



RAW RESULTS OF PHASE ONE PUBLIC INPUT: PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP

Village of Montebello Comprehensive Plan Update

Prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

On September 28th 2016 at 7:00 PM, the Village of Montebello Comprehensive Plan Commission held a workshop for the purpose of collecting background data, views and opinions from community residents and stakeholders. Given that this was the first public workshop at the outset of the Comprehensive Plan Update Process, the purpose of this meeting was to identify public and stakeholder sentiment regarding existing conditions within the Village.

To accomplish this, Turner Miller Group - the Comprehensive Plan consultants - coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan Commission to design a meeting that would consist of numerous break-out groups, respective to five discussion topics that the Village Comprehensive Plan Commission had previously selected at their regular meetings. These discussion topics, largely characterized as having emphasis within previous Comprehensive Planning efforts within the Village, were chosen due to their specified relevance in guiding future growth or conceptual development within the Village. The five (5) breakout topics were exhibited throughout the introductory presentation by Turner Miller Group, and included the following topics:

- Economic Development
- Historic Resources, Aesthetic & Community Character
- Parks, Open Space, Recreation & Natural Resources
- Transportation, Circulation & Roads
- Housing, Inter-Municipal Matters & Other

This meeting was well-attended by roughly twenty members of the public and local media. The meeting began with introductions and a welcome by the Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Commission – Melanie Golden. Melanie introduced the members of the Commission and invited all attendees to provide any and all input they may have so that the update to the Comprehensive Plan is inclusive of public comments. Max Stach, AICP provided a short description of what a Comprehensive Plan was, the plans previously undertaken by the Village in the past, and explained why the Village was undertaking its update. Max also explained the concept of a community and elaborated on the purpose of this public meeting. Matthew Ryan, AICP introduced the process that the consultant team and the Commission had undertaken thus far, the next steps involved with the Comprehensive Plan Update process, provided a framework for the workshop procedure.

METHOD

Prior to the meeting, a number of tables had been set up around the Montebello Community Center meeting room. As attendees entered the meeting room, they were initially directed to sit among rows of chairs that were lined up in front of the presentation screen. The introductory presentation was then given and instructions about the breakout tables announced.

As mentioned above, the primary goal of this public open house workshop was to gather input and sentiment pertaining to specified topics and the existing conditions within Montebello, as well as thoughts on the future of planning and emphasis within the Village of Montebello.

It was explained, that attendees interested in discussion pertaining to one particular topic were also free to rotate among the other tables at which four other discussion topics were ongoing. While some members of the public chose to discuss one topic due to familiarity and/or knowledge of the topic, most individuals made their way from one breakout table to another.

One member of the Comprehensive Plan Commission was assigned to each breakout table as a facilitator, while another was assigned to each breakout table as a note taker. The majority of the breakout groups were additionally assisted by members of the consulting team. The facilitators began the breakout discussions by introducing themselves and having each member present at the group introduce themselves and provide a brief statement as to their interest or familiarity with the Village and the topic of discussion. Ground rules for respectful conduct were given and enforced. In order to avoid groups from being "steered" by members of the Comprehensive Plan Commission, facilitators were asked not to contribute their own opinions to the group discussion.

The facilitators then led their group through the Open House and solicited public input, opinion, and feedback on the selected topics. This exercise had facilitators prompting group discussion on the conceptual ideas and visions developed within the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Village's 2008 Economic Development Plan, the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update, as well as the 2010 Historic Resources Survey completed for the Village. Facilitators also gathered additional public comments pertaining to other major community needs, concerns, or ideas pertaining to the breakout topic. In order to gather and record all input, the note takers at each breakout table utilized large post-it pads upon which each public comment was written as it was received. Each of the topic-specific breakout tables were also provided with one or more large 36" X 28" maps of the Village displaying resources that related to their breakout topic; for example, the Transportation, Circulation & Roads table utilized a large map with road names, railroads, and symbols for roadway jurisdiction, while the Parks, Open Space, Recreation & Natural Resources table utilized maps from the 2009 Greenprint plan, as well as a base map of all protected open space and trails within the Village. Participants at each breakout table were encouraged to mark up and write on these maps as a means of communicating any location-specific comments or knowledge related to streetscapes and roadway conditions, protected open space and parks, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, trail corridors, parking lots, existing and/or proposed businesses, stores, and emergency services. Many of the graphic mark-ups on the maps, explained below, were crucial towards accurately assessing and documenting existing conditions in the Village as well as the potential to develop or integrate site-specific examples and locations at which particular visions for the Village could be implemented.

Groups were given approximately five minutes for introductions and roughly forty-five minutes to review and gather input on their specific topic of focus. Time periods were not strictly enforced. With some groups proceeding more slowly than others, an additional five minutes was added at the end of the process to allow groups to finish.

Lastly, Melanie Golden thanked all attendees for coming and closed the meeting. It is noted that the responses set forth below are paraphrased notes of more robust discussions held at the meeting. Since the Commission members and consultant team were directly involved as

facilitators, these discussions will be reflected by the continuing involvement of the group facilitators as Commission members.

RESULTS

These are the raw results from the exercise and no analysis of results is offered at this time.

Economic Development

- Minimum acreage for farms should be reduced (currently 10 acres)
 - Allow small farms – fits within Montebello Vision and Goals
 - Allow farming without being an accessory use
 - Consider a bee-keeping law which would consider allowing this use without requiring an “accessory use”
- Community Garden at Village Hall
 - Children’s playground and public use is an asset to the Village
- Agricultural Districts – are these within the Village of Montebello?
- Expand uses permitted within R-2, R-3 & R-4 zones on Commercial and Industrial Property Inventory Map: Rella Boulevard
- Review home-based business issues and laws: permitted, special permit uses and/or accessory and supplementary use regulations:
 - Seems archaic in light of telecommuters and new business models (e.g. home offices, professional offices and/or apartment as accessory uses)

Historic Resources, Aesthetic & Community Character

- Revise what constitutes a commercial farm: this should be feasible for smaller lots than what is currently allowed for in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Fire Alarm Siren on corner of Hemion Road and Montebello Road is a nuisance and should be relocated;
- Early Farmhouses should be prioritized for preservation and/or recognition by the Village, County, State or on the National level;
- Scenic & Historic Roads District
- Barns Study
- Blind Players Club

Parks, Open Space, Recreation & Natural Resources

- Viola Road needs to be safer:
 - Places to walk and bike
 - Circulation in neighborhoods that are safe
- Bee Hives: protect as a use by residents within the Village
- Small growing garden (Farm) lot size should be under ten (10) acres
- Reference 2009 Traffic Calming Recommendations in order to facilitate additional trail development (on-road bike lanes, sidewalk and/or off-street trails throughout and adjacent to the road network)
- Revise/update definitions in zoning to differentiate farms, agricultural operations, small-scale agricultural uses, and home-based agri-businesses

- West Gate Road, opposite Belvedere: Storm Drain needs cleaning out; filled with sediment

Transportation, Circulation & Roads

- Speeding on Lake Road and Mile Road is a concern
- Four-way Stop on Lake Road: over 40% of drivers do not stop:
 - Implement speed bumps or speed cushions?
 - Lower speed limit from 30mph to 25mph?
- Hemion Road and Montebello Road Intersection:
 - Extremely unsafe intersection
 - Potential to implement a traffic circle?
 - Placing stop signs on both approaches on Montebello Road?
 - Thresholds for signalization? (inquire with County Highway & Town DPW)
- Mile Road and Viola Road Intersection:
 - Visibility coming off Mile to Viola is impaired due to overgrowth and fencing
 - Raised Sewer Grate on Viola causing issues for motorists and cyclists
 - Sunken Utility on Mile Road heading to Viola
- Need to install a street light at Kings Gate and Route 202
- First House on Kings Gate off Route 202 on the right: Site Distance of Driveway is unsafe

Housing, Inter-Municipal Matters & Other

- Public and Private Schools: Location, Planning for Increased or Decreased enrollment at either type; busing concerns; site-specific planning needs
- Need a supermarket, kosher meat store, and mom & pop stores within the Village
- Bicycle Path on Mile Road would be ideal within the Village
- Easement from Canterbury to Park
- Explore means by which an accessory use can be permitted on a site without the “required base use” (e.g. single family house, agricultural operation, commercial business shouldn’t be necessary to establish a permitted accessory use.
- Idea of buying golf course from Ramapo
- Coordinate with the Town of Ramapo to beautify Senior Center on Route 202