of minor maintenance code violations may seem insignificant, (shoveling sidewalks) but the cumulative effect of lack of enforcement allows owners to not be responsible and affects neighbors' property values.

16. Consistent enforcement requires maintenance codes be clear and unambiguous.

17. In the recent past it was relatively common for young families who rented or owned two-family homes to upgrade to single family housing in the village. That has virtually stopped because of increased competition in the housing market. These families must look outside the village and its immediate area.

18. The village has no condos, nor high-end apartments.

19. The downtown economic study identified a need for workplace housing where proprietors lived in the same buildings as their businesses.

20. There are varying degrees of home businesses that can be accommodated. There seems to be no need to regulate home offices that are used exclusively by the residents where there are no signs or employees. A service business in a home with one or two employees may need to be restricted to certain areas. Home retail establishments may be more restricted in location and operation.

21. When looking at accessory units, they may not be a part of the main structure on a lot. Should tiny houses or shipping container housing be allowed? Where does modular housing fit in, if at all.

22. The data prepared for this meeting underscores the decidedly middle-class nature of the village's population and the extent to which Ballston Spa is contrasted with Saratoga Springs.

23. Even though the Historic District overlay is not shown on the handout's zoning map, it is important.

24. Under the zoning law, for a non-conforming to be "grandfathered," in most cases, it has to be shown it existed

before 1949. With the new code, perhaps that can be changed to classify a "grandfathered" use to be one that has existed for 20 years, with the idea if nobody has complained in 20 years, it must be OK.

25. The 2019 landlord/tenant law was developed by people who understand downstate landlord-tenant dynamics, where most rental housing is owned by large companies. It has changed the time for a landlord to gain possession from about 30 days or so to four months or longer. People who have a few units cannot take that hit, and the law will force them to sell to large companies, who can use percentages to absorb those costs. That law will discourage rental ownership by village residents.

26. Because such a large portion of our homes were built before WWII, they require a greater amount of time and energy than newer structures and are not designed to modern standards. For this reason, they should be cut some slack when it comes to applying codes and regulations.

27. The 20% jump in last year's median housing price indicates a potential change in the village's population makeup. Unless something can counteract it, many families who have lived in the village for generations may no longer be able to continue as village residents.

28. Housing in the flats is impacted by being in the flood plain, which makes it doubly expensive for home buyers. Not only must they pay mortgage interest, but also flood insurance premiums. A critical review of flood plain mapping will be helpful. Modification of the creek channel is possible.

29. The Town of Ballston has created two levels of home businesses. One is by right and the other requires a special permit.

30. The rental market in the surrounding towns of Ballston and Malta has a very low vacancy rate, even though so many units have been built in recent years.

Karen announced Behan Associates will be hired as our consultants, and they will be drawing up a contract for the village attorneys to review. The contract will be divided into two budget years. It is hoped next month.

Marilyn reported on February 28 she updated the village board on our activities. They expressed thanks and appreciation for the committee's work

Meeting was closed at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted
John Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Built Environment of the Village
February 17, 2022**

Present in Person: John Cromie, Mathew Ercoline, Josh Frederick Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Jacqueline Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephenson

Present by Zoom: Scott Burlingame, Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, John Hearn, Jared Iacollucci, and Jon Taisey

Excused: Nafeesa Koslik

Others Present in person: Pamela Bortoletto, Liz Kormos, and Cecile Picard

Meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Martell at 7:00

Minutes of the February 3 meeting had been sent to members and posted on the committee's webpage. Marilyn Stevenson moved they be approved as presented, Mathew Ercoline seconded, passed.

Karen announced she would ask all members for their conclusions from last meeting's discussion. The following remarks were offered.

Esthetics are very important, and the village's historic appearance should be protected and especially through enforcement of existing codes. There are homes in disrepair, in need of upkeep, or with debris or items strewn about. There is need for language regarding esthetics of the village.

While there is a need for restrictive laws to protect properties and investments downtown and in the historic district, regulations should not be so restrictive as to discourage people wanting to move to or invest in the village.

The current village code seems not to conform with the realities of a village that has grown over generations. It needs to be updated to eliminate situations like a garage needing six variances before it can be built. The code should be broad and general and not too restrictive and designed to keep character and charm of properties

The variety of architectural styles in the village create the image of the community and attracts people to visit, live in, and invest in the village. There needs to be an effort to inform property owners of those valuable aspects of their properties and to present

guidelines for them to follow. Otherwise, well-meaning people may unknowingly destroy important aspects of their building, damaging the whole village.

The village's significant green canopy should be protected and added to. Ballston Spa is unlike other communities around it because of the amount of green, which pulls the different types and styles of buildings together. Green space and trees create a welcoming image for people driving into the village.

Many properties adjacent to downtown need incentives to enable owners to fix up their structures and improve the appearance of their area.

For visitors to go beyond usual shopping areas, there must be attractions developed to entice them and safe sidewalks to get there.

Small, individually owned business should be encouraged to open and large chains discouraged. It is the mix of small shops that draws people here and makes our village unique and interesting. Most other area communities depend on national chains, Ballston Spa should try not to be like other communities.

A major bottleneck for people investing in the village is a part-time building inspector with very limited hours. The building department is needed not only to issue permits and COs but to be knowledgeable enough to educate about the codes and understand the significance of working with historic architecture.

The building department and village historian should communicate and work together.

The tradition of looking away if something is done outside established framework should be recognized as damaging to village character because it often leads to destruction of elements of, if not total buildings.

Architectural diversity in the neighborhoods can make it confusing and hard to apply guidelines. It is better that they be confined to more sensitive areas such as downtown and the historic district. While people buying into the historic district should expect to adhere to guidelines, those in other neighborhoods can be encouraged but shouldn't be required to follow esthetic codes.

For residents and visitors to fully enjoy buildings and architecture, sidewalks must be walkable.

Buildings on Washington Street have become businesses and the rehabilitation of the "dress factory" will be a major addition to the street. The development of the bowling alley property will be important to draw people to the area of the tannery (Angelica) and Bath Street.

Downtown can be expanded in stages by creating loops for visitors to shop.

In the short term, enforce existing codes to address obvious deterioration and neglect.

Design guidelines be drawn which are broad and able to be adapted over varying contexts to assist building owners and they should be referenced in the village code.

A formal plan should be created to layout the processes to build growth within the existing business district and to expand the district.

One's impression of the village is reinforced by the conditions of buildings at entrances. When traveling into most, the impression is neutral if not positive. The Rickett's property and sparseness of trees and greenery adversely impact Doubleday. The lack of maintenance of the exterior of the village garage conveys the wrong message when entering through Charlton Street.

A policy is needed to define a line beyond which a building will not be allowed to deteriorate before code enforcement steps in.

New and modified principal structures should be required to conform in mass, height, and fenestration with nearby structures. Architectural styles should not be regulated so the village's variety will expand.

It was decided these minutes will be sent to Mat, who will organize the remarks and place them in a spreadsheet on Google Drive for committee members to add comments and evaluate by a date to be determined.

The subcommittee of Marilyn, Jared, and Monique reported they determined of the two proposals received, Behan's is favored because the group is local, assessable, and knowledgeable of the village. It may be a smaller firm, but it is joining with two others to form a team. It is offering to provide more value by creating a generic environmental impact statement that can be used by the village when describing the policy it is pursuing for specific actions that will need an EIS. The proposal from Bergmann

was more expensive and out of our price range. Behan's was much closer. Behan was willing to discuss paring down its proposal and its price.

Concerns about going over an agreed upon price should be countered by the contract specifying the number of hours or a specific job to be delivered for a certain price. The committee or village board should be keeping track of what is being billed and question if money is being spent too quickly.

Marilyn Stephenson moved that the Committee recommend to the Village Board that Behan Associates' proposal be favored, subject to final negotiations over fee amount. Seconded by Jacqueline Pelliccia; passed unanimously.

Karen asked if any members were willing join her to negotiate with Behan. Marilyn Stephenson, John Cromie, and Mat Ercoline volunteered.

Those listening to the meeting were asked for comments. Pam Bortoletto pointed to the housing development going into a forested portion of Rowland Street as something which will change the character of its surroundings and likened it to the relocation of the village DPW and how it will impact her home next door to it. She appreciates the DPW being next to her and would not wish it to leave.

A final quote of the evening was supplied by Marilyn, "It's not that we are afraid of progress. We want to make sure it is seamlessly integrated with the village, and it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb."

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05.

John J. Cromie
Secretary

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Built Environment of the Village
February 3, 2022**

Present in Person: John Cromie and Jackie Pelliccia

Present by Zoom: Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Mathew Ercoline, Josh Frederick, John Hearn, Jared Iacolucci, Ellen Mottola, Marilyn Stephenson

Excused: Scott Burlingame, Nafeesa Koslik, Karen Martel, Jon Taisey

Others Present by Zoom: Ben Baskin, Stephanie Duell, Liz Kormos, Kamran Parwana, Renee, Kim Slocum, Bernadette VanDenise

Meeting was opened by John Cromie at the request of Chair Karen Martell, who was ill. Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. John Hearn moved to approve the minutes, Mat Ercoline seconded; passed.

The items listed on the committee's monthly schedule for consideration during this month's study of the built environment were read.

John Hearn and John Cromie put together a discussion guide for tonight's meeting. Members were asked if additional subjects should be added to the guide. None were offered. The first section of the guide was read for non-members watching.

Buildings are the primary components of streetscapes. People make judgments based on what they see. What do people see when entering and going through/around Ballston Spa?

1. Almost no two buildings are similar to each other (except in the several developments). If they were once, they are not now, having been treated differently by a progression of owners.

2. Architecture from late 1700s to almost the present. The varied housing styles have grown into each other over time. Little in the village is jarringly different. There are significant exceptions.

3. Buildings are generally maintained, but not picture perfect.

4. Except for churches and factories, there are no tall buildings.

5. In the older sections of the village, streets have buildings with very different uses. Defies Euclidian Zoning. Reflects the way the village has evolved over time.

6. Store fronts in downtown are full, and there is activity in downtown.

It was noted no standards exist to ensure new buildings conform to the height and size of surrounding buildings, except in the historic district.

Because height can be relative there is a question as to how tall is tall. It was explained tall would be over three, certainly 5 to 6 stories.

A concern was expressed over visual inconsistencies between treatments of first floor facades and upper stories of commercial buildings. The committee should explore requiring architectural standards in areas other than the historic district.

The built environment must be considered with green space and trees and vegetation within it. Greenery is a positive attribute that makes the village inviting.

The second portion of the discussion guide was read:

Four streets serve as Ballston Spa's front yard to motorists as they drive through the village: West High Street, Church Ave., Milton Avenue, and Doubleday Ave. The buildings on these streets create the image of the village in the minds of non-residents.

The 2021 existing conditions report states there are 15,000 trips per day on Church Ave. and 8,000 trips per day on West High Street. It gives no figures for Milton or Doubleday Aves.

West High: Churches, government buildings, professional offices, and large to modest residences ranging in age from the 1812 John Taylor Home to 1960s ranches.

Church Street: The business strip in the Town of Ballston ends immediately at the village sign and turns into primarily single-family homes that also vary in age and size. At the intersection with Milton Ave. are commercial businesses and large houses converted to business uses.

Milton Ave.: A block of significant residential structures leads to late 19th and early 20th century business buildings. Stores below and residences on 2nd and 3rd floors. After it crosses the Gordon Creek the street becomes a mix of residential structures, churches, and businesses.

Doubleday Ave.: Sort of like a strip, but with substantial amounts of green space along the highway. What is built on the Rickett's lot will greatly affect the appearance of the northern entrance to the village.

A fifth very publicly oriented street is Front Street, which begins with mainly 19th century commercial buildings from the east end to its middle, encompassing Wiswall Park, followed

by early 19th century residences and commercial structures, terminating in the Iron Spring Park and Brookside. It is the most walkable of streets and perhaps with the most pedestrians.

What are the images created by the above streets that people driving through Ballston Spa will take away with them?

Front Street's draw for visitors needs to be extended beyond Bath Street. Retail businesses on Front beyond Bath work to bring the visitor to their doors. A greater draw is needed to entice visitors to walk to Iron Spring Park and Brookside.

One structure which is totally out of context in downtown is Cumberland Farms. It comes across as not belonging.

People driving through the village see storefronts along Milton Avenue which attract their interest, causing them to come back later and visit the store.

The committee should be considering how inviting Rte. 50 appears. The area on the "Flats" between the Elks and Prospect Street seems to have a good number of pedestrians and is welcoming. However, Front Street entices visitors to walk and it is difficult to have them stroll along Milton Ave.

There was a difference of opinion concerning congestion. On one hand traffic congestion frustrates people and can be a reason for them not viewing the village in a positive manner. Diagonal parking near the corner at Front and Milton worsens the situation when there is a lot of traffic. It is also difficult to find parking at certain times of the day. The opposing view is congestion is good because it creates activity, noise, liveliness, and the feeling that this is the place to be. It might be frustrating for the resident, but it is a positive for visitors. More people driving through Ballston Spa will require more obvious parking spaces, so they will stop and make a purchase.

Another image people will take away is that there are very few national or regional store in the village. Its business district is composed mainly of small proprietor-owned shops, which give the village its *je ne sais quoi*.

The next two items set for discussion:

How does the built environment affect decisions to invest in the village?

1. Discourages those who look at exterior details as added expense which provide no return and will rather invest in a vanilla box.

2. Attracts those who willing to bet that village properties will appreciate faster than other real estate investments and look for long-term profit.

How does the built environment affect decisions to visit and shop in the village?

1. Look at village as an interesting place to explore
2. Neighborhoods are generally inviting with interesting houses
3. Downtown looks like a cohesive comfortable space.

Ron Murphy of High Rock Development was asked why he decided to invest in the village. His response was read:

"What brought me to the village was the untapped potential. I saw a quaint little town close to Saratoga and the Northway that I felt it could go nowhere but up. The character of the old buildings and hometown feel intrigued me. What has kept me here over the years is the willingness of the village to work with me to get my projects done without a lot of politics. I tend to get very frustrated with the politics and red tape of development projects. That seems to be changing in the last couple of months, but we will see how it goes."

It was noted Ron's statement goes beyond the built environment but also into the community, which the built environment should encourage. Ballston Spa's neighborhoods have an attraction because of their environment, but also because of their approachable friendliness. While some people want to live in cities and around big buildings, Ballston Spa is for those who want to be around kids, schools, playgrounds, green spaces and downtown businesses. The appealing small-town feel is encapsulated in the view one has by the library, when driving into the village from the south.

The village has charm, even if more investment is needed in certain properties to realize the full potential of that charm or *je ne sais quoi*. It is a priority that all entrances of the village provide a welcoming sight. For example, the Ricketts property is apt to scare people away from living here or investing.

The village is fortunate due to its location in the Capital Region, with Rte. 50 running through it, and its proximity to Saratoga Springs. Saratoga has taken the course of erecting tall buildings and catering to chain stores. Some people like that, but it is sending others to Ballston Spa. Ballston Spa is what Saratoga was like 30 or 40 years ago, to Ballston Spa's benefit.

The village has attracted investors who take the older buildings, fix them up, and repurpose them like Ron Murphy, the Elliotts, and Spencer Tacy. (It was noted Spencer had read Ron's statement and agreed 100%.) The village is fortunate to attract people who become part of the fabric of the community.

Washington Street is developing into a retail street and can draw visitors to Bath Street where the bowling alley and Angelica Buildings sit empty. These two properties are opportunities to expand the business district.

Our built environment is supported by being an overflow for Saratoga Springs. People who are stymied by long wait times at Saratoga Restaurants are directed to Ballston Spa. Just as Saratoga Springs is looked on as a stopping off place for people traveling between NYC and Montreal, Ballston Spa can also.

At this point, there is no such thing as too much tourism for Ballston Spa. We are attempting to attract foot traffic. Should Ballston Spa be successful, then it can discuss the management of that foot traffic.

Village businesses may draw primarily from a 20-25 mile radius, but the specialty shops have to draw from at least a 90 mile radius. Ballston Spa fares well on social media and is known to draw people from Central New York, Washington D.C., and other distant locales.

The next question for the night was

How does the built environment affect decisions to buy or rent housing and live in the village?

1. Discourages those who look at residences as commodities with predicable values due to sales of similar houses in the neighborhood
2. Attracts those who want a unique home
3. Attracts those who wish to raise a family in a "small town" community

The village is configured in such a way as green spaces and downtown are in walking distance. In many other communities there isn't the range of places for coffee or a bite to eat. It is like having the conveniences of a small city and being able to walk to them without crowds, congestion (expect on 50), or fear. Our built environment allows this to happen and draws families to live here.

Ballston Spa is being successful and success breeds success. But the village could do better by encouraging property owners to keep up their properties better than they do. Property maintenance codes can be better enforced. Garbage does not have to be on front lawns. People may be able to work together to address long-term delayed maintenance.

Ballston Spa has a lot of homes over 100 years old and it takes a special type of person to take the structures on and special types of people to work on them. To be successful,

owners need to be given some slack. It shouldn't be so difficult to maintain these structures that the buildings will be looked at as hindrances to be torn down.

Property maintenance codes should be enforced. There is no reason for cars or debris on front lawns. It will be good if the village makes good on its threat to enforce that snow be shoveled from sidewalks.

The last question in the discussion guide dealt with threats:

Threats to the village's attractiveness

1. Too much success invites greed which cannot be well controlled.

2. Unfettered teardowns not constrained by site-plan oversight by planning board or protective regulation (e.g. limit residential rebuild to size of original structure.)

Solutions:

- a) Some sites can be improved by rebuilding
- b) Replacement buildings go through site plan review require replaced residence have same mass as original other buildings contribute to village image

Develop inventory of contributing structures

3. Large overpowering projects, where control of mass, scale & fenestration are not regulated and are four or more stores in CBD and three stories elsewhere.

4. Enforcement of a generalized (ham-handed) zoning code where provisions haven't been written to encourage "harmonious variety." Zoning should not discourage use of current architectural styles.

Item three was looked at the primary threat, especially coupled with possible destruction of green space, trees, buffers, and vegetation and development that conflicts with the historical character of the village.

This item was not fully discussed due to the time.

Proposals were received from Bergmann and Behan Planning and Design wishing to prepare the formal comprehensive plan. Monique, Marilyn, and Jared will study and review the proposals on Monday by Zoom and report back to the committee. As a review of a contract proposal discussions for negotiations will not be subject to open meeting requirements. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

John Cromie, Secretary

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Information Technology & Climate Change
January 20, 2022**

Present in Person: Scott Burlingame, Carrie Chapman, John Cromie, Buddy Glastetter, Jared Iacollucci, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Mathew Ercoline, Jackie Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephenson

By Zoom: Monique Cohen, John Hearn, Jon Taisey

Excused: Nafeesa Koslik

Observers: Bob Bush, Jr., Paul Farnum, Kris, and Liz Kormos by Zoom & a couple in person and unidentified.

Due to being unable to access the Cornell sign-in page, Zoom was not able to be established until approximately 7:20. Because Zoom was exited too soon after the meeting ended, the video was not saved for this meeting.

Minutes of the January 6 meeting were reviewed. It was noted the study on electrical demand did not indicate an increase in costs over the next ten to fifteen years. The state-wide study assumed the amount of out-migration of the state's population during that time period will reduce electrical demand at the same rate as demand of the remaining population will increase. After the ten-year period the state's electrical grid will be upgraded to meet future demands. The study was not broken down by regions of the state. With that caveat, the minutes were approved.

Karen asked members to volunteer to organize introductory information for each of the upcoming monthly topics to make future meetings more efficient.

Built Environment (Feb) John Cromie & John Hearn

Housing (Mar) Karen Martell & Liz Kormos

Utility Infrastructure (Apr) Marilyn Stephenson & Mathew Ercoline

Stormwater Management (May) Buddy Glastetter & Blue Niels

Economic Considerations (Jun) Monique Cohen & Ellen Mottola

Social Considerations (Jul) Jared Iacollucci & Jackie Pelliccia

Articulating a vision (Aug) Jon Taisey

Zoning (Sep) Scott Burlingame.

The following is a synthesis of committee discussion rather than actual minutes.

The primary points concerning Climate Change from the last meeting were reviewed and analyzed.

Presuming the Capital Region will not suffer as adverse effects of climate change as the rest of the country, demographic changes will result in a significant population increase. While much of Ballston Spa appears to be built out, a greater demand will force an increase in housing prices. As a result, use changes may be demanded to accommodate more people, such as, A) Desire to build up and B) Added "mother-in-law" apartments.

Because the village includes a valley with two streams, increasingly severe storms may cause flooding issues.

If communities around the village grow, so will the size of the school district and demand for services, increasing costs for village residents. The growth will provide a larger customer base for shops and businesses within the village.

CONCLUSION

As various climate change impacts (to the village) manifest themselves, village leaders should devise a process identifying actions to prevent or minimize adverse effects and exploit the positives.

The committee reviewed the primary Information Technology concerns identified at the last meeting.

Information technology provides more and better targeted communication, customer service, and efficiency, which is and will be demanded by those making the village their home. It also carries dangers of hacking, ransomware, and the like, which requires a workforce trained in its proper use. As a mandatory component in village operations, its operational costs are not only balanced by the benefits received by its residents, but also by potential extra costs the village may face if its operations are not properly handled.

CONCLUSION

The village must develop a holistic IT Plan that centers around a position responsible for operating, updating, and securing all the uses of IT by the village and for on-going training of village employees. The Plan needs to be updated periodically, as technology changes.

(A secondary issue was discussed concerning the need for greater intergenerational connections. While a non-governmental issue, village

organizations will have to segue from assumptions born in an analog/paper world to an electronic reality.)

A discussion ensued concerning the minimal number of residents who have taken part in committee meetings and how meetings can be better publicized. It was decided reports should be presented at each board meeting. The time to be on the agenda for the next meeting has passed. It will also help once we get the kinks out of the process of saving to the committee's webpage on the village site. Ellen continues to send out press releases. A major splash can be sent out when a consultant is selected.

John J. Cromie, Secretary

Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Information Technology & Climate Change
January 6, 2022

Present in Person: John Cromie, Buddy Glastetter, John Hearn, Jared Iacollucci, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Jackie Pelliccia, Marilyn Stephenson, and Jon Taisey

By Zoom: Scott Burlingame; Carrie Chapman and Monique Cohen

Excused: Mathew Ercoline and Nafeesa Koslik

Meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Martel at 7:05.

Minutes of December 16 were reviewed and Marilyn Stephenson offered two corrections, In item 3 the noun "plan" should be modified by the phrase, "of operations and maintenance," and in item 9 it should say "Cannot make suggestions on buildings with incomplete information. . ." Motion by Jackie Pellicca to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Marilyn Stephenson; passed.

It was announced that Bruce Piasecki had come down with a sore throat and cannot attend tonight's meeting. It will be up to the committee to consider the effects of climate change and IT.

It was suggested that we discuss climate change effects first then IT. To begin the discussion the observation from last meeting was repeated that as more is to run on electricity, demand is expected to outstrip the capabilities of the grid in the next 10 to 15 years, and electricity will become very expensive. It may mean our lifestyles will be impacted, and we will have to adapt to live as the Europeans did in the 50s, 60s and 70s.

It became obvious voices were not being picked up by the computer, and those attending virtually cannot hear the discussion. By using a hand held microphone, the problem was resolved.

It was noted a recent TU article reported NYC will be requiring designs for all new buildings to use energy sources other than fossil fuel within the next few years. It is possible these building codes will spread to the rest of NYS and begin to apply to existing structures. The prohibition will extend to cooking. There will be no natural gas lines at all.

It is predicted our area will become wetter and hotter, which is being experienced presently. Wetter means the village's infrastructure may be severely challenged and residents will face flooding. Hotter weather may cause social changes.

There are DEC grants for localities to pay for smart technology to address environmental concerns such as water conservation issues, bioretention (stormwater), green infrastructure, etc. Grants will also pay for engineering to address climate change challenges.

Possibilities can be explored for the village to utilize alternative energy sources, whether by using the water that flows through the village, solar, or geothermal possibilities. The village could use its real estate to produce renewables, for instance- solar. But as demand for renewable energy increases the financial benefit for property owners should be recognized by the village and modify its regulations to encourage use of those energy sources, which may be sold back to the grid.

Other parts of the country will continue to have difficulty with climate change and we will start seeing people moving back to the Northeast. Maybe not in the next five years but in ten or fifteen. There is a movement of people from downstate, not just Boomers who sell high-priced homes and move here. As sea levels rise, there will be more people coming up from the coast. The economy is better here than in most parts of upstate. We are seeing companies coming to the area from the West Coast. The technology industry needs water, and we have plenty of water. We also have a workforce and customer base, but water is primary.

Kingston has already experienced a rebirth. When IBM left it became very depressed. In the last two years, perhaps due to COVID, the property values have gone through the roof. That growth will proceed up the Hudson Valley.

It should be recognized NY's tax structure is a major reason people are leaving the state and the economic effects of climate change may cause people to return to the Northeast, but NY's tax climate will discourage their return here. However, the relatively lower taxes of Saratoga County may attract more than its fair share of people returning to NY.

In a recent study, Towns of Halfmoon and Ballston were among the 10 town with the greatest population increase in the state. Commercial realtors are constantly fielding calls from downstate businesses that want to relocate up here.

Within climate change are opportunities and the village should position itself to take advantage of them. It has clean air, clean water, clean electricity- things young families want. The village should promote the protection of its natural resources and attract young families and business who look at those things priorities.

If the village wants to be a leader in showing alternatives to traditional infrastructure, in its next building project it should use smart technology. It has an opportunity to promote environmentally sound building practices in its brownfield areas.

Discussion of Information technology

The village needs to ensure broadband is available everywhere for people running businesses from home and for students. There are newer platforms being developed and the village should be on top of their development and distribution. It is essential fiber optics are brought to the village.

Unless one has access to the more expensive broadband subscriptions service will not be optimal. Larger companies in the area use a lot of the broadband, and it affects the normal consumer.

The contract the village has with an internet provider (Spectrum) is renewed each year. It may provide a way for the village to upgrade the quality of internet. Today, communication is everything.

The village should ensure it is using the best, latest technology to protect privacy, enhance village services from water usage to cleaning streets. It can help composting of leaves to be given back to residents as mulch. It can spot problems with water usage.

The village can better communicate with technology and save money. Paper billing is unnecessary. It is more convenient to have a portal through which bills can be paid online. Need to know information can be sent instantaneously to residents. Electronic payments are a must. It is possible to contract for these functions.

The village needs is a person in charge of its IT. The position would be responsible for maintain all the websites, training and security. Village staff using smart technology will need training to prevent phishing, scams, and other damaging

actions. Ransome activities are very expensive and disruptive, and the village has to protect itself.

Many of the village's social/service organizations are historically based on face-to-face interaction and their existence is threatened by not connecting with those who communicate through technology. Millennials and younger have an interest in participating, but are lacking an invite. In 2021, the PTA was able to triple its 2020 pandemic level of parents by pivoting to Zoom. Millennials are more comfortable with virtual meetings.

The lines feeding village homes with internet are very old and do not provide what people need and want. The village contract with Spectrum has to be reviewed to see if lines can be upgraded. For now the school has about 200 Wi-Fi hot spots for low income students. The village should insure all its residents have access to basic coverage through state programs.

Village government should set the tone for its residents by beginning to replace its patrol cars with electric vehicles, setting up a charging station, and replacing its streetlights with LED lamps.

The village is able to draw young people because it is cheaper to live in this area than major cities; it is clean, and there are things to do.

The village and our master plan have to be flexible to adapt to future technologies that can't be predicted.

Super energy-efficient housing exists in Ballston Spa that can produce more electricity in a year than is taken from the grid. The home was specially engineered.

Internet use comes with a downside requiring constant vigilance to minimize the taking of private information. For the village government, people have to be trained to recognize scams, ways viruses can be introduced, etc. It requires the village to be a topnotch employer, training office and on-site employees how to avoid the traps.

If the village hopes to attract world-class businesses, it must have a world-class IT professional on staff to protect their information and the information of all village residents. The cost will be worth it if ransomware attacks and hacking are prevented. The village should evaluate its current vulnerabilities, now, and not wait for future plans.

Generally, loss of personal privacy is a tradeoff for using the internet. How we use our phones and what is on our phones subjects us to others accessing this information. But certain information one should not put out there, like personal ID numbers and financial information.

Karen asked the committee to look at the comments from the last meeting. The next meeting will be to pick up where we left off, determine why various topics will be important for future decision makers and formulate suggestions to be included in the master plan. Meeting adjourned 8:10 PM. Next meeting January 20 at 7 PM.

John J. Cromie, Sec.

**Ballston Spa
Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee
Governmental Built Infrastructure
December 16, 2021**

Present in Person: Scott Burlingame, Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, John Cromie, Mathew Ercoline, Buddy Glastetter, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Jacqueline Pelliccia, and Marilyn Stephenson

By Zoom: Josh Frederick

Excused: John Hearn, Jared Iacolucci, Naffeesa Koslik, and Jon Tacy.

Chair Karen Martell called the meeting to order to order at 7:02 PM.

Minutes of the December 2 meeting were reviewed. Motion made by Buddy Glastetter to approve; seconded by Carrie Chapman; passed.

Karen welcomed new members of the committee, Carrie Chapman, Monique Cohen, Mathew Ercoline, Jackie Pellicca and Marilyn Stephenson. She noted the purpose of the meeting is to determine the reasons the condition of governmental buildings are as they are and come up with possible solutions and guidelines for the future. Members took turns to express their views:

1. It is basically a budget issue. If maintenance had been done it wouldn't have taken much money at one time. Now the village has to spend a lot of money.

2. have to first know where we are, what is needed. There should be strategic plan that is carried out over a 5, 10, to 15 year period.

3. There doesn't seem there ever was a plan of operations and maintenance or the village knew where it was.

4. How can the village ask for money if it doesn't what is to be done? How realistic is it to be proactive if there are no resources? A fund should be created in the budget to be carried over from year to year. For instance, if acquiring land to build a new DPW, how do we get from here to there without having the money?

5. When working on buildings, it may be more cost effective to have DPW do the work they are primarily responsible for and hire contractors do work they are trained in.

6. The problem may have begun with the village acquiring buildings as they became available without assessing costs of maintenance, unique repairs (old fabric not compatible with modern methods) and fitting village functions in spaces not designed for them. It may be better to bond construction of appropriate easily maintained space and sell existing structures to help pay for it. Is the cost of delayed maintenance about the same as the cost of bonding interest?

7. The deterioration of water system structures should be handled by water charge and those moneys and sewer fees should be segregated from other village finances. Recreate a separate water/sewer department from DPW would help in that.

8. Cannot make suggestions on buildings with incomplete information, and the committee does not have sufficient information. An assessment is necessary.

9. Retrofit existing buildings to meet village needs based on architectural studies and designs. Keep the historic buildings.

10. Responsibility for caring for the built assets should be assigned to specific person(s), who can develop a planned approach to maintenance and renovation. Hire the right people to do a correct job.

11. When department heads present their proposed budgets to the board is when the funding for maintenance and improvements would naturally come before the board. Without operational plans in place, maintenance items are passed over until they become crisis issues.

12. To move to proactive planning for maintenance requires is a major shift in the culture of the village. Departments have been operating as they are for a long time. It will require a sustained effort, not unlike turning a ship.

13. The option of using other facilities, such as the former Pressroom Building for Village Offices or Emergency Corp for the police station, should be looked at.

14. A yearly review of buildings should be done as a matter of course.

15. A person can be designated- perhaps building inspector- to be a go-to person on maintenance issues and to initiate action. Add to building inspector's job description and hours.

16. Being reactive rather than proactive and depending on DPW may have been the cause for leaves being picked up on December 15, which is unacceptable and places added strain on the storm water system.

17. A search of other NYS villages can be done to find villages that don't have the problem of delayed maintenance and deterioration and find out how they have managed their operations. It will save us from reinventing the wheel. Goshen is a possibility. The factor of relative wealth will have to be considered.

18. A position of village administrator would ensure someone is in charge to make sure the village is running, everyone is moving in the same direction, and operations are being carried out according to plans. At present the Mayor is the only person in a position to do this. Given the Mayor's salary, it is not fair to expect that to be part of the elected official's job.

19. Because it has a separate revenue stream, there should be a separate water and sewer department to be responsible for the maintenance of those properties.

It was noted the suggestions made tonight are very difficult to bring together for the committee to decide what to do. Flip charts would have helped. It was suggested to use Google Share.

The next two meetings will be devoted to how changes in climate and information technology will inform future decision making relating to topics to be discussed in succeeding meetings. A discussion ensued about whether or not IT and climate change will affect the 10-to-15-year period which is the committee's focus. The general feeling that it they are already affecting us. It was noted, if past performance means anything, this Master Plan may not be revised for 30 years. A study was noted that suggests electrical power will be very expensive in another ten years, which will affect how people live.

The Comprehensive Master Plan should work on two levels. One is to provide relatively short-term suggestions, but also to act a guide for planning boards and other decision makers well into the future.

Karen mentioned that three more people have expressed an interest in being on the committee. They live in the east-side neighborhood. She felt neighborhood representation is important. Several areas of the village are home to one member. The fairground area has no one. The east side would have 9 residents if the three came on board. The decision was to wait and see if any of the committee or others can find members from underrepresented areas.

Meeting adjourned, 8:09. Next meeting Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 7 PM: "Uncontrolled Forces" presenter, Bruce Piasecki.

John Cromie, Secretary

**Ballston Spa Comprehensive Master Plan
Steering Committee
Governmental Built Infrastructure
December 2, 2021**

Present: Scott Burlingame, John Cromie, Josh Fredericks, Buddy Glastetter, Karen Martell, Ellen Mottola, Jon Taisey

Perspective Members: Carrie Chapman (by Zoom), Monique Cohen, Mathew Ercolin (by Zoom), Jackie Pelliccia, Marilyn Stephenson

Liz Kormos

Unable to connect due to incorrect link or lost audio: John Hearn, Jared Iacolucci, and Spencer Tacy; Christine Fitzgerald.
Excused: Nafeesa Koslik

Karen called the meeting to order at 7:03. Minutes of the last meeting had been sent to members. After review Buddy Glastetter moved they be approved, Ellen Mottola seconded, passed.

Karen welcomed new members of the committee and introduced the attendees who have expressed an interest in joining the committee and are being recommended to the Board.

John Cromie was asked to explain the modifications made to the original RFP. He noted all references to rezoning the nursing home, tannery, and Rickett's had been deleted. The topics of committee meetings have been added or upgraded, replacing the language of the earlier version which was less descriptive. The bulk of the RFP prepared by Regional Planning remains.

Karen reported that she had contacted a local planner who was familiar with the earlier RFP and said the earlier version was confusing as to what a firm was to do. Asking for a plan while also asking to prepare special zoning legislation may have scared away a lot of bidders who weren't sure what the RFP might be asking them to do. Karen will pass this version to him to comment on.

Scott Burlingame noted the time between the release of the RFP and deadline for questions will be impacted by holiday activities. After discussion, it was agreed the dates should be pushed back a week after initial release has occurred. It was agreed by consensus to move the deadline for questions from January

3rd to the 10th, and all the subsequent deadlines. Otherwise, the RFP was given general approval.

The attention of the committee turned to the conditions of governmental buildings. Reports of Kate Garways (swimming pool) Andrea Simmons (Library), Spencer Tacy (DPW Garage, water towers, pump houses, monuments, and John Cromie (police station/court and Village Hall were reviewed. We were unsuccessful in contacting the fire departments, but it is felt the fire stations are among the best maintained buildings.

The police/court building was the former Eagle-Matt Lee firehouse built of brick by the railroad in the mid-1800s to ensure nearby fire fighting apparatus for its buildings. It had two bays, one is used by the court and the other is a garage for police which doubles as waiting and conference area for court. Wooden cornice has fallen to the street probably due to water infiltration and the bricks are deteriorating due to rising damp caused by the ground around the building being blacktopped. It is barely adequate for the police, and totally inadequate for the Court, which needs much more square footage.

The village office has good bones; the upper two floors are not able to be used due to no handicap access, bathrooms, and heat. The existing furnace is relatively new. the building needs painting to protect wood and metal members. There is a current engineering study that indicates it needs about \$250,000 in upgrades to bring it up to date. The building was and is laid out as a bank and forces village employees to try to make do. It was noted the 9-11 memorial inhibits building proper access to all the floors. It was felt the memorial can be moved.

There is some interest in moving village administration to the office building that used to house the Journal press on Bath Street opposite the back of Augies' Restaurant. A question was raised if the village could sell a building and lease it back.

The DPW garage is probably the village building in the worst condition. It is too small for village needs and too much equipment must be stored in the weather. The building has reached its point of obsolescence and cannot be saved. The village board explored moving the operations to the former village dump site, but regulations in the Town of Malta do not permit that use.

Buildings for various water pump stations are in functional condition. Walls of studs and insulation, deteriorated brickwork, and other delayed maintenance is apparent in all of those

buildings. There is concern about the standpipe's condition. The two fiberglass water towers are in good condition.

Monuments need minimal care and are in good condition. It was noted many of them have non-governmental groups looking after them.

The swimming pool needs to be resurfaced. Buildings need basic maintenance due to water damage and weathering. The mechanicals are old but functioning.

The library is in decent shape. The staff bathroom could have a renovation. There are landscaping needs.

About this time, it was discovered the Zoom audio was not on, and it was turned on so those attending by Zoom could be heard and they could hear those present.

The committee began to discuss reasons for the varying conditions of the buildings. Most apparent is the buildings receiving funding from outside the village (Firehouses and library) are in the best condition.

There is a natural hesitancy for the board to increase taxes resulting in the condition of those buildings dependent solely on tax money. There was a question about water system buildings being different because they are partially supported by outside water users. Some wondered if water/sewer money was being syphoned off for other governmental uses, especially as the DPW and water/sewer employees are the same.

It was noted the raising of water rates is viewed as similar to raising property taxes. It was suggested after assessing the needs, priorities and costs could be laid out to water users to build a general understanding that rates had to be increased to pay for those specific needs.

It became obvious the village has no maintenance plan but because of the fragile condition of its hard assets, it is forced to deal with one crisis after another rather than carry out scheduled maintenance. No one knew of a proactive schedule.

A question was raised if the village hired work to be done on its buildings or used DPW staff. It was determined that DPW staff has almost exclusively been used. There was a concern that the job of DPW staff was not to do building repair and remodeling and that such work took them away from services needed by people in the village. In the long run it may more cost effective to hire

outside work with specialized knowledge. It was noted the use of village employees for building upgrades is a red flag there is no planning for maintaining hard assets. Also, if these practices do not change, moving to new quarters will not solve the problem because those buildings will be neglected and fall into disrepair.

This conversation will be continued at the next meeting where the reasons why these conditions exist and what guidelines and suggestions will help the village address these problems in the future.

Karen reminded everyone to take the sexual harassment training before the end of the year. Meeting was ended at 8:10.

John J. Cromie, Sec.

Defining Village Neighborhoods

November 26, 2021

There were six responses to the request to define separate areas of the village and identify one or two needs for each area. Three, Buddy, Paul, and Peter submitted narrations without using a map. Paul's and Peter's was a joint effort. Dick, Ellen, and Scott delineated areas on the map and examined needs. I did the same.

The maps came from people who live in different areas of the village. Dick's home is in the older portion of the north end. Ellen hails from Kelly Square. Scott is among the larger homes of the south end. I live adjacent to the business district on the Flats.

While Dick, Scott, and I lumped Kelly Square with Colonial Hills, Ellen, who lives there, did not. Paul and Peter went further and combined those two areas with Forest Park. Dick and I emphasized recreational needs for the most northern sections of the village.

Sidewalks were a common theme. That fact points to a need for the committee to take a hard look at economics of sidewalks, priorities, and try to separate what is doable from what is wishful.

No one discussed storm sewers and water drainage specifically, although Dick's identified need of infrastructure repairs could include storm sewers and street drainage. Street pavement and lighting were mentioned for several areas. Buddy focused on curbing, which straddles storm water and pedestrian safety.

Rickets, Angelica, the former nursing home, and the "Beehive" [for those who are not familiar with the name, it is the burned-out apartment house on the corner of E. High and Eastern.] were identified as problems for their areas.

Ellen and Scott looked upon the older areas in what I call the "Flats" as the "gut" with inconsistent property maintenance and impacted by industrial uses, mixed with business and commercial uses, and likely not too desirable from a resident standpoint. Paul and Peter worry about CBD creeping into residential zones and interfering with a person going home to peace and quiet. I, living there, didn't see those concerns as problems, but sought more

street trees and flood plain review. (Actually, I enjoy the variety of commercial/ business, multifamily, single-family mix, for the added interest it gives the neighborhood.)

Being able to mitigate the disruptive affects of the fair on the people living on Fairground Hill and connecting events at the fairgrounds with the rest of the village were the primary concerns for that area.

The central business district drew a few specific comments: repairing sidewalks heaved by tree roots, encouraging new construction to be three stories, programs to help businesses, downtown improvement district, and public bathrooms. Zoning changes were mentioned by several, but without specificity.

Residential areas south and east of downtown were treated variously. Dick saw three distinct areas: east of Milton & south of E. High; South of E. High & east of Church, and south of W. High and west of Church. Scott and I lumped the two areas east of Milton and Church together. Ellen combined the two areas south of W&E High. However divided, life must be fine in these areas. Just about the only recognized need was improved sidewalks. Having been on the cemetery board, I noted it is an under-used passive recreation space, which could be better utilized for south-end residents.

John

Topics for discussion:

September 9, 2021

INFRASTRUCTURE

I Develop infrastructure plans for water, sewer, storm sewers, buildings, streets, parks, pool, well fields, water tower, DPW equipment.

I Infrastructure needs for electric cars & private/public cooperation

I Insure a more than adequate electronic infrastructure to provide residents and businesses the highest rates of coverage and data transfer possible.

I Water and sewer systems are vital concerns

I Effects of climate change on infrastructure.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT:

SW Setting up a storm water management program and position village to obtain federal infrastructure grants.

SW Storm water is a priority

SW Reevaluate flood plain and widening channel of Gordon Creek. How Foots Pond and Kelly Park can be used to minimize flooding.

SW Look into use of green roofs and rain gardens

SW Ability of soil types in village to drain water.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

BE Maintaining the historic character of the village

BE Parking (throughout the village)

BE Promoting the village's multi-century, built environment and preventing tear-downs as land becomes more valuable.

BE Zoning and other statutes should require cleaner energy facilities be designed into improvements.

BE Esthetics are important

BE Vacant buildings can be a blight. They also can benefit neighborhoods by decreasing density, if maintained.

BE If hotels are looking to locate in village, pressure to tear down and redevelop exists. Can be positive if buildings lost do not contribute to village character. New buildings need compatible mass and scale. Buildings that contribute to village character need protection.

BE Building heights in CBD need to be rethought.

BE Clean energy sources to be encouraged, but must not adversely impact neighbors.

BE Historic integrity of village must be maintained and promoted.

BE Design standards for new construction in downtown needed to ensure compatible fenestration and massing. Discussion needed on appearances.

HOUSING

H Accommodating home businesses at any location

H Effects of bringing clean energy sources into neighborhoods.

H Overview of housing in B Spa needs study. Encourage accessory apartments for owner occupied homes

H Should rental percentage of 48% be reduced? Encourage home ownership or do current housing preferences of younger people require more rentals?

H Condos are needed for Millennials, up-coming Zs, and Boomers.

H A wide variety of housing types and uses should be allowed.

H Neighborhoods should provide for different preferences of people e.g., quiet streetscape vs. busy & active neighborhood.

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Econ Should market forces alone evolve to accommodate new business endeavors or is there a governmental role- especially in being a coordinator?

Econ Address the constant need for the village to use the most current technological resources for promotion and communication.

Econ Role of surrounding communities to partner with Ballston Spa to provide more for visitors than what the village can do alone.

Econ Internet capacity has to be increased and updated regularly. What is role of village.

Econ Air B&Bs are becoming a popular business but can adversely impact a neighborhood. Should have some controls. Help in accommodating people who wish to stay in village where few commercial places to stay.

Econ Nothing wrong with home businesses, just need to protect neighborhoods.

Econ Are pot stores a concern for business district?

Econ Electric charging may change some ways of doing things, but commercial business will provide infrastructure.

Econ How best to benefit from the overflow effect from Saratoga Springs

Econ Keeping up to date with technological advances is essential.

Econ How will climate change affect business

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Soc Importance of village being perceived as welcoming and receptive to responsible development, new businesses, jobs, and tax base expansion.

Soc Plan should incorporate visions of village organizations, e.g. BSBPA, school, Brookside, BARC, churches, etc.

Soc Update organizational list from 1994 comp plan. PF

Soc Study how the village can maintain its population's economic diversity in the face of increasing land values.

Soc Utilization of public spaces for enjoyment, recreation, family purposes. Victory Circle is undeveloped @ underutilized.

Soc What changes will happen if hydrogen power becomes cheap enough to use?

Soc Have to better accommodate electric bikes and scooters. How are they handled in Europe?

Soc Village's walkability can be an asset bringing visitors for walks, exercise, dogs.

Soc Use of B Spa to be family friendly with resources, like playing fields, library, school, etc.

Soc Everything that is done should be to improve quality of life for residents.

Soc Effects of Climate Change on expectations.

ZONING

Z Address discrepancy between what is permitted by zoning and the uses that disregard it and adopt a more realistic approach to actual conditions that exist, resulting in develop of good planning and enforceable codes.

Z Study the implications and uses of overlay/opportunity zones, planned unit developments, and mixed use to transition into residential zones.

Z Zoning should allow administration to be proactive rather than reactive.

Z Look at how the village really appears and recommend changes to current zoning. PF

VISION STATEMENT FORULATION

BUDGETS & PRIORITIES (Where vision and reality clash)

The following is Karen Martell's review of how master plans are customarily organized: Most of the areas included and "Overview," "Challenges and Opportunities," and "Recommended Actions."

INTRODUCTION: Village Overview, Community Profile, Planning Process, Public Engagement, Plan Organization.

VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PLACEMAKING: Promotes a sense of comfort, Nurtures and defines sense of community, Promotes health by creating more pedestrian friendly spaces, creates improved accessibility, Builds and supports local economy, Fosters social interactions.

ECONOMIC GROWTH: Regional and local context, Expansion and new business location, Future needs and strategies.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY: Vehicular mobility, Public Transit, Bicycle and pedestrian mobility, (sidewalks and bike lanes), Multi-use trails.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING: Regional and generatio0nal trends.

HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND MUNCIPAL RESOURCES

RECREATION

NATIURAL RESOURCES, PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Topography, Geology, Soils, Water Resources, Groundwater, Floodplains and drainage, Wetlands, and Significant ecological features and habitats.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES: Stormwater, Wastewater Collection and treatment systems, Drinking water supply, Infrastructure considerations.

GOVERNANCE: Community Services and Local Government efficiency.

FUTURE LAND USE:

IMPLEMENTATION:

Village Board & Comp Plan Comm Meeting

July 13, 2021

Attending: Ben Baskin; John Cromie, Dick Duffy, Paul Farnan; Christine Fitzpatrick, Buddy Glastetter; Liz Kormos, Karen Martell, Peter Martin, Ellen Mottola; and Larry Woolbright

Absent: Ashley Christman; Nafeesa Koslik; Shawn Raymond; and Spencer Tacy

Also Attending: Rory O'Connor and Bob Cavanaugh

After several rounds of general discussions relating to expectations, methods, and roles of the committee and board and the process of working with consultants, members of the committee focused on how the committee will interface with the consultant.

Opinions about the committee's degree of involvement ranged from moderate but active participation to intensive involvement

The resulting consensus was that the committee should meet with the consultant once a month and between those meetings, it will meet without the consultant to finalize conclusions from the prior meeting, if need be, and to prepare for the topics of the next meeting with the consultant.

While it is recognized that the consultant will be offering subjects for discussion, the committee will also bring topics to the table. It was suggested that the committee may benefit from developing a wide range of study topics and then prioritize those which will become part of the comprehensive plan. Also it was noted the committee must be vigilant to prevent the use of boilerplate by consultants

It was agreed members of the public should have a major participatory role in meetings to compensate when various committee members cannot attend meetings. While the Village Board is the final decision maker, it was observed the committee will act in the role of overseer.

Meetings will be in evenings and a hybrid of in-person and Zoom to allow more public participation and out-of-town committee members to join in. Meetings should not last more than an hour. Minutes are to be taken.

It was decided that the two consultants selected by individual committee members, Planning 4 Places and M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying be invited to interview with the Board and Committee on July 29, from 6:30 to 8:30. Each group will have 10 minutes for a

presentation and 35 minutes will be set aside for Q&A. Committee members are to develop questions independently.

Meeting of Comp Plan Comm
June 3, 2021
Review of CDRPC Existing Conditions Draft Report

Executive Summary: OK

About Census Data: Hypothetical example of "margin of error" illustrates a range so wide as to cause data to be of questionable value.

About Esri Data: OK

Introduction- Comprehensive Plan Update Context: OK

Regional Overview: OK

Prior Planning Activities and Recommendations: OK

Population Change and Characteristics: OK

Population Change 1980-2018: OK

Village Comparison: OK; Surprised Stillwater has a higher Median Income than B. Spa.

Gender and Age: Either fix the Chart 3 relating to 80-84 men or remove it in its entirety. Data displays with such misinformation decreases credibility of report.

Age 50+ Profile: Focus on need to continue to attract younger families and singles to take the place of those aging. Members present (four well over 50) all noted a marked increase of children in their neighborhoods.

Ballston Spa Central School District Enrollment: While information in Chart 4 may reveal a general decline of school size, School census data for the same period will better display the same data for children who live in the village, which can be added to this information. The chart does inform about the clientele for youth programs offered in the village.

Ballston Spa Central School District Births: The estimates for 2019 and 2020 do not seem in line with 2018. The school census data for those years should be available to enable real figures to be used.

Race and Ethnicity: Chart 6 is not correct. Far more than 11 Black African Americans live in Ballston Spa. If this chart cannot be fixed, it should be removed. The paragraph, alone, suffices.

Educational Attainment: OK

Crime Summary: Either note why Chart 8 is skewed by showing the chance of being murdered in Ballston Spa is far greater than being a victim of any other crime or drop the chart completely.

Economic Characteristics: It should be explained what benefits are and are not included in determining a person's income. For instance, SNAP, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits are not, but SSI, Public Assistance, and SS are?

Labor Force Participation: OK

Industry Breakdown: Chart 10 is problematic. It is very unlikely only 42 people are employed in construction and 9 in information. It is unclear if the number of employed includes those who work from operations centered in the village but are not necessarily employed in the village or only those who work in the village. The number of 2,726 is contrary to the number of 4,806 of Chart 19. The two charts should be made to conform. There should be a modification noted in the text modifying the healthcare numbers due to the nursing home closure. If these changes cannot be made, it will be better to remove this information, as it cannot be relied on for decision making.

Income by Household Type: We do not believe anyone exists on less than \$10,000, which is below SSI levels. The figures for all categories below \$35,000 are unreal, especially the two categories that have no families included. We suggest the chart be modified lumping all earning less than \$35,000 in one category. The categories for \$35,000 and above appear valid.

Consumer Spending: We are not sure how to interpret Chart 12. Are consumers village residents or are they people who come to shop also included? Does the disparity between "total Spent" and "Spending potential Index" mean residents of the village are cheap? The explanation is not clear.

Housing Change and Characteristics: OK

Vacancy Rate: Chart 14 is not realistic or accurate and should be discarded if it cannot be fixed.

Housing: OK

Housing value: OK

Sales Single Family Home: OK It will be interesting if the first half of 2021 home sales can be included as an adjunct to this chart.

Residential Building Permit Issuance; OK

Inflow/Outflow: See comment in "Industry Breakdown." The figures don't seem realistic. If the figures cannot be confirmed by other studies, A general description of the relative proportion of workers who leave, stay, or enter the village for employment can be utilized.

The un-numbered chart between Charts 19 and 20, with the blue, areas is inaccurate, misleading and should be removed.

Means of Transportation to work & Vehicles Available: OK

Vehicle Available: OK (We wonder how this may change as people continue to work from home.)

Vehicle Movements: OK

Pavement Conditions: The CDTC's study sample [Map 20] is too small to be useful. It should be replaced by a map produced through anecdotal information from Village DPW.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations: References to Ballston Spa Trail and East High Street Trail are misplaced, as neither exists.

Crash Data Analysis: OK, but question the value of including crashes outside the village.

Maps 5 through 14: OK

Map 15 Median Household Income: This map should be deleted as being misleading and unhelpful. It will be valuable for the maps produced by our committee members that depict separate sections of the village be studied and consolidated into one map.

Map 16 Building Age: The age of older buildings is inaccurate because of the practice of assessors labeling old homes as 1900 or 1920 to indicate they have been retrofitted for modern

living. It will be helpful if buildings built before 1950 are all given the same color. Then divide the subsequent building ages to specific periods of village prosperity, that is 1950-1965, 1966-1985, 1986-2000 and 2001-2021.

Maps 17 & 18: OK

Map 19: Important Destinations: Fairgrounds (while not governmental, neither is the post office) and county buildings should be included.

Map 20 Existing Pavement Conditions: As stated earlier this map should be deleted or replaced with a pavement condition map based on Village DPW information.

Map 21 Traffic Volume: OK

Map 22 Existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure . . .: OK except nonexistence trails.

Map 23 Fatal & Injury Crashes 2016-2020: Drop "Fatal" as a description. The 2 fatal accidents can be added to the color-coded legend.

Conclusion: OK

Missing: Leaves out role of village and its retail sector as a destination for visitors. This is a marker for the community's continued health and sphere of influence.

There is nothing showing the condition of storm sewers, which are integral to transportation plans and business and quality of life issues. This is especially critical due to effects of climate change.

The 1994 Plan had a section on community organizations. There should be an evaluation of village organizations, size, meeting frequency (pre-COVID), purposes, etc. to show strength of citizen participation.