

Memo

To: Joint Comprehensive Plan Committee

From: Jenni Easton, AICP, CNU-A

cc: Jim Pashek, Sarah Rizk

Subject: Suggested edits to address review comments

Date: November 20, 2025

Via: ☒ Email

It was a privilege to attend the November 12 hearings on the draft Joint Comprehensive Plan, and it was a pleasure to again see so many members of this committee and community actively taking part in shaping the plan to be the best it can.

We offer the following suggestions for revising the draft plan document. These suggestions are based on comments heard and submitted at both public hearings, ideas from committee members, official comments from the Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Development (referral No. 2025-25), and informal discussion with Town Attorney Joel Seachrist.

For all changes, ~~red strikethrough~~ indicates a deletion, and **green bold** indicates an addition.

Changes related to high-impact land uses

Page Revision

- 55 "Throughout the planning process, community input made clear the interest in revitalizing commercial areas, expanding access to the waterfront, preserving farmland and open space, and ~~accommodating clean energy without compromising~~ **adopting clear and strong regulations to protect** the community's rural character."
- 59 "Residents have expressed a desire to ~~balance these opportunities with~~ ensure that **these uses are governed by restrictive local** protections ~~for that prioritize~~ the rural character, environmental resources, and quality of life that define the Town and Village."

- 60 “Renewable energy ~~districts that set scale and siting guidelines to balance clean energy with scenic and environmental needs.~~ controls to limit the impact and negative externalities of industrial-scale land uses.”
- 63 “This Key Issue ~~will provide clear guidelines for large-scale energy development~~ will **articulate community priorities for the future regulation of industrial-scale renewable energy and other high-impact land uses**, while also finding ways to encourage residential renewable energy projects.”
- 74 “Local ordinances must ~~designate appropriate sites for utility-scale projects and~~ require performance standards for environmental protection and decommissioning **related to utility-scale projects**, as well as support smaller-scale renewable energy systems that are compatible with residential and agricultural uses.”
- 74 “**This planning process involved a thorough data-driven GIS analysis of potential parcel suitability for** ~~Environmental analysis indicates a limited number of parcels as potentially suitable for~~ high-impact uses like renewables, data centers, or battery storage. Analysis ~~for this plan~~ considered prime agricultural lands (from the New York State Prime Soils Database), wetlands, rare plant and animals, and other sensitive environmental layers. **Potentially suitable sites are very limited. Sites** ~~Those~~ such as the former County landfill on Dinsbier Road ~~are identified as appropriate due to their~~ , with status as brownfields and limited alternative uses, **may represent the most viable options.**”
- i. Both the Village and the Town should **develop and adopt strong controls for industrial-scale renewable energy uses, prioritizing the protection of environmental quality and existing community character. Examples from model ordinances and peer communities appear in the Appendix for general guidance.** ~~a land-use policy or renewable energy ordinance that supports residential renewable energy and balances commercial or industrial wind, solar, and battery storage uses.~~
- ii. ~~Use appropriate and defined zones for commercial-scale renewables, with performance standards for visual impact, setbacks, and decommissioning.~~
- 75 Move this page to the appendix as general guidance
- 76 Move this page to the appendix as general guidance
- 77 Move this page to the appendix as general guidance
- 78 Move this page to the appendix as general guidance ADD disclaimer that **“The information above is included only for general contextual reference as each community determines its own local standards. These terms do not represent any precedent to which the Town or Village is bound.”**
- 79 Move this page to the appendix as general guidance

80-82 Move these pages to the appendix as general guidance ADD disclaimer to each that “**The information above is included only for general contextual reference as each community determines its own local standards. These terms do not represent any precedent to which the Town or Village is bound.**”

Changes to emphasize watershed protection

Page Revision

62 **Protecting the region’s remaining natural open spaces and forest cover supports healthy waterways, thriving wildlife habitats, and long-term resilience. To guide this work, the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy identified and prioritized the most ecologically significant areas in its Comprehensive Regional Conservation Implementation Strategy. The resulting map, and an explanation of its importance, are included in the Appendix.**

Appx Add map

Using regional data sets, the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy evaluated every parcel in the county and scored them across 11 variables related to water quality, ecosystem and habitat health, and overall sustainability. These factors were combined into a Composite Conservation Score (CCS) for each parcel. Color categories were assigned to the CCS values to create a visual map of the county’s most ecologically valuable areas. Dark blue indicates the highest conservation value, while teal and green highlight areas with above-average contributions to water and environmental quality. Additional information about the analysis is available at the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy’s Strategic Land website: chautauquawatershed.org/strategicland.

Changes to address County comments

Page Revision

15 ~~Lake~~-Chautauqua **Lake**

48 Add example of build-to lines in the empty space for understanding and context

51 *Add two important local grant opportunities* (**Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth, Chautauqua County 3% Occupancy Tax Tourism Grant Program**)

104 *Include a priority to coordinate with the County on the Countywide Broadband efforts that are underway.*

112 ~~CARTS-CHQ~~ **Transit**

116 ~~Lake~~ Chautauqua Lake

Miscellaneous other changes

Page Revision

Appx Update language on p. 16 to match clarification on the scope of farming in the Town to updated language on p. 58 of the Plan