

The **Master Plan Committee** Meeting of the Town of Cortlandt was conducted on **July 8, 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:

Master Plan Committee:

James Creighton
David Douglas
Michael Fleming
Seth Freach
Dani Glaser
Barbara Halecki
Adrian C. Hunte
Michael Huvane
Theresa Knickerbocker

Absent:

Maria Slippen
Michelle Robbins

Staff Advisors:

Edward Vergano, P.E., DOTS Director
Chris Kehoe, AICP, Deputy Director of Planning
Rosemary Boyle-Lasher, Assistant to Director of DOTS
Jeff Coleman, P.E., DES Director

AKRF Consultants:

Anthony Russo
Flaam Hardy

Anthony Russo opened the meeting and gave an overview of his professional background including that he has been working in the traffic field for 25 years; and specifically in Cortlandt for over twenty years. He has prepared and viewed a lot of traffic studies and some of the complaints that he has heard are that the studies only focus on cars and do not look at quality of life issues. This has changed here in Cortlandt; the town is working very hard not to look at it only from an auto-centric point of view. We look at safety issues; we talk to emergency service providers to get their input on the traffic issues they face when a project is being proposed. This is some of the focus that Chapter 5: Traffic and Transportation, was written with. Anthony pointed out on page 2, Transportation Systems Management (TSM) is based on the fact that you can't expand roads everywhere but you can improve the technology on these roadways to help improve flow and help aid locations that are congested. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) (page 3) is changing the modes people travel and

encouraging multi-modal roadways, car pooling, tele-commuting, and to try to have less demands on the roads. There is also the Integrating Land Use and Transportation Planning (page 3) which is something the Town looked at awhile ago. It looks at the relationship between land-use and traffic. One bullet point stated to *Evaluate the effect of proposed development under existing zones on the Town's transportation system. Consider revisions to the Town Code that promotes a more measured and manageable traffic growth along the key corridors.* Another point listed is to *Consider construction beyond the zoning districts requirements (by special permit) for projects that incorporate sustainable transportation improvements.* Anthony explained that if a project is going to propose innovative traffic measures as mitigation it is possible that will be given approval to construct something beyond what is allowed by code to encourage these types of improvements.

Anthony congratulated the town on implementing or partially implementing 95% of the Traffic and Transportation policies from the 2004 Master Plan.

Seth Freach asked if the statement to consider revisions to the Town Code that promotes a more measure and manageable traffic growth along the key corridor - was in respect to zoning. Is that the tool the Town would use to accomplish the goal? Anthony answered yes and Form Based Code is one of the ways we will also address this in several key areas of Town. Anthony went on to explain that as part of the implementation of the last Master Plan, AKRF worked closely with the Town on a traffic mitigation special permit is where a potential build-out was looked at under an existing zoning in a corridor and what type of impact that would have on a traffic system on roadways. Based on that, in certain locations you may want to down-zone in order to have less traffic. This was one strategy. Rosemary confirmed that we worked extensively on that TMSP or "Traffic Mitigation Special Permit" but it was never fully adopted/implemented. So we are hopeful our new approach with FBC and traffic will help.

Adrian Hunte commented that this Chapter was quite comprehensive and well-done. Adrian suggested that on page 11 - *Trains leave for Grand Central Station approximately every 30 minutes. Travel times to Grand central range from 42 minutes (express) to 71 minutes (trains making all local stops)* - that the same be stated for the Cortlandt Station. This change will be made.

Anthony spoke about page 9, *Recommendations: the town will continue to lobby and collaborate with the State to develop and implements improvements on the state corridors in support of sustainable engineering traffic practices and economic development.* This is something that the town does and is on-going. The Town met with the NYS DOT on the Cortlandt Crossing project and they were complementary on the traffic study because it was honest and spoke about the issues on Route 6 and what type of constraints there were. Where there is a project on a State roadway, in order for the state to be involved in the approval process, we don't want them to disappear after SEQRA but to stay involved throughout the entire process.

Chris Kehoe added that with TOD and MOD there could be some issues because these areas are located on busy roads and that is where they Master Plan is contemplating additional

development. As part of the development with those 2 code sections, some of the concepts should be worked into the zoning and form based code sections. We are going to be proposing more dense development in areas where people may say it will be difficult to handle from a traffic perspective. Rosemary asked if the traffic improvements would be wrapped into Form Based Code for TOD or MOD. The response was yes.

Dani Glaser pointed out that in the TDM section that only 12% of commuters take the train. She asked if there were ways to increase that number. Could we add van pooling or shuttle service? Would this help to increase that number of train commuters. Anthony mentioned that the Town is looking into a trolley service along Route 6 with potential expansion. The town is applying for a CFA grant. The trolley could be used for service to the hospital and train stations. This may be a way to increase that number. Dani said it is unfortunate that most commuter cars are single occupancy, taking up spots at the train station. She added it is easy to have a shuttle service when you live in a condo. Seth asked about the condos along the river in Croton and Ossining, and if the shuttle service is an amenity or could we mandate to build this into new developments. Anthony did not know the answer but most developers want to stay out of the transportation business. Seth asked if it is beneficial for us to force them into this. Dani added that more education is needed to encourage carpooling to the train. It is tough with everyone's different schedules.

Chris Kehoe asked for confirmation on the fact that Route 129 from Quaker Bridge Road to Underhill Avenue had a 41.6% increase in volume from 1999 to 2012.

(Page 7). It is a route to the Taconic Parkway because Rte. 202 is backed up with traffic. Several members of the committee agreed that many people traveling to the mid and southern parts of the County are often taking "back roads" to areas like Route 129. Anthony will double check that figure.

Seth asked if it is worth looking at what improvements the Town does and what improvements other municipalities do and the interaction between them or the lack thereof are and what that would mean to the traffic patterns in Cortlandt. Anthony commented that we would not have much influence on the other communities. Several members of the committee acknowledge past attempts at this type of traffic study/analysis between municipalities were not fruitful.

Seth asked if monitoring the improvements informs our decision. Anthony explained that as part of the recommendations is for the town to actively have traffic system management program. When State projects are put out for construction, they go through planning and design and the town will continually monitor those projects from a planning stage to see if they want to provide to the DOT at that time, where something that makes sense, is it possible to carry this into the town. What could be done to that would make sense for Cortlandt. It is important to monitor these types of things on a regular basis. Anthony added that traffic will be a part of the GIS and you would be able to identify what the impacts are. When a developer comes into the town they will have a good idea of what needs to be done with traffic. Rosemary asked if there was a limit as to how far from the center of a proposed TOD, MOD or WSD we could go? Is there a known limit or generally accepted practice. Anthony explained to establish a traffic study area, what is

normally done is to determine the traffic that will be generated by the project (trip generation). Then you determine how that traffic will travel on the roadways. Then you will see where the heaviest concentration of traffic will be and eventually it will begin to dissipate and that is how the study area is determined.

Dani stated that the approach of the chapter makes a lot of sense but is disappointed overall in that transportation and green house gas emissions from transportation from both municipal and residential, which is the highest source of emissions in the town, are not being reduced more aggressively. Dani doesn't feel we are really moving the needle at all; however, she acknowledged this is partially a result of where we live. Anthony stated that this is a sustainable Master Plan and we can identify policies that are different than in the past. Hopefully we will start to move to a positive side. Dani stated that education, on the website and other areas, to reinforce to people that it is not mandated, but car pooling and ride-matching are encouraged. Education is a start to continue to raise awareness. Rosemary pointed out on pg. 14 *Policy 6: Create a trolley/jitney system. Phase 1 to connect shopping areas along Rte. 6. Phase 2 connects hospital center and area Train Stations. Phase 3 connect to the waterfront areas.* As part of this year's CFA the Town is submitting the "And Away We Go" Trolley application. This electric shuttle bus will be used to help educate the public on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Flaam noted that the trolley would be electric and that is a major component of what we are trying to achieve including adding more electric vehicle charging stations in Town, which will be added.

Jeff Coleman commented that on page 2 TSM box regarding transportation systems management was added by him. Jeff noted that one of the things that we all fight for through the Master Plan process is the ability to apply for Federal grants for CMAQ funding (Congestion Management Air Quality). Some of the improvements can include signal timing optimization which can help with to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions, as well.

Dani Glaser asked for an explanation of the FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) Sustainability tool (on page 15).

Anthony explained that it is voluntary. The Fed's do not have to know that you are doing it, but it is up to you if you do want to tell them. Its goals are to translate broad sustainability principles into specific actions. It is a web-based self-assessment tool. It helps transportation agencies assess sustainability (economic, social and environmental outcomes).

Anthony explained that you go into the site and will have to answer questions; it will assess how sustainable you are from a transportation perspective and based on that it will give recommendations. It is another option that you have to use.

Adrian had a question on the Town of Cortlandt Designated Historic and Scenic Roads (page 10) asking which roads were historic and which were scenic. Chris explained that some were historic, some scenic, and some both.

Anthony spoke about roads that can be identified as being susceptible to flooding and what could be done to get emergency services there in an emergency.

Dani asked about using permeable pavement and if it can be used. Jeff noted that it is expensive. Cortlandt Crossing Shopping Center is proposing some sections to be permeable. Dani asked to add to the Master Plan that we will consider using permeable pavement in as many areas as feasible. Rosemary believes it is referred to in the Storm Water section of the Master Plan already as reduction in impervious pavement is a requirement – at least at Site Development Plan level. Seth suggested it be added to Policy 19: *Review town parking standards for residential and non-residential uses and consider parking ratio reforms for development projects to avoid excessive parking.* Rosemary suggested generic language be used: Review town parking standards with green (porous). It was suggested that a new policy is needed to address this.

Adrian asked which roads need a Road diet as mentioned in Policy 18: *On roads with excessive widths, reduce the number of travel lanes and/or effective width of the road (Road Diets). Use available right-of-way for landscaping and/or bicycle/pedestrian/future transit use.* Rosemary explained that we have already done some road “diets” in town. It is a way of “traffic calming” and reducing excessive speed. One example is Broadway in Verplanck, which is one of the largest width roads in the town. As part of the multi-phased Broadway Streetscape project, we aggressively reduced travel lanes and added landscaped bump outs narrowing the road which has been effective in reducing speeding in that area. Mayor Knickerbocker agreed that this project is a good example of a road diet.

Jim Creighton noted under the Parking policies if we could address the sea of parking, where you want to break the parking up with enough vegetation. This should be added for the sustainability piece. Is there anything in the town code that addresses vegetation in the parking lots. Ed answered that it is 5% requirement for vegetation.

Chris Kehoe brought up a concern about general width of required new roads. There have been instances, in the Planning Board process where the Planning Board may want to protect trees and slopes and they want to narrow the pavement width or roads in sub-divisions to less than the requirement for a “Town road”. In some instances the developer is pursuing it for their own reasons. Could there be a policy to address this? Seth asked if there were standards for different zoning areas (roads). Jeff responded that there is a single set standard right now for requirements for a newly built Town road. Jeff went on to explain that the issue comes down to is what is on the roadside. If the trees are by the curb, that is where the snow goes and that can be an issue. You can’t have a narrow road, with no place to put the snow. Chris said a policy would still be helpful for the Planning Board to refer to it. Seth would want to see a base-line of standards that the Planning Board could deviate off of. Seth stated that as a policy we try to establish criteria for roadways. There can be flexibility. Chris added that we can take into account a variety of features whether that is environmental or historic. The fire code is also another determining factor as we have to allow for turning radius and such for large emergency vehicles.

Jim Creighton asked to add to the Master Plan to encourage the Planning Board to consider park banking. If you suspect you do not need that much parking but the code says you need it, allow them to build the portion they need and set aside the other parking. If it turns out after a year that it is not needed then you don’t have to build it. Chris noted that you still have to show that you

can build them. It differs from an out-right waiver. Jim would want language in the Master Plan to encourage Park Banking, as well.

Seth asked if Policy 20: *Continue encourage use of shared driveways, shared parking, cross-access easements and connections through adjacent developments during the approval process to eliminate driveways and curb-cuts* – is for non-residential parking only. Rosemary explained that it was and that it should be added. Flaam and Anthony will change it.

Dani asked about the top priorities on page 1 - Establish Complete Streets on the town's main traffic corridors - Route 6, Route 35/202, and Route 9A and asked where that is mentioned elsewhere in the chapter. The definition of Complete Streets is a where all people can use it by car, bike, seniors, etc. The definition will be added to the list. Flaam responded that Policy 14 *Encourage sustainable roadway design and construction best practices to reduce storm water runoff, maintain and enhance vegetation and minimize environmental impacts (bioswales)*. Anthony mentioned streetscape design management. Dani stated that you are specifically saying to establish complete streets on Cortlandt Boulevard, Route 6, and if you have it as a bullet it should be talked about how you are doing Complete Streets in those areas and if we are not doing this, the bullet point should be taken away. Anthony suggested a policy or call out box to define what Complete Streets is.

Michael Fleming commented that we should be consistent in all of our chapters to referring to the Town's Master Plan survey. When we are citing our sources the survey should be mentioned. Rosemary agreed and stated that we will add this to the area under "Relationship to Visions" and reference the survey.

Anthony spoke about the survey, which is mentioned on page 1 and 2 and that 60% of the people that answered the survey said that Cortlandt Boulevard is the town center.

Adrian questioned on pages 4 -7 Existing Conditions - Roadways, there are references to accidents along certain roads, what are the causes of the majority of these accidents (driver inattention?) Where are these statistics obtained? Anthony explained that the accident data is from the State DOT. Adrian suggested that the source (NYS DOT) be stated. Anthony noted that the sources will be in the Master Plan.

Michael Fleming commented on page 4 *Roadway Classifications* - where it is stated that *There are three categories of roadway in Cortlandt: Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector Street and then local streets are mentioned*. He suggested that it be stated that there are 4 categories and local streets be a separate category because it didn't make sense when reading it. Page 8 & 9

Local Roads (pg. 8) - the increase of 7 miles from 157 miles in 2000 - 2015 is stated and under Local Roadways on page 9 the year 2004 is given. Which ever is the correct year(s) should be noted. (The paragraph on local roads on page 9 may not be needed because it seems repetitive).

Michael Huvane asked if the 189 Road Section box could be moved to where you talk about 189 roads. Seth added that when 189 is mentioned the word Roads should be included anywhere it is

mentioned just so we have clarity.

Chapter 7 Community Character and Visual Quality:

Anthony asked Rosemary to explain the significant work that the Town has done a lot of work regarding the community character issue as part of their enhancement plans - MEP (Montrose Enhancement Plan), VEP (Verplanck Enhancement Plan) and REP (Round-about-Enhancement Plan). Rosemary explained these were three mini planning studies that were done since the last Master Plan was completed in 2004. Led by the Town Supervisor, Town Board and Senior Staff, we held many significant public outreach meetings – each in their own area of Town. For example, MEP was held at the Hendrick Hudson Library. Montrose (MEP) was a major success because from these meetings the Montrose Business Association was created which is still actively meeting with the Town. Several traffic improvements came about including the crosswalk that exists on Route 9A between Coles Market to the Hudson Dance Studio. VEP is the longest standing enhancement area and has a large active group for the past 25 years. REP is the area where the least work has been done but is needed. There is a vision to try to attract something better in that area. Seth suggested the round-about be referred to as the Oregon Road round-about. Michael added that the words traffic circle is eliminated to not cause any confusion.

Seth spoke about not wanting to see banners on pole-flags that flap in front of gas stations up and down Route 6 and/or big balloons. The enforcement of property maintenance and signs is needed. Signage and billboards have a direct visual impact on the town. There should be a consistency in the signs. Today, it is an enforcement issue but do we want to state that consistency is needed in the visual streetscape as it relates to signs. Chris noted that probably all those types of signs are illegal and none are permitted, nor should be there. It is an enforcement issue. The Architectural Review Board looks at the signs. Rosemary spoke about an ordinance for when a new store opens they are allowed for 30 or 60 days to fly banners and flags announcing the opening. You can have temporary signs 30 days before an event and 10 days afterward. Ed Vergano stated that many violations have been issued. Chris said that it is very difficult to enforce this issue and Seth asked how it can be enforced.

Rosemary asked if signage could be a part of Policy 8 *Develop an Architectural, Site and Landscape Design Manual*. Anthony thought it was a part of Cortlandt Boulevard, which is a streetscape project. Rosemary continued that an over-arching theme from the very beginning, one of the challenges that we have is a sense of identity for Cortlandt. Over many years we have begun bringing in a unified design feature, such as our themed light poles and banners that exist in many different places around Cortlandt and this could be a way to do this. Some other ways to improve this situation is to surround it by great other stuff so they are embarrassed to do it. Ed suggested a policy to re-evaluate the sign ordinance.

Policy 8 could be a vision and a theme for the whole corridor. David asked if Policy 8 was just for commercial. Rosemary responded that she thought it was and said it should be added to the wording. Jim suggested that signs only be allowed with specific limitations and we follow up and

make sure the rules are followed. A policy could be that we encourage or empower the town to hire more people to enforce the laws and then maybe there is something more we can do with “teeth”. Seth believes there is a need for a comprehensive policy or solution of how to address the sign issue from a visual impact perspective. Chris recalls when the original sign ordinance was written there was a lot of thought to try to figure out a way for the temporary sign/banners to go up, to try to help the small business person. A new policy might be less accommodating. Anthony concluded that there are 2 options to address the issues the committee is discussing. One is to evaluate the sign ordinance and the other is to develop a streetscape design manual. Michael says you have to create something you can enforce. You can’t set standards that you can’t enforce. Chris asked Jeff if the DES staff gets involved with sign removal. Jeff confirmed they absolutely do remove temporary signs from many public spaces in Cortlandt. Jim Creighton asked also that the municipal signs (speed limit signs, stop signs, etc) be trimmed of the branches and leaves. The Gateway signs should be as clean as possible and kept nice.

Rosemary then mentioned a section of the Chapter dealing with lighting and she acknowledge Michelle Robbins hard work on lighting language to improve things like protecting night sky vision and limiting light spillover in commercial projects. This is something we need to be better at. Where the lighting ordinance did work well was in the Annsville Circle at the Mobile Gas Station. The lights do not spill over and it is completely safe and works.

Seth asked since this is a sustainable Master Plan could we talk in the Goal about energy efficiency in regards to lighting? Maybe it can specifically talk about energy efficient LED lights. Within the lighting ordinance we must require state of the art technology. Dani suggested that when they are replacing fixtures they have to use energy efficient lighting.

Michael Huvane noted that *Policy 13 Adopt a lighting ordinance that ensures safety and night sky access where appropriate through adherence to light trespass and up light requirements in perpetuity*- is more of “light noise” than as a standard for lighting. The standard for lighting should be set. Flaam noted that under the lighting ordinance box more details are provided as to what the ordinance should include. It was agreed that the word sustainable should be added to the lighting ordinance title. Seth asked that “efficiency” is incorporated into the actual Goal policy. Dani stated that the word sustainable does not mean green house gas emission reduction. Rosemary agreed that the words green house gas emission will be added. Dani suggested to say that you can say it is environmentally sustainable, or put sustainable with the underlying definition that it is environmentally, economically and socially beneficial. Anthony asked who is in charge of enforcing the light ordinance. Ed Vergano and staff are responsible for this.

Anthony spoke about the survey, which is mentioned on page 1 and 2, and that 60% of the people that answered the survey said that Cortlandt Boulevard is the town center.

Flam reviewed the Sustainability Principles which were created to have a common thread throughout the plan and have been chosen to guide the “sustainability” aspect of this Master Plan. They were created by Rosemary, Chris and Ed and the AKRF consultants. Each policy will support one or more of these principles. The following Icons and principles were reviewed:

Community Engagement - sustaining community engagement throughout the Master Plan

process and beyond, particularly during implementation, throughout the citizen's guide interaction with the website and an improved digital use experience, communication and education initiatives.

Everyone agreed that the icon was fine.

Ecological Harmony - preservation open space and natural resources that promote harmony between ecological resources.

Jim's initial reaction to the icon was that it resembled a bi-hazard symbol. It was decided to remove the triangle and leave the flower or perhaps a circle of arrows.

Economic Vitality - Policies fitting under this principle discuss ways of improving the economic vitality of the community by encouraging certain types of development such as the TOD, MOD & WSD, improving efficiency of the permitting and approval process, improving access to and quality of jobs, developing local resources to attract businesses to the Town and ensuring that residents support local commerce and tourism.

Energy Efficiency - Focusing on reducing the amount of energy required to provide products and services throughout the Town via initiatives related to solar and alternative power sources, use of electric vehicles and improving building codes to allow for energy upgrades.

Mobility - Improving mobility for all residents and visitors through improved public transit options, safety improvements to traffic, encouragement of bicycle use and furtherance of walkability throughout Cortlandt via pedestrian networks and trails.

Michael suggested a train be used to represent MOD, TOD, etc. Others felt to keep the icon, as is.

All ideas dealing with public transportation are included.

Public Health - Creating a healthy environment for the public through policies that ensure active and healthful living, limit exposure to environmental hazards and provide equal access to community resources.

All social services fit under Public Health.

There was a discussion of the apple icon. It reminded some of Apple computers. Barbara suggested a stethoscope. Seth thought that an apple still represents good health.

Resilience - Resilience refers to a community's ability to tolerate, adapt and bounce back from events and their adverse impacts through improving capacities at the Town and/or resident level, preparing the Town for future flooding and extreme weather events and designing new systems to better manage stormwater.

Resilience is the next step beyond sustainability.
Everyone should be more self-reliant.

All agreed they liked the resilience icon.

Resource Management - Improving the management of the Town's resources, both natural and built, such as sewer and water infrastructure, open space, coastal, existing housing and roadway resources.

Flaam stated that the difference between resource management and ecological harmony is that resource management is a lot more about both natural and built resources which are transformed for our use.

Rosemary suggested that it would be better to use fewer icons because we want this to be very consumable.

Seth noted that the resource management icon is very nature centric, right now as is the ecological harmony because it is nature based, by its nature. If resource management is going to be both natural resource management, as well as infrastructural resource management maybe you want to take the natural resource management and put it into the basket of ecological harmony. Have infrastructural resource management be an icon - Seth suggested using the waterworks icon from the monopoly game.

The Historic Preservation & Cultural Resources Chapter was looked at.

It is in the "In Design" template. Anthony explained that you can see what the call out boxes look like and what pictures have been incorporated and tables. Anthony pointed out the color margins. Different chapters will have different colors. Seth suggested you keep the color scheme uniform throughout the Master Plan but the placement of the offset (the smaller color) to look like tabs.

The colors will have to be chosen. The icons will be in red.

Seth asked if icons would be used to cross reference policies that are mentioned in different chapters. Rosemary stated that we are trying not to have a policy that will live in two different chapters. Flaam will count how many policies that will have a "see also".

Seth noted that the use of this document going forward is to reference policies to people, projects and to developers. The metrics are a NYSEDA thing. Chris thought the metrics should be numbered and there will be many fewer metrics than policies. Goals will not be numbered; policies will be numbered (sequentially throughout the document).

Flaam asked for more pictures with good quality (preferably not from your cell phone) which are due by the August meeting.

Rosemary explained that we are trying to make September be the last meeting of the MPC. In that meeting all the chapter reviews will be completed. The Town Board will complete the Master Plan in its final form. Rosemary asked for suggestions for the pictures to be used on the heading of each chapter.

Minutes submitted by Judi Peterson