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Town of Barrington Informational Meeting Comprehensive Plan Survey Results August 26, 2006

Dave Wilcox (Planning Board Chair)
Mary Mann (Planning Board Member)
Marilyn Scharf (Planning Board Member)
Marion Loudon (Planning Board Member)

Jason Haremza (G/FLRPC Staff) (JH)
Mark Denecke (G/FLRPC Staff) (MD)

32 members of the public.

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm 8/26/06. Mr. Wilcox explained focus of meeting--discussion of survey results. (See handout of powerpoint presentation.) Discussion of the survey will follow the survey topics - Land Use, Services, Protection and Preservation. Comprehensive plan dates from 1975. Barrington has a Zoning Code. Explained what a comprehensive plan is and is not. Think of the following terms/ideas when thinking about the comp plan: rural character, residential, recreational, and control.

Q: Please define SEQR? JH defined the term and the process (State Environmental Quality Review Act).

Mr. Wilcox explained the general survey responses in more detail, brief notes follow (238 of 950 response rate – 26%). Balanced demographic response - half from lake, half from ag (categories: year round, seasonal, lake res, and ag res). 75-80% support preserving rural character of Barrington. Very little support for heavy industrial, some for light industrial, ag development. Controls for residential development. Majority responses related to road maintenance issues...county, town. No strong support for sewer and water. Strong support for controls on adult entertainment, junkyards, structure on the lake and large livestock ops. Other issues: Rental property control, noise control, taxes, no sprawl. Next, Mr. Wilcox explained results question by question, demographic questions first, then moving into results by the three categories.

Land Use

Results (graphs) presented. Discussion of the data split by demographics (lake and ag?). Questions/Comments follow.

Mr. Doug Johnston: Control means restrict, implied in questions in the survey (thing dog control), implied restrict subdivisions. Rural nature vital, very important.

Mr. Scott Drake: Agree with previous gentleman, we come here to get away (from Elmira). He answered the survey, relative to how it is now. Lot sizes should stay the same relative to now. If no one was there, if it was empty, I would've wanted the lot size larger.

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Mr. Wilcox: Q to audience, if it was empty/blank, how many would want larger lots...majority of hands were raised in support.

Comment, JH: It can change, we are seeing assemble of lands, place like Canandaigua Lake, buying up multiple lots, combining for one larger lot. Something to think about as you comment today and in writing.

Mr. Jerry Lange: I hoped that multi-family dwellings would be (specified) away from lake. Also, lightning rod – this planned development on lake, a lot of us have learned a lot, how would the survey look today, probably fewer neutrals.

Ms. Barbara Allerdice: Words, terms...quality of life is definable, things people value highly are available, to us here, QOL different than suburban Rochester. We need to plan for what we want. Noise, traffics, pop density, water pollution, seaweed these things are important to me, my QOL goals. We all have in common preservation of lake and surrounding community. Once they're gone, they're gone.

Mr. Jamie Bly: Reference proposed water system that was not passed, re: development - town houses, planned development -- they'll need much different control, sewers along lake road, not just holding tanks. What will happen? Hydrants... Big concern is what's going to be supporting these complexes and that it be away from the lake.

Services

Mr. Wilcox explained the survey responses in this category. Road conditions are the number one priority for services. Comment from Ms. Scharf (PB): neutral as related to fire protection...people may have answered it as neutral because they're covered (Dundee, Penn Yan, Wayne) and thought, how can we improve. Sewer service question was split between lake and ag. Questions/Comments follow:

Mr. Jamie Bly: Answered my question re: geographic splits, things that are important to people on the lake and off.

Mr. Jerry Lange: Re: issues like snow removal. I picked neutral to mean, it's working fine. We need it!

Ms. Nancy Rembaun: similar to re: police. It's fine now, but should we get more densely populated development, this will be much

Ms. Barbara Allerdice: In re: to what services you want, if this means my taxes would go up, that would change my opinion (I may or may not choose it).

Comment, Mr. Wilcox: Premise, keep in mind that services need to be paid for (funding in the form of tax dollars).

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Mr. Doug Johnston: These are quality of life issues as well, and they are quantifiable. If you move our house away from lake, taxes change dramatically, the lake adds the value. Looking at services, the fire department couldn't save my house, I don't see fire as relevant. I get water from the lake, electric, that's it. I feel I am in a very quantifiable quality of life situation.

Protection and Preservation

Mr. Wilcox explained the responses for this category, areas we think the town should control or more closely study. We were thinking of these as the hot topics of the day (wind farms, adult entertainment, large livestock ops, unregistered motor vehicles, recreational vehicle storage, subdivisions, junkyards, antennas, cell towers, gravel pits, noise, odors, structures on the lake, and hunting camps. Large livestock, adult entertainment, junkyards and structures on the lake had significant responses. (Windfarms, (slightly) less than 50% think of respondents should be regulated.)

Question: difference between cell towers and antennas. Antennas relates more to personal antennas.

Last section, preservation areas of highest priority (similar to previous question, which one(s) do you care about the most). Keuka Lake by far had the highest significance.

Comment, Mr. Johnston: they all relate to preserving rural character, save for preserving historic sites, shows a high affinity to protect/preserve rural character.

Comment, JH: This list of issues Mr. Wilcox showed (protection list), half-minute planning lesson, towns in NYS can regulate what happens, save for a few instances, specifically large livestock operations (and most/all agricultural activities). See NYSA&M . Cell towers and gravel pits can be regulated to some extent, but not across the board. Cell towers regulated as utilities, some say in siting. Gravel pits – all or nothing reality.

Question, Mr. Johnston: Does that include location (large livestock operations)?

Response, JH: If it is in a county agricultural district, it would be very hard to impossible to say No. Outside that county ag district, you would have more say.

Comment, Ms. Scharf : Our experience, we wrote a law that would create a lot of hoops to jump through (to site large livestock op in ag res district). County planning board denied, town board majority plus one passed, on the books.

Response, JH: Towns can pass a lot of laws that stand until challenged. Said law may not stand a legal challenge.

Comment, Mr. Wilcox: Plenty of written comments also (to discuss) – verbatims.

Question, Ms. Mann: Are their state env laws that would protect the lake from CAFO's?

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Response, JH: CAFO's are regulated by DEC. However, DEC enforcement is limited.

Question, Mr. Steve Knapp: Very interested in Eggleston's Gully, very important natural treasure for Barrington. What can the comp plan do to protect and preserve natural treasure like Eggleston's gorge and falls? (JH: park question while Mr. Wilcox finishes up.)

Mr. Wilcox: returned to demographics for survey responses, related to sewer and water, divided by lake and ag residential .

Comment, Mr. Knapp: Implication is that lake people care more about sewer and water service.
Response, Mr. Wilcox: Yes.

Mr. Wilcox highlighted some of the written comments/verbatim. Some seem to contradict the survey findings. This survey is not all inclusive, only 26% responded! A survey elicits only so much information. Strongly encourage you to read the survey personally, especially the verbatim comments, available at town hall.

Comment, Mr. Johnston: Don't understand why you are concerned about control. Control limits you from doing some things, and allows others (?). Our system of government responds to the participants, same goes here, if you didn't fill out a survey, why should we

Response to earlier question Mr. Knapp, JH : (comp plan and pres natural areas). There can be a danger of comp plans being too general (e.g. Penn Yan –preserve main street, rural town – pres rural character). When these thoughts are put into law, that's where people start to disagree. Town can specifically set areas aside for conservation/preservation. Town could say a certain area, goal is to buy conservation easement. Town could say in this specific area, all buildings have to go through site plan review, not in the whole town, just in this area we want to protect.

Mr. Wilcox: Remember that the comp plan isn't a law. We can say what we want, can't say the how...

Mr. Knapp: Railroad bed, remains of historic trestle...things to include/protect/preserve.

JH: Comp plan could spec this is a feature we want to protect. Spectrum of how to accomplish...conservation easement, nonprofit buys it, and so on. Also, make sure we (the contractor) know what the special areas are.

Question, unidentified female: What did you mean by the word *control* when you wrote this survey?

Response, Mr. Wilcox: Regulation, NOT restrict.

JH: Open to all and summary comments, also please comment, written, verbal and so on, until the deadline!

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Ms. Mann: Three calls this week, all three live on lake, near proposed project, they are getting older and would like an opportunity to remain near lake, but not responsibility of taxes, upkeep of home/cottage. What are their options?

JH: Struggle for a lot of communities, rural and suburban. Continuum isn't always there, single family home to nursing home, nothing in the middle.

Comment, Mr. Bob Scharf: In speaking of development, we have to think of slippery slopes. Some places in this country are so wonderful, they are protected from impacts. (No cars, snowmobiles). What about the disabled? How do wheelchairs get into protected areas.

JH: Balance is tough. Small town wanted a youth program, but couldn't support it.

Mr. Knapp: Access to the lake doesn't have to mean siting right on the lake. It's up to the PB and Comp Plan to sort out this balance of lake access. There are answers to those questions, even condominium proposals in Penn Yan and Hammondsport.

Mr. Johnston: Economics are cold and heartless. Cold reality, the place we have now may become unaffordable and we may have to go, that's it. Same goes, for relocating to a lake view.

Mr. Rob Loudon: Far more appropriate for seniors where there are services, Penn Yan or Hammondsport, hospitals and so on.

Ms. Mary Sanford: I don't live in this town, property owner on Esperanza Road, live in Seattle, WA. I hope and pray that these planned developments don't come to pass. Crass developments on Lake Washington (Seattle, WA). I don't want Keuka Lake to look like Canandaigua Lake. This is a gem.

Comment, Mr. Roy Priestly (speaking for wife Carol Conlon) Sr.: Lived in Niagara Falls, Ontario. A lot of people take things for granted. Some year-round residents take things for granted. Doesn't dawn on you when you see it day to day. This is some kind of place!

JH: Landscape changes don't happen in one fell swoop. Death by a thousand paper cuts. One project, one change, BUT incrementally, over time, they change the place.

Mr. Knapp: Issue to raise...growing concern among vineyards that vineyard property is disappearing because of price, needed for the grapes, prime vista lots too! Need to protect near-lake agricultural property for the vineyards, a hallmark of our Finger Lakes!

Ms. Mann (PB): How would that land be lost from wine production?

Mr. Knapp: Pricing and economics of wine. CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION study, win

JH: Open to general comments

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Ms. Kathy Murray: Question, where are we on the condos? When are we going to hear about this?

Mr. Wilcox: This is not a public meeting about the condos, this meeting was clearly advertised, it is not about the condo plan.

JH: The condo issue is not in the Planning Board's hands, it's in the Town Board's hands. Applicant has not finished Part 1 of the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF).

Ms. Sanford: Conflict of interest for G/FLRPC to work on both things?

JH: No, G/FLRPC is a public entity and is representing the town's interests in both projects (comp plan and review of condo development).

Mr. Knapp: Do you feel from the survey that the results on something like lot size would lead the Planning Board to not recommend major changes to lot size in the districts.

Mr. Wilcox: (pers) We're not there yet. This is a starting point, a discussion of a data set. The Planning Board has a responsibility to represent everyone in town, regardless of response (to survey).

Question, unidentified female: Where did you get the list to mail to? Can you find those people when they pay their taxes?

Response, Mr. Wilcox: Our document could not reach them, foreign mail addresses...other cases, no way to reach them. A good many were mailed to organizations, corporations, trusts...most of those didn't come back.

Mr. Knapp: Answers to question of lot size/lake res: would the split between non-lake people...overwhelming survey, rural character.....(unclear) point: Planning Board should know that the town wants zoning code to be enforced.

Mr. Wilcox: Issue of PDD? Won't go there? Question for the whole Planning Board.

JH: Planning Boards are advisory in NYS.

Ms. Sanford: Help me understand. I see the work that went into the survey. Why was the survey even done?

JH: Survey was done to gauge opinions of the town, one tool to do this, this evening is a tool in the same manner. We don't govern by survey and referendum in NYS. Survey was not done in response to specific proposal.

Mr. Wilcox: All volunteer work supported this survey, only cost to town was postage.

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Mr. Johnston: Allerdice property, boathouse on lake, house across road? Property/zoning question. What constitutes lakeside property?

Mr. Wilcox: Lakefront property must be on lakeshore, lakeside residential district is different, anything West of Route 54.

Mr. Johnston: Thank you for you efforts Mr. Wilcox, et al.