

TOWN BOARD MEETING OPENNING REMARKS OF SUPERVISOR MICHAEL B. SPECHT

At the last Town Board Workshop on Comprehensive Plan issues, I indicated that the Town Board would provide periodic updates on progress with that planning review process. As I also stated, at times the update would be brief and when there was more information to share that the updates will be lengthier. I am happy to say that the Town Website has already posted a brief update as promised.

Let me also advise what other steps referenced by me at the last Workshop Meeting have and will include.

First, the Town Website will have more detailed information on the plan update process. I have asked Town Planner Jackie Hakes' Firm to work closely with the Town's IT Department to improve the content and frequency of information that will be regularly posted on our Town Website.

Second, I have also asked our Town Planner's Firm to have a "Comment" part on the Northeast Ramapo page specifically devoted to the plan update process where all Town Residents can provide their comments that will be circulated to the Town Board and posted to the webpage. This makes the comment process easier to use and easier to respond to.

Third, I have also asked our Town Professionals to start a "**Frequently Asked Questions**" Section on this part of the Town Website so all can review answers that frequently arise in this plan update process and answers will be readily available.

Finally, I have asked our Town Professionals to make periodic presentations in future Town Board Meetings (as they did at the last Town Board Workshop Meeting).

Since several questions were presented after the last Workshop Meeting and the additional features to the Town Website are being put in place (but not ready yet), questions from the Public have been shared with Town Professionals who have provided the follow responses to common questions that I can share now.

Q. Why isn't the Town establishing a Plan before finishing the SEQRA Process?

A. No action can be taken by the Town on any plan or plan update without first starting and then finishing the SEQRA Process. The Comprehensive Plan update process is being combined with the SEQRA process and these processes are happening concurrently. Town Law allows for this and it is a logical approach to not only complete the update but also be in compliance with SEQRA. In this approach, environmental impacts will be evaluated during preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, rather than preparing a Plan first without consideration of the potential environmental impacts.

Q. What is the role of the Town Professionals in this plan update process?

A. The Town continues to be served by its existing and experienced professionals in this plan update process. MJ Engineering with Jackie Hakes and Laberge with Nicole Allen continue in a collaborative effort to provide planning recommendations. Attorney Ben Gailey with extensive experience in the planning update process will also work with our planning professionals to provide the Town with the most qualified advice available. Coordination of all those professionals will be done by the Town Attorney's Office.

Q. How will the Town address questions and concerns by Town Residents and those seeking to build in the Town?

A. The Town's Website will be significantly updated by having Town Planner Jackie Hakes's Firm work to regularly post updated information and also to have a place on the Northeast Ramapo page where all comments specific to the Northeast Ramapo effort can be provided.

Q. What is the "inventory" referenced in the approved Scoping Outline?

A. As part of the plan update process, an inventory of relevant Town wide information on existing conditions is being gathered as a baseline. This will help to inform the plan update and DGEIS.

Q. Why isn't the Town doing a Comprehensive Plan Update for the entire Town?

A. The Town is doing a Comprehensive Plan update for the entire Town. The SEQRA process has and will continue to develop information on Town wide issues generally and specifically the Northeast Ramapo Corridor Area. The SEQRA process will even expressly study relevant impacts from that Corridor on the rest of the Town. Due to the unique reality of 12 different Villages in our Town, the Town is doing a planning update comprehensively, but in a sequential manner. Our Planners have also advised given the different physical characteristic of the Town that the Northeast Corridor is a proper sequential start to a comprehensive plan update.

Q. What are the different parts of the Town's planning update.

A. The Town as required by law is reviewing its Comprehensive Plan. The last such Town wide review took place in 2004. The Town is certainly due for that review. As expressly authorized by Town Law, this plan review update is taking place within the SEQRA process known as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). The Town will also consider potential Code Amendments during this same process.

Q. What happens when the Town finishes the plan update review for the Northeast Ramapo Corridor?

A. When the Town completes that review, the Town Board plans to continue that review sequentially with other parts of the Town. After the Northeast Ramapo Corridor process is finished, the Town Professionals will be able to look at the process results to better inform the Town on any changes in procedure or substance best utilized in other portions of the Town during this update review process.