

**Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council
Regional Engagement Sub-Regional Forum**

November 5, 2014

Yates County Breakout Session

Session led by David Zorn

Notes by Tom Kicior

Attendees:

Tim Dennis, Yates County Legislature

Shawna Bonshak, Yates County Planning

Steve Griffin, Yates County IDA

Alex Taylor, Yates County IDA

Sherry Morse, Yates County Workforce Development

Elizabeth Russell-Orr, Yates County Workforce Development

Brownfields

- Penn Yan boat marina- brownfield site. County owns, site with private developer remediation work almost completed
- Some abandoned gas stations are an issue
- One site located at routes 54 and 14 is a potential brownfield, economic opportunity. Site is a vacant gas station, taxes aren't paid, and the County is not interested in taking ownership. Current ownership status is not known.
- Few industrial brownfields. One power plant property in Dresden may be a brownfield site, but no discussions have occurred regarding redevelopment of the site.
- The Morton salt site, owned by the County, is not a problem presently
- The water street NYSEG site is scheduled for cleanup in 2015 or 2016. Cleanup will include gas plant and soils including the outlet. Currently waiting on DEC approvals, but this site is a priority and has been in the works for years.
- The Jackson Street brownfield listed on the sheet may be a different location. There is a substation on Lindon Street, maybe that is the site that should be referenced? Review plan to determine exact site.

Economic Distress

- Milk processor, is growing and just rented space in the Dundee foods building for processing and bag and box.
- Railroad siding needs to be in place at Elm Street/Hamilton Place, near Lakeview Organic Grain

- Low unemployment rate, and a lot of working poor
- Challenges there based on issue with surveying and the village's right of way conflicted
- If there was a rail siding they could bring materials in by rail instead of truck
- Rail siding would be located at Milo Mill Road and Himrod Road
- Open access fiber network is a priority project – it has been a struggle, but they are close to making a breakthrough with grant funding
- Potential for Broadband exists, but need to establish the backbone infrastructure, which is slated to be built in the next year with an 18 month timeframe for completion, with last mile connections possible after initial infrastructure is completed.
- HTR – they want money to build building incubator

Downtowns

- Rochester Community Design Center finishing up Penn Yan 2020 plan, which will be completed in December. This plan will be important to review as Penn Yan is the center of business for the County.
- Our Town Rocks initiative, focused on Dundee, Starkey, and Barrington neighborhoods and downtowns. Sponsored by the S2AY and Greater Rochester Health Foundation.
- The program has been critical to Dundee as it is such a small Village.
- Rushville received a Safe Routes to School grant and has put in new sidewalks, completed a sewer study, and applied to upgrade sewers.

Tourism and Recreation

- Quality of workforce is important.
- Lots of seasonal tourism jobs.
- Need to improve tourism customer service with a training program so workers know and understand more about the area and are able to refer people to the local places such as restaurants and other attractions.
- People should be visiting the area for a while and seeing different attractions, not leaving the area quickly.
- Workforce Development has been talking to Finger Lakes Community College about a certification course in this area to get people thinking more about tourism and the hospitality industry. Finger Lakes Community College is working on establishing a course, but a detailed status is unknown. The fact the College is not located in Yates County, may mean that Yates County will not be the focus of the Course.
- Need to include more specific information about Yates County and the lakes in the type of program they are thinking about, but marketing the fingers lakes as a whole is also very important.
- Can Yates County establish its own program where business can send their employees for training? Yes, but the challenge is getting the businesses to buy in and send their employees along with finding someone who can conduct the training.

Money is needed to complete this effort. The program could be strictly a Yates County approach of it could be a Finger Lakes wide effort.

- Recreation is a missing piece in the county, there is a huge lack of recreational funding in the county.
- Need more cultural activities.
- Need white-collar family activities.
- Recreation department is small and has difficulty maintaining the current assets.
- There are two village parks with swimming access that need improvements, but are both great and important assets.
- Marketing of recreational assets can be improved as well.
- One of the ideas and projects in the Penn Yan 2020 plan is making little parks and improving what they have currently have. These are high priority goals.
- Outlet trail is very important but they don't have any funding, it has been set back because of flood and now it is not open
- These types of services are good for visitors but even more important for residents and quality of life. Quality of life improvements can help in attracting and retaining a quality workforce.
- Improvements to quality of life are important. The higher income population doesn't live in the county full time.
- Survey was completed and showed that visitors and residents want the same thing (800 survey responses) (Steve Griffin has a copy of the survey)
- The finger lakes trail, and outlet trail could be world class if maintained
- Maintaining the outlet is a major priority, 'friends of the outlet' needs 5k to open, but has been unable to raise that much. The outlet might actually need more like 300k to make it great
- Funding for the trail is a priority (it's a multicounty trail/priority)
- Recreation and culture for families is really lacking it's hard to attract workers (like teachers) and new residents.
- Finger Lakes museum is a priority, Phase 2 is likely completed (Building septic arch plans) and they did not apply for CFA funding this round.
- North end of Keuka lake there are issues with access, with dredging needed
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Waterfronts

- Seneca Lake Watershed Management Plan is working on getting all of the municipalities on board. They need funding to work on implementation, this is very important to Yates county as there is a huge amount of land on Seneca Lake, but most of the focus on planning has been Keuka Lake.
- There are land use issues along Keuka Lake; towns are using up agricultural land based on how they allow land subdivision and residential development. This is a poor/inefficient use of land.
- Hillscapes are an issue: one house goes up and they clear out 3 acres, another house comes up and another 3 acres go up.

- Minimum lot sizes could be an issue in some places not sure. Planned residential areas (or planned development districts might help).
- Need to decide where to focus residential, and cluster development, not just allow it everywhere at very low density
- Need to balance agriculture needs and residential needs. Using up land inefficiently. A bit more dense actual 'neighborhoods' could be better. (Similar to Middle Cheshire in Canandaigua or Twin oaks in Benton). This may help attract residents as people want neighbors, especially if they have kids. Currently there are limited options for residential, except to live on large scattered lots, or on one of the lakes which is very expensive and not possible for many.
- Waterfront redevelopment infrastructure project, associated with Penn Yan marine, has a schedule and should be finished mid 2015 including infrastructure improvements

Natural Resources / Energy

- People are concerned about fracking, but it is probably not going to happen
- Village of Penn Yan is going over their hydro power allocation. Looking for ways to increase their allocation, is there a way to go after more?
- Village of Penn Yan has a municipal electric system, so they can supplement with regular electric, but it costs more.
- Cornell coop extension is working on a small farm methane digester.
- There was pressure a few years back for windmills in Italy but not recently.
- Geothermal is huge but its case by case
- Penn Yan will probably start looking into alternative energy, maybe getting some power from the falls at the outlet?
- Waste from milk farms is going to digesters

Land Use

- Yates is looking to update the agriculture and farmland protection plan this year, this is a priority and they are applying for funding soon
- The boundaries of the agriculture district were just updated
- Is there any need for municipal farmland protection plan?
 - County level is appropriate, current county plan has not been used enough, they need a new one and the county should take the lead on helping them.
- 14A Corridor study was completed in 2006. May be worth reviewing and looking at it again. South of Penn Yan there is a lot of land under agriculture protection/conservation easements. North of Penn Yan, there is some commercial development and will probably be a bit more along the Corridor.
- Dundee is working on a sidewalk analysis now
- Starkey is redoing their comp plan
- Viewshed plan – mostly in Jerusalem? Yates County will pull out some of the assessments to review in order to include in the regional viewshed project
- Middlesex steep slope ordinance may be approved this week (working on since 2009)

Buildings / Housing

- Housing development will probably quickly come to Benton in areas where the water is coming.
- Housing – quality, low income, challenge is available land with limited infrastructure. Hard to get developers to build septic systems and wells. The best land for housing development is scarce.
- Housing is a major issue
- Homelessness is a problem
- Hotel development, a priority in the FLREDC plan and may be funded this round even if the Region is not one of the big winners.

Infrastructure

- Water and sewer expansion running along route 14 is a priority (especially water)
- The wineries and breweries need water, some are using well water now and others are having water trucked in.
- DEC has given some of the wineries issues with waste water. A waste water study would also be good, this is the 2nd priority after water infrastructure
- Fox run, Anthony road, and 3 Brothers, put in for CFA funding on an engineered plan for wastewater onsite review. It is currently being reviewed. If the Region receives a top award from the state all three will get it, otherwise only one will receive funding.
- DEC has said this study could also be used for the rest of the wineries
- Benton is bringing water in to the Torrey line. From the Southern County line up to Benton/Torrey border (drawn on map). Just looking to do water right now.
- Benton on Route 14 is getting water now. They haven't used funding to get it.
- Perhaps they can do an analysis; they might be able to get funding for an engineering study through DEC with DEC funding.
- Torrey, Milo and Starkey still need water, just for corridor.
- Some issues with Dundee foods waste (no pretreatment); village plant couldn't handle the content of what they were giving them (not the volume, but the content). Not a problem with the plant really (although it is old). Maybe an upgrade is needed?
- The capacity of the plant isn't quite known
- There has been discussion of sewer in Jerusalem, the town would like to have it on the west bluff, but there have been arguments against it. Residents would probably not want it.
- Bringing water to Benton was critical
- Eastern corridor plan for water?
- Need transportation, public transportation, not a huge volume, but a huge area to cover, residents sometimes have to rely on taxis to get to work
- RGRTA has made presentations and talked about set routes as well as call for rides – RGRTA thought they could do that

- Need noise from employers, workforce, schools etc. to pressure this to happen. The workforce has been vocal about the need for public transportation, though employers don't seem to be having problems hiring due to transportation issues.
- Transportation Plan may need to be updated

Preservation / Cultural

- Samson Theater in Penn Yan is a high priority – on the list of 5 to revive. Going to take a lot of funding.

Environmental / Water Resources

- New watershed management plan for Canandaigua Lake and updating some of the laws

Other Plans/Other Thoughts

- Small county population/along with a Mennonite population skews some of the economic distress data including poverty and educational attainment
- Need to find a way to meet with the Mennonite population and find out more about them
- Mennonite map is created each year, its hand drawn, Shawna will send the information and G/FLRPC can digitize it.
- Are there any data sources that track data specifically on the Mennonite population? Census?
- Public health tracks live births, which may help track Mennonite population
- Some municipal comprehensive plans discuss the Mennonite population, but not many County plans
- G/FLRPC met with the Mennonite on a previous Comprehensive Plan and can utilize this information
- Reach out to mayors and chamber of commerce for additional input
- BOA Program no longer being funded
- Hazard mitigation plan – 2011 – should have identified projects in it. Flood control, issue with mapping in Penn Yan. FEMA had come a week before to start looking into remapping.
- Employment, medical, education, are priority needs
- Shared Services/improved efficiencies possible. Regional Jail; discussions between Yates and Schuyler Counties ongoing. Received 50k to study where they can be more efficient up to and including merging counties.
- Penn Yan, Yates county, milo, and School District talking about a shared facility for fueling and maintenance. Could be based on school and school aid.
- Keuka college Center for Business Analytics and Health Informatics is still a priority (FLREDC Plan)