

An open letter to the residents of the Town of Smithville.

Smithville's Town Board and its Planning Board want to make you aware of the fact that, after several years' effort, we are approaching the final steps in creating a Comprehensive Plan for the Town.

A Comprehensive Plan--defined in State law--is a document describing a shared vision for a community's future. It is *not* a law. Comprehensive Plans exist currently in the Towns of Bainbridge, Columbus, Greene, New Berlin and Oxford; other Towns are in the creating process.

The existence of a Comprehensive Plan provides a Town with several important advantages: other governmental agencies must honor the Town's goals and standards; a plan helps identify and resolve local issues before they become local problems; a plan can promote coordination and sharing among government or non-government entities; a plan can support and attract business; a plan, *very importantly*, makes a community eligible for many state and federal grant programs; *most important of all*, a Comprehensive Plan can help preserve those things residents value most about their community while still promoting growth and development.

The Planning Board has completed a draft of a Comprehensive Plan. Before it can be finalized, there will be one or more public hearings for your input. But even before any formal public hearings, we believe you need to become aware of what is, and is not, in the Plan and have multiple opportunities to contribute to it. We are going to try to make it available for your inspection in a number of ways. On the internet, you will find a complete copy linked to www.SmithvilleNY.com. One or more copies will be available at the office of the Town Clerk, and also at the Smithville Store. It will be provided to the Genegantslet Fire Company. We are open to suggestions for other places that might be useful.

The Planning Board meets May 9 at 7:00 in the Community Center. This is your invitation to attend that meeting to either listen or speak to us with your reactions.

Please make an effort to examine this draft of the Plan and participate in its final creation. Contact either of us if you have other questions or comments. Thank you for your attention.

Tim Hanna, Planning Board Chair; Al Johnson, Smithville Supervisor