

**2015 Master Plan Committee Meeting  
MINUTES  
February 4, 2015**

The **Master Plan Committee** Meeting of the Town of Cortlandt was conducted on **February 4, 2015** in the Vincent F. Nyberg Meeting Room of the Cortlandt Town Hall located at 1 Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567 with the following committee members and appointed staff in attendance:

**In attendance**

Jim Creighton  
Michael Fleming  
Barbara Halecki  
Michael Huvane  
Theresa Knickerbocker

**Absent**

David Douglas  
Seth Freach, Town Councilman  
Dani Glaser  
Adrian Hunte  
Maria Slippen

**Staff Advisors**

Edward Vergano, P.E., DOTS Director  
Rosemary Boyle Lasher, Assistant to Director of DOTS Chris Kehoe, Deputy Director of Planning

**Also in Attendance: Consultants**

Anthony Russo, AKRF  
Michelle Robbins, AKRF  
Flaam Hardy, AKRF

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Michelle Robbins opened the meeting by giving an update on the survey. There are close to 700 residents who have completed the survey. Anthony Russo stated that everyone on the Committee should definitely take it. Cortlandt Boulevard is considered “downtown” by most of the residents responding. 20% of the population who have taken the survey use the train to go to work which is slightly more than the multi-modal data Anthony has. Anthony added that according to the latest census information, 82% of the people who journey to work from Cortlandt drive, 13% take the train and 1% take the bus. The survey showed that most residents get their information about the Town of Cortlandt by watching Channel 78, with the Town’s Website & Facebook close behind. There are also a lot of people who get their information through Linda's emails. Anthony reminded everyone that the survey closes on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mike Huvane asked if the Town would be putting in hydrant markers for snow to be attached to all the hydrants in Town for easier visibility. He was not sure if this committee would address this but since we are dealing with all this snow it is an issue. Rosemary Lasher stated that the Town has gotten a few calls recently about this subject as residents have been assisting with the digging out of hydrants. Rosemary offered to follow up with our Fire Inspector and Director of DES. Michelle suggested we add this concept to the infrastructure section. Theresa Knickerbocker mentioned that the Village of Buchanan used to have the high poles attached to their hydrants. The Fire Department liked them but there were many complaints. They were becoming brittle and would break off. Theresa suggested using poles made of fiberglass. Mike H. mentioned seeing ones that were made of rebar.

Mike H. had some ideas on the **Commercial Land-Use Policies** economic development. He thought some of the following responsibilities should be added: 1) Conduct and maintain an inventory of existing businesses and what their impact is on the local economy, 2) Conduct and maintain an inventory of available assets in the Town (buildings & open space that are available for public use, potential job creation and increasing the tax base). Mike H. believes that any Town that wants to do pro-active economic development has to know the inventory to be able to show the commercial real estate focus easily. 3) Develop a plan to meet with existing businesses in a meet and greet group mode or meet one-on-one. 4) Based on those meetings, develop retention plans to hold onto these existing businesses and help them to grow. 5) We should also envision collaboration with adjacent municipalities and the State. 6) Develop working relations with economic development professionals and capitalize on the existing regional council for the Mid-Hudson Valley region. 7) Develop a parking plan for the Town. 8) Develop a complete menu of available assistance/benefits to businesses that are already located in our area or are thinking of locating to Cortlandt.

Michelle brought up one of Ed's comments which was to change Economic Development Director to Committee. Rosemary believes that Ed's thoughts on this were to have an Economic Director possibly work with a Committee in the future. Michelle also brought up Dani's comment that suggested supporting programs for the businesses, i.e. develop Energy Star and LEED requirements. Chris stated that it is based on State code and Anthony wanted to know if the State was more stringent than the Town and Chris said they would have to ask Code

Chris mentioned that he has been inputting a lot of paper copies of the survey and that these paper copies are generally done by our senior citizens who have come into Town to pay their taxes. Chris believes the results are slightly skewed because almost all of them opposed 'residential above store fronts'. He stated that may not be true throughout the entire survey, but the last 10 or 15 he entered went particularly out of their way to check that off. Anthony asked if we remembered the consensus on this. Michelle stated that this has been an issue at other Towns she has worked at. Mike H. believes that in the more affluent areas, people are reluctant to accept residential above store fronts, but folks who want to invigorate their Towns & Villages are more willing to be open to it, believing it will bring their downtowns back to life. Theresa was wondering if having residential above store fronts was for a younger group of people. Rosemary added that we also want to provide for the single residents and those just starting a family. The committee in general supported the concept of residential above commercial.

Jim Creighton brought up the renaming of the Hudson Valley Hospital to NY Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital.

Anthony moved on to traffic. He gave some background on the development of the policies. He stated that many know that the traffic policies have been auto sensitive for years, so the policies we have here look to elevate pedestrian, mass transit and bicyclists with a higher level of attention than in the past. Anthony continued that the policies will also help satisfy the NYSERDA grant goals and help meet the metrics we have been talking about, especially walk-ability, multi-modal roads, sustainability and reduction in traffic.

Anthony mentioned he met with members of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) who submitted some comments and issues they thought should be brought to the attention of the Master Plan Committee. Some items they brought up were: 1) They want a Town speed bump or speed table requirement policy. Jim asked if they were recommending the use of speed humps, speed tables, speed bumps? Anthony answered where appropriate, yes, they want criteria established for what that is. 2) Another highlight they had was the need of the Town's DES reaction to continuous Town accidents to determine causes. It was noted that this is more the role of the Police. 3) They want the Town to be pro-active in terms of monitoring locations and hot spots in the Town in terms of safety issues and pro-actively take steps to implement improvement measures. Anthony mentioned to them that the Town is limited because some of these roads are State roads. The TSAC would like us to pressure the DOT to do something about it. 4) Another item they would like to see is a new curb cut policy for common curb cuts adjacent to existing curb cuts in Commercial Areas.

Mike H. asked if there was a standard for curb cuts especially those relating to ones for the handicapped because some are really dangerous. Rosemary said they should all be built to ADA standards. Anthony talked about the TSAC's feeling that these ADA standards are all good going forward but they want us to go back and retrofit some facilities that have outdated ADA facilities. Jim asked about curb cuts saying that what would be most helpful for Cortlandt would be the connection of adjoining properties to share an access, curb cut and a shared driveway along the backs of their properties to reduce the number of vehicles entering and exiting the main roads. Jim continued that he didn't know how much we could do with that. We can make recommendations, but he doesn't know how much we can do to force someone to create agreements with their neighbors.

The TSAC's comments and issues have been posted at the end of these minutes.

Anthony spoke about the **Transportation Policies:**

*Item #13 Parking Policies: Encourage use of parking lots cross-access easements and connections through development approval process to eliminate driveways and curb-cuts.*

Michelle stated that this also relates to shared parking. Anthony mentioned that Cortlandt has Routes 9, 9A, 202, 35 and 6, all major roadways, major land uses under DOT controls. There are limits on what the Town can do.

*Policy #79 Establish Transportation Systems Management (TSM) criteria to plan for maintaining and improving conditions in the Town.*

Anthony stated the one area that the Town has been pushing is the Traffic Management System by looking at innovative technology to implement. One of them is the adaptive, state of the art, traffic signals which can better optimize green time and improve operating conditions at an intersection. They are able to monitor traffic in all the lanes and at the control level, decide what is the best way to allocate green time to the different lanes. Anthony continued that we talked about implementing that along Rt 6 at Cortlandt Crossing and also installing pre-emptive devices which allows ambulances, fire trucks and police, as they approach an intersection, to turn it green by GPS satellite that tracks the vehicle as it approaches the intersection. It will turn the traffic light green so it clears out the cars, allowing the emergency vehicles to move more easily through the intersection. Anthony did meet with a fire chief who said it was one of the most dangerous situations emergency services have, coming to a crowded intersection with a long cue of cars. They have to swing out into opposing traffic where accidents can happen. This will be a way to alleviate that and a way to start building the system a little bit at a time in Cortlandt.

Jim asked if can we recommend that in those corridors, where it is possible for those technologies to be implemented, that it be paid for by developers. He added that they are obviously on our wish list and if a developer comes forward, we could check off that box. Mike H. believes we need a firmer statement on that. Jim stated that even if we don't have a developer with an active proposal in the Town, that we start allocating some resources a little at a time to handle some of those hot spots. Jim asked if the Town had access to the Accident Database system "ALIS" and how do we identify where the accidents are in Town. He wanted to know if it was through developer traffic studies or does the Town have access to its own data. Anthony stated that for the Town, we reach out to the New York State DOT and pull the accident data which, if we are working for a municipality, is free from the DOT. That information is available anytime you want from the DOT. You can get that information as a municipality and you can actively be monitoring hot spots and accidents. Chris asked if that was only for State corridors or was it for anywhere in Town. Anthony stated that it can be requested for anywhere. All the agencies report all over the place, not just State roads. Jim asked if that was the ALIS system because only a few stakeholders have direct access to that. Jim continued stating that we would have to request it from DOT and they would pull it. Anthony confirmed yes. Anthony stated that is what we do for all traffic impact studies. We are doing it at Hanover with the accident data and speeds. We are elevating safety as an issue. As part of that, we have recommended additional warning signage, increased enforcements, SMART trailers that flash your speed all in an effort to try to get motorist to slow down. It may not be as effective as you want it to be, but it is one of the tools in the tool box.

*Policy #84 Pursue opportunities to obtain funding and approval for major capital projects.*

Anthony pointed out for Policy #84, we want to provide a Lexington Avenue - Rt 6 bypass to alleviate congestion at the Rt 6 Lexington Avenue intersection. This has been a long standing problem and was something that was acknowledged in the Cortland Crossing traffic impact study. While mitigation and improvement measures are available along Rt 6, it is difficult to come up with anything a developer should be responsible for. This is really heavy lifting that should be done by the State at some point. Chris asked if it goes through what we call the Mendelowitz property at the top of Rt 6, there are steep slopes and wetlands and it is not really practical. But on the other hand, do you take it out because it is not practical or is it better to leave it in even though you acknowledge that it is probably not. Anthony pointed out there was a study the DOT did and they looked at a whole host of possible solutions, they even looked at a tunnel at one point. Chris stated he was not sure how many different alternates exist within the Town of Cortlandt. There are a lot of varieties of routes in Yorktown, but when you come into Cortlandt, you are limited.

*Policy #82 Assess operational classification of the busiest Town roads and seek transfer to the County or State DOT for roads clearly functioning as arterials.*

Rosemary isn't sure this is as realistic an anticipated goal as it may have been in 2004. Anthony stated that one of the reasons that it is difficult and may not be realistic is that most transportation agencies do not want to take on more miles of road. They are looking where they can to push things off onto others. Rosemary suggests this policy should either come out or be revised. Jim asked if there are any Town roads that are acting as County or State roads. Rosemary believes what they were thinking of in the past was Gallows Hill, one of our more difficult roads. It is a very challenging road and further down from the hill, where the curve is and where the water goes underneath; as you drive up that hill you can see that it is a very dangerous intersection. There is a steep slope and there are permits that we need to have done. According to our Engineers, in-house and beyond, it is going to be quite the undertaking and will require outside funding most likely from County and State. Rosemary still thinks that funding should be sought. Jim asked is if we could remove this broad Policy and simply focus on Gallows Hill and where we would like to see improvements and the possibility of the County taking over because it is acting as an inter-county arterial road. Barbara H. commented in the Google groups about concerns at Gallows Hill Road and safety concerns especially during weather events. Barbara concurred that having a policy focused on it would be helpful. The Committee agreed to revise the language in old policy #82 to focus more on Gallows Hill Road specifically.

Anthony suggested leaving in Rt 6 and the bypass road to keep pressure on the DOT. Mike H suggested we address the Bear Mountain Parkway (BMP) because people think it is completed. Anthony stated that it will eventually connect to the Taconic Parkway. The property is there, the right-of-way is there, but the money isn't there to get it done.

Jim C. stated that planning for future road right-of-ways, certainly within the last 10 years, has a much bigger focus at the planning board level. Michelle stated that they are actually obtaining rights-of-way with every subdivision. Rosemary added there are certain existing roads – long cul-de-sacs such as Lakeview Avenue East and Lakeview Avenue West which perhaps could be connected in the future. But it seems much more difficult to create through roads out of existing cul-de-sacs for a variety of reasons. That being said we have a policy we don't always activate where we try to discourage cul-de-sacs in our Planning Board process. Jim believes that it is a really good planning measure to continue to encourage through roads. How it gets implemented later on is subject to neighbor's concerns and other things, but it is a really important thing to do, to try to keep neighborhoods connected for the safety of the kids. Mike F. asked if that should include multi-use extensions, not just roads but trails, sidewalks, bikes. Anthony agreed, not just roads. Jim stated road connectivity is helpful for school buses; it is helpful for kids seeing other friends so they don't go out on the major roads like Oregon Road or Croton Avenue. Michelle added multi-modal.

*Policy #87 Support the creation of bikeways and pedestrian trails.*

Chris thinks the State was doing a Rt. 9 bike corridor back in the early 2000's. Not necessarily the section of Rt. 9 through Cortlandt, but Rt. 9 is a designated State Bike Corridor so the reference to Rt. 9 is correct.

Policy #91 *Evaluate the need for park-and-ride lots by analyzing those areas where the use is currently taking place, such as the intersection of Route 9/9A in Montrose and Item #16 Parking Policies: Consider the establishment of Park and Ride near or around existing future Town centers.*

Rosemary explained this subject was discussed at length in the 2004 Master Plan. At that time the focus was on a piece of land on Route 9A near the intersection with Route 9 which was being used unofficially as commuter park& ride. However since then the NYSDOT has taken over the area plus it just seems as if less people are doing the car pooling thing. Michelle stated that she can see a park and ride fitting in if we had a shuttle bus. That would be a NYSERDA metric. You need to have a location where everyone can get on that shuttle bus. In a small areas like Verplanck maybe, where everyone walks to one particular lot or drives and gets on the shuttle. There was some discussion about the viability of this idea. For now maybe we remove the old concept of Park & Ride lots. Anthony stated we talked about if we are going to do TOD, which is normally a quarter or half mile walkability and walk to it. For those people further out to take the shuttle; people have to drive or walk to pick up the shuttle and get to the TOD. The committee likes the language in Item #16 instead of Policy #91. Chris agreed that we are not going to carry over #91. Jim stated that if there was a jitney or trolley or bus at Cortlandt Crossing or the Town Center, Item #16 would cover that. Mike F. asked if we wanted to tie in other Town Centers with the TOD around the train station and Anthony said that would be our goal.

Anthony stated that another thing he wanted to bring up in terms of sustainability is that the Feds have in their policies something they call Invest 1.0. The Federal Highway Administration has a sustainability tool, it is completely anonymous and what it does is translate broad sustainability principals into specific actions. It helps transportation agencies assess and improve sustainability. It's voluntarily, it's free and it's easy. It is used a lot by DOT's and local governments and contractors. It is an inventory of what you have going on in the Town and gives you a way you can implement some of your policies and ways to improve your sustainability in your Town. It is something free the Feds offer and something the Town may want to consider doing.

Mike H. brought up how he has never seen so many bus stops not shoveled out which is forcing people to be literally in the road. We have these bus stops, which are all the right things to do for sustainability and yet we are forcing these people to hike through 4 foot piles of snow and literally wait on the road which is certainly a safety issue. Anthony asked if that is Jeff's department and Rosemary stated that it is Westchester County's beeline bus but she did not know specifically who is responsible for snow maintenance. Mike Huvane asked if the County comes up and does their own clearing or do they expect the Town to do it. Rosemary will follow up with an email to Jeff Coleman on this to see if we can ascertain whose responsibility the clearing of the bus stops are.

Mike Fleming stated that this all confuses him because we encourage sidewalks and we want sidewalks and safe walk-ability, but the Town has to maintain the sidewalks. Rosemary responded we do. Mike F. asked if the Town attorney could look into whether or not there is anyway we can do what other municipalities do which is to require residents to maintain their own sidewalks. Rosemary stated that sidewalks are complicated. We are in the middle of a grant right now for sidewalks along the 9A corridor, where we are trying to connect the VA Hospital ultimately to the center of Montrose, where the Montrose Deli and Fire Department are. That project and money has been a long project. We keep trying to go into the dollars we have, so unfortunately, that project has shortened in length and now it is going to be from Roundtree Lane to the center of Montrose. That is along a State highway. There is an existing type of blacktop there right now and it is very heavily used, a lot of people walk along it. We wanted to convert that to a real sidewalk. We, the Town, maintain and plow, because if you do anything in there, you have to maintain it. That is true on Rt 6. That is true on all State roads. All our local roads as well, we have to maintain where streetscapes have been done, like on Oregon Road or Broadway, we have to maintain it. Almost everywhere you look our Town guys maintain it. Jim suggested that as part of the Planning process, the applicant agrees to install sidewalks, but then they push the responsibility off to the Town or by law, the Town has to do it. Is there a way that we can have the landowner take over that responsibility. I don't know if Towns are able to do that. Michelle suggested we establish Sidewalk Maintenance Districts, similar to a Lighting District. Rosemary expressed concern about the viability of Sidewalk Maintenance districts being established especially in existing areas – could prove difficult. Michelle stated that districts like this can happen easier in new, larger subdivisions where they are creating sidewalks to connect to major State roads, but

not on the State roads themselves. This is for brand new subdivisions who have never seen the tax before. Michelle agreed that to go back to a community retro-actively and create a sidewalk district would be difficult. Chris commented that commercial areas it is different. In Croton, he is required to shovel his own sidewalk and he doesn't think the Town is going to do that. Theresa added that in the Village of Buchanan, business owners and residents take care of the sidewalks. If they need to be repaired or new ones put in, the Village is responsible for that. Chris stated that in new subdivisions we typically don't require sidewalks.

Chris asked in the hamlets, like Verplanck, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Street, do those homeowners shovel or are we taking on that responsibility. Rosemary responded it is a combo, the businesses tend to come out and shovel but that's a unique thing for them – the Town maintains the rest. There are areas like along Lake Meahagh and at the Riverwalk with no direct residents – again the Town maintains those. Jim stated that is something to think about, even if we are not implementing a tax district. Michelle spoke about the liability. The question is do you want more walk-ability, connectivity and encourage people to walk, then that comes with a responsibility to make that a safe experience.

Anthony stated that it is even the same thing with the fire pre-emption devices and maintenance. You can get the developer to put them in, they will pay for them, but the developer is not the permittee. It has to be the Fire Department. Therefore the Fire Department is responsible for the maintenance of that going forward unless you come to some agreement with the developer. The DOT will let you put the pre-emption devices in, but they will not maintain it. They will look for the persons name on the work permit as the person who is going to maintain it going forward. That is something the Fire Departments have to be made aware of. They are really interested in having these, but there is an ongoing maintenance issue.

*Item #5 Street Design Policies: Where possible consider creating permanent or temporary Pedestrian Only Shoppers Streets (POSS)*

What is POSS? Anthony stated that it is something that happens, you see that more in Europe, where they close down a street that might be next to a retail establishment, a bistro, a series of stores and they open it up to the public. Mike H. asked if it was like a pedestrian mall and Anthony concurred. Chris asked if it was permanent or temporary and Anthony stated both. Anthony continued that what applies more in Cortlandt is where you see an opportunity to do that temporarily, like for a weekend or a day, in order to promote the businesses in the area and create a nice experience for the people that live in the Cortlandt where they could walk on the street. Mike H. stated that in the summer Division Street does that in Peekskill, it closes off and all the restaurants come out into the street and setup tables. Michelle stated that the Bronx River Parkway does it for the bikes. Michael F. asked if there is a specific area in Cortlandt we might have been thinking of and Anthony responded he had no specific area. He was just giving us the concept and throwing it out to us as the Cortlandt experts to see where we think it might make sense. Mike F. talked about the conversion of a dead area in Cape May, NJ that has been converted to a wonderful shopping mall. It is unique, but it is small, only 3 or 4 blocks, but because it is so different, it has created a unique destination. Anthony asked do we see anything like that happening in Cortlandt. Chris brought up Ithaca, NY where they are on their second version. They did a traditional urban renewal 30 or 40 years ago and now they are digging it all up. He is not sure if they are going to reintroduce vehicles but they are trying to make it livelier, whether that's just bikes or something like that. Mike H. stated that it would be more of a destination, something to draw us in. Michelle stated that in the future there may be more of an opportunity. Anthony commented that we are trying to create more Town Centers in the Town, TOD's are one of them.

*Item #34 Transportation Policies: The Town should consider enrolling in the FHWA's Invest Program which helps transportation agencies/DPW assess and improve sustainability.*

Rosemary asked what do we get out of it if we take this survey. Are they going to help us with some vision documents? Anthony responded no. You can use their tools and come away with informative material, and Cortlandt can do this by themselves, without the Feds knowing.

*Item #25 Land Use Policies: Long range land-use planning and zoning must consider transportation issues and concerns (such as roadway capacity) that could potentially limit development or require zoning changes to ensure that transportation infrastructure can effectively and safely accommodate demand.*

Anthony stated that a lot of time, somebody comes in, proposes a project and then we try to make the transportation system fit the project. So we are working backwards and that is a challenge. Sometimes, as in Cortlandt Crossing, it is not easy because of what's happening with Lexington and Rte 6. So this gets to trying to work the other way around where you take a look at what the build-out might look like under existing zoning along the corridor and what implication that has on the traffic network and make proactive changes to your zoning or land use that better fits the traffic system. Maybe the language of this policy should be something like adopt a study or that there is more analysis to be built into that, like the action thing. Anthony stated that the action item for this would be TMSP, or "Traffic Mitigation Special Permit", which is a study that we had done before.

The intent of the TMSP is to improve safety, traffic and pedestrian flow and implement land use and zoning policies to promote a more measured and manageable traffic route long the three major corridors Rte 6, 202/35 and 9A. Chris asked if we actually wanted to call it Traffic Mitigation Special Permit because we had already been through that and he thought we wanted to sort of re-brand it. Anthony stated that he isn't scared to call it that. Chris stated that he was thinking somewhere between what they had written in #25 and the Traffic Mitigation Special Permit, there could be some language to make it clearer, that it needs an action to be taken. Rosemary stated that to execute that well, we would have to probably restudy all of the numbers that we originally looked at several years ago. Anthony agreed that it is old and outdated. The policy or action would be to initiate a study for long range land use planning, not just TMSP's. Jim stated that it actually addresses Ed's comment in the Commercial Land Use Policies. It is too generic to consider assessing traffic impacts and mitigation. We are looking at what the area can sustain and then saying let's see if we can build and encourage it, rezone it. But the converse is also true. If an area can't sustain high activity even though stuff around it is high activity, then you almost want to zone it down to recognize that the area can't take that impact any further. There is nothing we can do to mitigate it so we need to do something whether that is rezoning or not, I don't know. It is always a touchy subject. Anthony stated that part of TMSP is to reduce the dimensional requirement that they can build. And the only way you can go beyond that is if you can show you can mitigate the traffic impact. Jim asked if there has been thought about what the landowner will say – "you are limiting my ability to do something with my property, everybody around me can do this and you say I can't do this". Jim asked if there was a language we could use that would address that. Anthony hasn't seen anything outside NYC that defines what traffic impact is. Jim stated that we have to be sensitive to the fact that somebody owns land and is entitled to do something with it. Whether it is what they want or it ends up being something completely different.

*Item #26 Encourage the development of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at the Cortlandt Train Station*

Handouts were reviewed on what TOD is and what the benefits are. Chris stated that we looked at this in the Commercial zone the last time which you all know is the train station area. Anthony stated in discussing this with Michelle earlier, there are going to be more meetings that the Town staff is going to have on the TOD's and there will be more specific policies that are going to be done. This is just introducing the concept and is something that is being considered. Chris stated that we assume that the committee members know what a TOD is, it's Planning 101 and all Planners love it. We assume that you guys will think it's cool. We are not so sure that the normal residents in Town are going to think it is absolutely wonderful. It takes a lot of explanation because it requires pretty high densities to make it work. But it existed in our 1991 Master Plan so it is not a totally new concept. An interchange with Route 9 would be a major requirement if the full vision of a TOD around the Cortlandt Train Station were to occur. This was always the vision in past Master Plans.

Mike H. commented that now that the baby boomer's children are moving away because the area doesn't have what they want, it might be a different sentiment. Chris stated that in the 700 surveys we have received so far, everyone wants walk-ability types of things, until you tell them about the x number of housing units on Rt 9A. That's a bad deal all of a sudden. Michelle stated that this is a major push by NYSERDA and the State Governor in general, and she knows several communities locally that are working on TOD's right now. Poughkeepsie, is implementing TOD's and are working on updating their Master Plan. Tarrytown did a very successful TOD

redevelopment and they significantly increased density there. Michael pointed out it was controversial in Tarrytown. Places like Yonkers and Maryland have done quite well with TOD's, but it's harder here because we don't have the space and we have more older, more entrenched, industries. But that is not to say we shouldn't include it as a long-term future planning tool.

Chris commented that places like Tarrytown were dealing with private property owners with less desirable uses – which Cortlandt will be also. If everyone was creating a TOD on vacant land around a train station it would be easy. Anthony added Tarrytown was a lot of industrial. Michelle stated that in some way, this is very future thinking. Where is Cortlandt going in the future and where is the growth going in Cortlandt? We certainly can't say we can't have any more growth. That's not going to work. So if we have growth, we have to say where we are going to put it and what it is going to be like. Mike H. stated that down the road, if high speed rail ever comes about, if we look at it today and then start looking at the future, you could be on a train to Grand Central in thirty minutes. So this doesn't become the hour commute for the people. You don't know what's coming down the road, what technology will bring. The committee agreed the area around the Cortlandt Train Station makes sense as the TOD location. However, it might prove to be a very long-term goal.

*Policy #84 Pursue opportunities to obtain funding and approval for major capital projects*

Chris commented that from past Master Plans, this was one of the lynch pins to try to figure out how to get on and off Rt 9. Rosemary stated back in the 1990's during the design and construction of the Cortlandt Train Station, there was a big push by the Town Board and the Supervisor to NYSDOT to connect Route 9 and Route 9A in this area. However that was not be. Since then, we have expanded the train station significantly but the access is still coming off Rt 9A – one now near Trinity Ave across from the VA and one off Memorial Drive. Any future TOD that we are talking about would require that the connectivity to Rt 9 would have to happen as part of the broader density vision for this area. Chris stated that you would think you could creatively convince the State powers that infrastructure money should go to support a large scale transit oriented development. Michelle stated that we would have to convince the public that this is a good thing. Anthony added that today's DOT is not the same as it was 10 years ago. They are more into this type of thing - elevation of pedestrians, walkability etc. They may be more open to this interchange than in the past. Chris stated that TOD is one of the central issues of the grant application and will be a major focus for Metrics.

*Policy #21 Require new mixed use/large scale developments to integrate transit and provide/connect to pedestrian and bicycle networks within their projects*

Rosemary asked if Policy #21 would be part of the TOD and Anthony confirmed that it would.

*Item #17 Prioritize the safety and needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users over convenience of motorists.*

Anthony asked if the policies needed to be expanded to include specific parcel application boundaries of how big the TOD is going to be, how many acres. Do we flush this out for more detail or do we keep it very high level?

Mike H. asked if the TOD really has to be a parcel that is in walking distance to the train station. Rosemary stated that we already know that it has to be within that quarter mile radius. Chris brought out a map of the train station area and stated that the Tall, Bilotta and Brookfield properties all could become a TOD in connection to a major employment center across the street. Rosemary stated that in looking at the Town's GIS system the property across the street is owned by the Boy Scouts of America. Michelle stated that you could implement a shuttle for outside of that area.

Chris asked do you simply say the Town should encourage or analyze the TOD or do you map it and drill down, talk about it, show maps at meetings? Jim added do you do both without being specific by saying within a quarter mile of the train station platform. It was agreed by the Committee after analysis of the maps, that the concept of a quarter mile "bubble plan" for TOD would be the way to go here. Michelle stated you have all this property around the train station, so there is no way in the future that is going to stay industrial. Michelle believes that at some point it is going to be utilized, probably as a residential property. It will happen eventually.

Items #11: *Review town parking standards for residential and non-residential uses, consider parking ratio reforms for development projects to avoid excessive parking & Item 14: Consider land banking parking when studies conducted as part of development applications demonstrate that Town/Industry standard would require excessive parking.*

Anthony stated that sometimes municipalities have stale parking standards that can lead to over parking, more pavement, and more infrastructure. Chris stated that the Town has a new special permit for parking which was written to address this, so we can read that over to see if we have already addressed #14 or we can make it better. It is in our Town Code, parking special permit. Ed added that this code gives our Planning Board flexibility to wave certain parking requirements. He agreed that the parking rules in our Code are conservative.

Item #35: *Maintain the transportation system to keep it operating safely and to maximize its useful life*

Anthony reiterated that this is also a TSAC item. Chris asked when they say maintain, do they mean potholes? Rosemary stated she spoke with Mr. Cocozza on this and they mean everything as it relates to maintenance of the traffic system. They are talking about drainage, on-going re-surfacing, paving and encouraging road –resurfacing at a faster than we do now. Mike F. believes this policy is written well and encompasses all those concerns. Chris added that if we are thinking of actually moving this to another section, it could possibly be #27.

Item #37: *Encourage sustainable roadway design and construction best practices to reduce stormwater runoff, maintain and enhance vegetation, and minimize environmental impacts (bioswales).*

Anthony stated that it is basically a land safe element designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff. He added that this is used a lot in parking lots. Chris added that it catches it and filters it before it actually goes into the drainage system. Jim asked if Chris thought that would work at Cortlandt Crossing. Chris stated that he is hopeful a Planning Board member will bring it up during the DEIS hearing to require it. Ed mentioned that in 2010, stormwater standards would require these practices.

Item #38: *Prioritize construction of sidewalks based on criteria, such as road classification type; proximity to transit stops and park-and-ride lots; proximity to schools parks and other public facilities; location in activity centers and along growth corridors; and the potential to connect to existing sidewalks, greenways and bike facilities.*

Mike F. brought up the sidewalks issue in the proximity to schools and that ties to Item #20. He felt this was a big deal for us. There are no sidewalks around any of the schools. Chris mentioned that he is a grant writer and this topic came up four or five years ago as part of the “Safe Routes to Schools”. As part of that process, Chris met an unnamed principal at an unnamed school who said we don't want kids walking to school. They get on a bus, they get off a bus and they are perfectly happy with that. That particular school was not interested in safe routes to schools. Rosemary asked if the Schools felt it was safer for children to actually be on a bus from a control standpoint. Chris confirmed that seemed to be the case at least with that one district. Mike F. added that there are a lot of politics related to the schools. Chris thought parents might want it.

Mike F. stated that at the new Cortlandt Crossing, there is a wonderful school within 300 yards and it is a great place to put a day care and a great place where kids can walk with teachers. Lots of other town's do it where the kids go in groups to school and back from school, instead of having a bus pick them up and drive just three quarters of a mile around town and then bring them back. We have no accessibility to our schools and it bothers a lot of parents. Mike H. believes that this works when you have a condensed village where you have a walkable to begin with. Chris stated that you do the reverse, you start with the school to find who could legitimately walk to the school. Anthony mentioned that for the houses on Baker, there was a connection through Cortlandt Crossing to the school and ask if that would be of interest to create that type of connection.

Chris thought that some parents would be interested in it, but the schools probably wouldn't want it. Anthony asked if the schools not wanting, does that mean you don't have a policy. Mike F. brought up that then crossing guards come into play, which the schools don't have to deal with right now. Mike H. also brought up the issue of who would maintain the sidewalks then. Mike F. stated that you have kids that literally live across the street from

the school and they are getting bused. He believes that addressing it with the schools is one thing, but the Town should be supporting the idea of making this an option. Chris noted that nothing stops the Town from building sidewalks near the schools. Mike H. likes this policy and believes we should encourage it and make sure the language is tweaked to make it prioritized on locations to schools. Mike F. believes that it helps businesses too. Mike F. added that every one of our schools has a day care facility, at least at the elementary school level, where you could walk to school

*Item #40: Encourage use of recycled materials, such as recycled aluminum alloy, when installing new traffic signals or when replacing existing traffic signals*

Anthony asked if Item #14 was possible. Ed stated that we would have to research it. Chris stated that we have had hesitancy about using recycling material for roadbeds, asphalt and such. He doesn't know if we have the same hesitancy for recycled aluminum alloy. Ed mentioned he has some questions about it's practicality. Rosemary stated we have completed an LED replacement program for all our traffic signals. We could expand that to be for all our street lighting – make them all LED lighting. Mike H. asked couldn't we just do away with that in the sustainability and just say use sustainability when and if possible? This language will be revised.

*Item #10: Evaluate opportunities to install roundabouts in lieu of traffic signals*

Mike F. believes this should be a little bit stronger. He knows people who use Cortlandt's roundabout every day and love it. Mike H. stated that it is a lot better than it used to be. Jim asked the committee if there was anyone who didn't like it? You may have been against it but once it was there, you realize how many hours of your life you have gotten back. Anthony stated that DOT Region 1, which is the headquarters for all DOT regions in Albany, has an intersection squad, called the E Squad and they are pushing roundabouts throughout the entire State. And even if it is not a State road, they will come in and talk to people about how to build them, the positives of it. Three roundabouts were just installed on Rt 55 near DOT headquarters. Chris believes that it is partly traffic calming. Anthony agreed that it is a recognized traffic calming tool. You have to yield before going into the circle which slows everyone down. Rosemary brought up Annsville circle and how some people might confuse the word Roundabout (as in the one on Oregon Road) and the Annsville Circle. Anthony notes that Annsville is NOT a roundabout. Anthony suggested language encouraging roundabouts in Cortlandt would be a green initiative because it reduces maintenance and power because you are not powering traffic signals anymore. Mike H. also said there would be no idling. Jim asked for the metrics for this and asked if we could calculate the carbon foot prints savings. He is sure that the DOT has in their manuals great marketing materials to encourage roundabouts. Mike H. said to take a look at Maple Ave & Furnace Dock, there are so many places that roundabouts could go. Chris added that roundabouts like ours have mountable curves, resulting in less nervousness going around curves.

Chris noted that in our Survey roundabouts are not getting high praise. Mike H stated that Annsville may be our biggest problem, it is really a circle, not a roundabout but people taking the survey might be confused. Jim stated that the problem may be education. Anthony has a study of a side by side comparison of traffic circles and roundabouts which he will post. Mike H. stated that the perfect example is the roundabout at the Hollowbrook.

*Item #1: Design roadways that are safe and efficient for motor vehicle users while also accommodating transit users, pedestrians and bicyclists, and limiting negative environmental impacts.*

Ed stated that we already have site criteria in our code. Rosemary asked if we should take this out? Ed answered that it has to be enhanced. Ed will revise language.

*Policy #84 Pursue opportunities to obtain funding and approval for major capital projects.*

Ed stated that a lot of this comes from the sustainable development study and we have kept it all, we even kept the bypass even though it may not come to fruition. When we say completion of the Bear Mountain Parkway we mean to the Taconic State Parkway. We are also going to update plans for the future road right-of-ways more specifically connectivity and encourage the elimination of cul-de-sacs that don't connect or provide connectivity where we can.

Item #15: *Continue to consider and plan for ADA accessibility during site plan review for new projects and amended site plans*

Anthony stated that is another TSAC issue. The reason that this is in again is because it is not up to the current standards. Rosemary brought up Mike's comment again about wheelchair accessibility. Mike H. stated that it sounded very windy. When you say "continue to consider", it is like, oh well. It really doesn't make a bold enough statement. Ed commented that it should say implement and that it also should be in the section that talks about handicapped parking. Chris suggested we put something in Item #11. He stated that one of the things they are always talking about is they want more handicapped parking. Anthony stated that they want more handicapped parking and they want them in the right place. Chris believes that this is then more of a separate policy. Anthony stated that we should increase the number of handicapped spaces and look at the width of them. Rosemary stated one of the challenges is finding a spot that can accommodate a handicapped van. This often comes with vehicle side door that the wheelchair comes out of – requires more parking space. Rosemary added that these handicapped vans are becoming more popular.

Item #2: *Create livable, people-oriented streets by integrating appropriate traffic calming management principles into new streets and retrofits of existing streets. Investigate traffic calming solutions to manage speeds and volumes, especially in sensitive areas such as schools, parks, institutional uses*

Rosemary noted we have some standard streetscape design happening in Town – specifically we have decorative lighting that has been specified and is in existence at several locations including Town Hall, Cortlandt Blvd, Kings Ferry Road, Broadway, Route 9A, the Roundabout. We would wan to continue to encourage design standards for future streetscape designs. Mike H. added more decorative themes continuing is a great thing and helps identify a sense of place.

Item #3: *Encourage safe and appealing sidewalks. Include sidewalk features such as tree canopies, separation of sidewalks from travel lanes, safe and visible pedestrian crossings and bulb-outs.*

Michelle said we will add 'through streetscape design'.

Item #2: *Create livable, people-oriented streets by integrating appropriate traffic calming management principles into new streets and retrofits of existing streets. Investigate traffic calming solutions to manage speeds and volumes, especially in sensitive areas such as schools, parks, institutional uses and Item #7: Evaluate and implement traffic calming strategies such as pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, bump outs bulb-outs and speed humps where appropriate, in conjunction with transportation improvements to protect residential areas and other sensitive land uses from the impacts of inappropriate volumes of through traffic or excessive speeds.*

Jim asked is it something we want to follow through or recommend a park zone, like Yorktown has? Similar to a school zone. The speeding fees go up in a school zone. In a park zone we could do the same thing. Or we could just reduce the speed around the park. Jim doesn't know if that is something we might be interest in, but there are a few places where that might be helpful. Jim believes tickets are more effective than the SMART machines alone.

Michelle mentioned that is definitely true, especially where you have trail properties, where trails cross streets. Anthony added that the reduction of speed on any street requires DOT approval, even if it is not their roadway. He asked if there was some specific place where we wanted to make this happen. Jim brought up that Yorktown does some things but they are not NYSDOT sanctioned. They have something like a park zone. They did not drop the speed, they increased the fines, the penalties. Anthony suggested this is a question for the Town Attorney. Rosemary offered to follow up with Tom Wood on the concept of Park Speed Zones and increasing the fines.

Anthony commented that one thing Ed brought up was a Traffic Improvement District that has no written policy. Anthony stated that it also needs approval from the State Legislature. Anthony added that it is another way to pay for traffic improvements and streetscapes from the property owners that are there. Chris added that it appears it will be another line on the tax bill. Anthony stated that we could discuss it at the next meeting.

Rosemary had one item to add. We have been requested by the Town Supervisor to invite the Hudson River Towns to come speak to the committee at either the March or April meeting. Cortlandt has been one of the initial towns that has been very active with them.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Palmiotto

ATTACHMENTS: Documents submitted by AKRF including "TOD" flyer.

The TSAC's comments and issues follow these minutes

## **Town of Cortlandt Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee**

**TSAC recommendations for discussion:** **02/01/15**

Two Entergy Alarm type system alert for Indian Point for tests and alerts

Town Speed Bump or Speed Table requirement Policy

Latest Handicap Improvement requirement policy and action for fines for noncompliance

Verizon Utility Pole Requirements on Town Roads and need for permits

Citizen safety issue of cable phone service especially for senior citizens

Need of Town DES reaction to continuous Town accident to determine causes

Latest Trucking resolution #115-14 and adding reflective sign requirement to all signs

Policing of Begging on Public Roads and fines due to safety road issues

DES proactive involvement for safety issues on State Roads such as CMP for damaged Reflective markers and damaged dividers

Requests for Sport Field located at new developments where bad road conditions exist

New Curb cut policy for a common curb cuts adjacent to existing curb cuts

Baker Street policy revision due to proposed New Mall and due to existing accidents

Bear Mountain Parkway usage of trucking at all hours

**The Traffic Safety and Advisory Committee of the Town of Cortlandt**



# TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

## What is TOD?

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TOD is “a type of community development that includes a mixture of housing, office, retail and/or other amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood and located within a half-mile of quality public transportation.”

## Components of a TOD Neighborhood

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- Main Transit station or stop supported by a variety of other transit options (walking, bicycling, rail transit, bus transit, automobile)
- Medium/high-density development
- Residential dwelling units within walking distance of transit stops
- Street networks that accommodate pedestrians and bicycles
- Walkable, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood
- Convenient, affordable
- Compact mix of uses
- Community spaces to live, work and play
- Promote attractive, safe, walkable mixed-use neighborhoods
- Reduction in off-street parking
- Reduction in commute time



## TOD Benefits

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- Improves walkability of communities and promotes active/healthy lifestyles
- Increases use of public transit
- Expands mobility choices including reduced transportation costs
- Better access to jobs, housing for all people of all ages, provides better economic opportunities
- Attracts young workers/young families
- Increases sense of community
- Reduces auto-dependence and therefore congestion, air pollution, GHG emission
- Potential for increased property values and tax revenues for local governments near transit investments
- Increases development and business transactions in areas near transit
- Provides opportunities for neighborhood connections

Source: <http://reconnectingamerica.org/what-we-do/what-is-tod/>  
<http://www.planetizen.com/node/39133>

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