



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

## MEETING SUMMARY

**Purpose:** Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) Meeting #4  
**Date and Time:** August 17, 2023, 6:00 pm  
**Location:** Town Hall, 2 Halfmoon Plaza Halfmoon, NY 12065  
**Attendees:** See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b></p>	<p>Richard Harris, CPUC member and Committee Chair, welcomed attendees.</p> <p>MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C., the consultants assisting the Town with the Comprehensive Plan Update was represented at the meeting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nora Culhane Friedel</li> <li>• Jacob Landis</li> </ul> <p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) provided an overview of the agenda.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Presentation</b></p>	<p>Henrietta O’Grady, a member of the 2003 Halfmoon Comprehensive Plan Committee, provided a 10-minute-long presentation.</p> <p>Ms. O’Grady provided the Committee with a presentation focused on a historical perspective of growth in Halfmoon over the last 50 years. Her comments are attached. The Committee was encouraged to take her comments into consideration and thank her for her time and interest in taking part in the process.</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scope, Schedule, and Approach</b></p>	<p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) shared updates on the schedule of milestones going forward: (note this schedule is subject to change)</p> <p>Spring/Summer 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus Group Meetings</li> <li>• Vision / Goals</li> <li>• Strategies and recommendations</li> </ul> <p>Fall/ Winter 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> round of public engagement</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> round of public engagement</li> <li>• Draft plan</li> </ul> <p>Winter/Spring 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> round of public engagement</li> <li>• Draft plan</li> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> round of public engagement</li> </ul> <p>Summer 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final comprehensive plan</li> <li>• Adoption of plan</li> </ul>	<p>MJ will continue to provide physical comment cards (with QR code to website contact form) at all meetings as well as sign in sheets.</p> <p>MJ will provide a draft focus group list to CPUC for their review.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Public Participation Update</b></p>	<p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) gave an overview of the Focus Group meetings that took place from July 31 – August 3, 2023, to the committee.</p> <p>The meeting highlight documents will be shared with committee members following this meeting.</p> <p>Jacob Landis (MJ) reviewed key focus group meeting highlights with the committee and provided an opportunity for initial reactions and comments.</p> <p>Focus Group Meeting Highlights:</p> <p><u>History, Culture, Community Organizations – July 31, 2023:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events, drive-ins, and the Harvest Festival</li> <li>• Halfmoon maintains a partnership with the CP/</li> <li>• HM library and both would like to grow the relationship</li> <li>• Community Center is an existing community</li> <li>• Parking/traffic issues with events</li> <li>• Public transit has limitations (even with CDTA Flex Bus)</li> <li>• Looking for more green initiatives overall</li> <li>• Provide new businesses with information connecting them to resources within the Town</li> <li>• Have a more prominent News/Events tab on the Town Website</li> <li>• Clarify the location of news updates</li> </ul>	

	<p><u>Transportation and Infrastructure – July 31, 2023:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95 % of the Town has municipal water</li> <li>• Flex Bus has helped to alleviate tension on the Town Transportation resources but there is room for improvement</li> <li>• Rt 146 and Rt 236 intersection to be studied</li> <li>• The town does not own sanitary infrastructure (Saratoga County)</li> <li>• Resiliency planning for larger storms to address flooding</li> <li>• Need for a long-range plan to alleviate pressure along the major corridors that cause traffic</li> <li>• Address how the greater County is impacting the local Halfmoon residents and their travels</li> <li>• Pedestrian and Bike infrastructure is needed</li> </ul> <p><u>Local and Regional Partners – August 2, 2023:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halfmoon’s location is a key asset</li> <li>• Many connections throughout Halfmoon</li> <li>• As the Town grows, capacity needs to be kept up with</li> <li>• Recreation resources have transcended borders with residents of both Halfmoon and Clifton Park</li> <li>• Need to think about a regional approach</li> <li>• Change the perception of new business coming to Town</li> <li>• Can mixed use be used to entice younger families?</li> <li>• Plan for alternative energy (school bus EV requirements example)</li> </ul> <p><u>Parks, Recreation, and Open Space – August 2, 2023:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town has several resources: Town Park, baseball fields, agricultural spaces, forests, and recreation</li> <li>• Town Park has ADA access for parking and trails</li> <li>• Preservation efforts with the Town will stem from agriculture and maintaining Halfmoon’s identity</li> <li>• Neighborhood connectivity and access to Town recreation amenities should be a priority</li> <li>• Outline open space and preservation initiatives or create an Open Space Fund</li> <li>• Access to the waterfront needs emphasis (water-related maps for boaters)</li> <li>• The Bond Act could be an opportunity for the Town to provide the state with its priorities, especially regarding climate resiliency</li> </ul> <p><u>Emergency Services - August 3, 2023:</u></p>	<p>Focus Group Highlights documents will be provided to the committee for their review and consideration.</p>
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town of Halfmoon is considered a dispensary site (partnership with the County) – which has worked well</li> <li>• Demand for emergency services continues to rise with population increase, but many of the jobs are volunteer-based</li> <li>• Continuity of operations is essential for the County Halfmoon to continue to work closely with them.</li> <li>• The Recreation Department offers trail walks throughout the year but is trying to further the effort</li> <li>• The state pushes for cooling and warming centers and could use the senior center for a location where people can go, especially during power outages.</li> </ul> <p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) provided a Public Engagement Update.</p> <p><u>Upcoming Public Engagement Activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Website <a href="http://www.planhalfmoon.com">www.planhalfmoon.com</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Comment form available on website</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Public Meeting #3 – Fall 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presentation of the vision, goals, strategies, and preliminary recommendations to the public.</li> <li>○ The intent will be to gather feedback from the community at this stage prior to the development of the Draft Comprehensive Plan document.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vision Confirmation and Goals Discussion</b></p>	<p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) led an interactive exercise to elicit committee input on updating the vision statement for the updated comprehensive plan and introduced preliminary goals for the Plan.</p> <p><u>Preliminary Recommendations Introduction:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Step: Understand where you are (the Existing State)</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Step: Where do you want to be (the Desired State)</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Step: How do you get there? (Implementation)</li> </ul> <p><u>Vision Confirmation:</u> <i>The Town of Halfmoon envisions itself as a “lifelong” community, delivering a quality of life that highlights the charm, as well as social, recreational, and economic opportunities, enabling residents to make the Town their home for this and future generations. Halfmoon aims to be a growing, fiscally balanced place, that values and celebrates its historic, cultural, business, and</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Committee to continue to share thoughts and ideas with MJ Team via email over the next weeks.</p>

	<p><i>agricultural resources while remaining progressive in its efforts to conserve said resources and look to the future.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee provided feedback regarding the new Vision Statement that was created via input from the Committee.</li> <li>• The Committee wanted to include more about not just preserving farms, but preserving barns, open space, viewsheds, and other associated resources.</li> </ul> <p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) provided an overview of Goals and asked for feedback from the Committee.</p> <p>In the update, it was explained that the goals from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan had been further consolidated to create a more consolidated document that groups similar goals together when applicable. Nora presented the 2003 Goals, in their newly proposed sections, and gathered feedback from the Committee.</p> <p><u>Transportation and Mobility:</u> <i>Provide safe, convenient, and efficient transportation options for people and goods within, through and around the Town of Halfmoon, which minimize the impact of traffic on the Town’s character and quality of life.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the word “Encourage” instead of “provide.”</li> </ul> <p><u>Infrastructure and Community Facilities:</u> <i>Continue to provide and/or support adequate community facilities and services - including fire protection, police protection, emergency services, solid waste collection, education facilities, healthcare services, libraries, services for youths through seniors, and social services - that are responsive to the community’s expected level of service and safety and that continue to enhance the quality of life.</i></p> <p><i>Provide a utility infrastructure system that meets the demands of current residents and business and that will support future development in carefully planned areas of Town.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instead of “provide” use “support”</li> <li>• The Chair expressed his satisfaction with expanding utilities under this Goal.</li> </ul> <p><u>Housing:</u> <i>Provide a balanced blend of quality housing opportunities, including price ranges that are affordable for all income levels and housing types that consider the needs of older residents, young families (first time homeowners)</i></p>	<p>committee to receive homework week of 8/20/23, to provide feedback on Goals and offer preliminary recommendations for achieving the Goals.</p>
--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

	<p><i>and those with disabilities. Properly plan for and locate housing based on density and purpose to take full advantage of existing and future community services, alternative transportation opportunities, and recreational facilities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instead of “Provide” use “Promote” or “Encourage”</li> <li>• It was noted that NYS is calling for more housing and the Town has had a lot of development in certain areas, but it must be known that certain roads may be out of the Town’s jurisdiction.</li> </ul> <p><u>Quality of Life, Placemaking, and People:</u> <i>Create a land use management system that mitigates the adverse impacts of sprawl, discourages further sprawl, addresses concerns of conflicting land uses, responds to community needs, and protects and enhances Halfmoon’s resources, unique features and quality of life.</i></p> <p><i>Preserve and enhance Halfmoon’s identity, image, and quality of life in accordance with the vision for the future.</i></p> <p><i>Nurture and support the civic environment so that input from Town residents is considered a customary and integral component of the Town’s ongoing planning and implementation process.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes Growth Management, Town Character, and Civic Duty</li> <li>• Committee showed interest in further expanding on Town Character</li> <li>• It was suggested that the term “Placemaking” be changed to something more understandable</li> </ul> <p><u>History and Culture:</u> <i>Recognize, protect, and celebrate Halfmoon’s historic and other cultural resources.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee was satisfied with this goal</li> </ul> <p><u>Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Open Spaces:</u> <i>Maintain the viability of existing agricultural operations and preserve important natural and open space resources that contribute to the diversity, character, aesthetics, economy, and general health, safety and welfare of the community. Resources such as the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and their watersheds, viable farmland, mineral resources, ravines, woodlots, streams, aquifers, wetlands, floodplains, the escarpment and viewsheds are recognized for their role in drainage, water supply, agriculture, aesthetics, recreation, and wildlife habitat.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the terminology, change the start - “Maintain the viability”</li> </ul>	
--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

	<p><u>Recreation:</u> <i>Provide sufficient, well-located, and fully accessible, active, and passive recreational opportunities for all Halfmoon residents.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially use “promote” instead of “provide”</li> </ul> <p><u>Economic Growth and Sustainability:</u> <i>Promote diverse economic development that provides goods and services, employment opportunities, and tax revenues in well located commercial, office and industrial districts, compatible with the community character and vision for the future.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee was satisfied with this goal.</li> </ul> <p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) discussed how the committee can begin to form preliminary recommendations/ action items to achieve the presented goals.</p> <p>The Committee should consider feedback gathered through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report Card Exercise</li> <li>- Public Meetings</li> <li>- CPUC Meetings</li> <li>- Focus Group Meetings</li> <li>- Committee comments</li> <li>- Public Comments</li> <li>- Existing Conditions Information</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Community Profile Update</b></p>	<p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) explained that the Community Profile Section of the Comprehensive Plan Draft is in the process of being created. It will include discussions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Context</li> <li>• Historic and Cultural Places</li> <li>• Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends</li> <li>• Land Use and Zoning</li> <li>• Natural Resources and Water Quality</li> <li>• Parks, Recreation, and Open Space</li> <li>• Transportation and Mobility Resources</li> <li>• Economic Development</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<p>Nora Culhane Friedel (MJ) provided an overview of the next steps in the process:</p> <p><u>CPUC Town Tour:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 22, 2023</li> <li>• Consultant team and Town Staff to join committee members on a tour around Halfmoon.</li> <li>• CPUC Chair, Rich Harris, will highlight key locations</li> </ul> <p><u>Next Steps:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Community Profile</li> <li>• CPUC Homework</li> </ul>	<p>The next CPUC meeting is scheduled for Thursday October 19, 2023, at 6:00 PM</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Tour</li> <li>• Public Meeting #3 (Day/Time TBD)</li> <li>• Next Committee Meeting 10/19/23 at 6:00 PM</li> </ul>	
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:

Jacob Landis, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.

cc: Consultant Team, Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, Town, File

### Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC)

Name	Present
Chair: Richard Harris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jeremy Connors	
Paul Hotaling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Steven Kucskar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
William Herman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
J. Daniel Wojcik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joseph Landy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Donald Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nancy Morris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Deborah Curto	
Lyn Murphy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michael Moran	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Peter Bardunis	



## Town Representatives & Planning Support

Name	Present
Paul Marlow	

## Consultant Team

Name	Affiliation	Present
Jaclyn Hakes, Project Manager	M.J. Engineering	
Nora Culhane Friedel	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DRAFT

**FINAL DRAFT 8-15-23**

**OBSERVATION AND REMARKS FOR 2023 HALFMOON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
(MASTER PLAN)**

**Introduction**

My name is Henrietta O’Grady, a 60-year resident of the Town of Halfmoon, and a former member of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Committee, appointed to the Cultural and Recreational Committee and a former chair of the Town of Halfmoon Trails and Open Space Committee. I have participated in and witnessed several major improvements to the Town that resulted from that effort which should be pointed out to you, as you proceed in your deliberations.

I am bringing you a historical perspective to some of the things that occurred in the public information meetings and actions by the Town since the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Most importantly, the Vision Statement in the 2003 Comp Plan was prepared with a great deal of thought about the town’s future. It was thoughtfully prepared to try and keep some small-town features while, at the same time, recognizing and witnessing the wants and needs of future growth. Prior to adoption there was some discussion for the creation of an agricultural district to satisfy several requests to maintain the agricultural history and look of the community. However, that proposal was tabled after some landowner resistance and the imposition of land use rules. Land conservation was also discussed as a means to accomplish that goal with the final consensus emerging that it was a landowner issue that should be agreed upon between the landowner with the assistance of land preservation groups and town officials. There were also efforts to obtain a zip code for the town, a complicated federal issue of the postal service. However, since that time, a postal substation was built near Exit 8 which is located in the Town

of Halfmoon but is not identified as a Halfmoon substation, probably because it does not represent a specific zip code. Federal representatives were notified yet the zip code problem has not been addressed in a satisfactory manner. Several other citizen interests were served as a result of the 2003 Comp Plan.

### Comp Plan Town Survey 2002

The findings of the 2003 Comp Plan were based on a town wide survey of 7,500 households. Of that number, there were 1,449 responses received – almost 20%. The committee at that time was pleased with the large number of responses. As a result of that survey and neighborhood public outreach and workshops, many changes and improvements have emerged.

### A personal observation

I believe that there is one area in the Vision Statement that I find missing and would be beneficial to the Town of Halfmoon and the future of its residents and businesses. I am suggesting the addition of a statement that provides for town vigilance of environmental issues that would affect Halfmoon residents. The environment is important to the health of the community and its residents who seek clean air and water as recently witnessed in a public referendum by the state electorate. Quality of life is an important issue.

## EXAMPLES OF SOME IMPROVEMENTS

### Recreation

- A Town Center Park centralized many scattered ball fields, provided a walking trail around the perimeter, a large playground, open space for Town sponsored events and rest

rooms. There was some concern expressed over pocket parks in neighborhoods because of neighbor complaints and policing policies.

- With the help and foresight of several citizens and a resulting Trails Master Plan, the Town developed several historic trails along the former old Erie Canal and original Champlain Canal towpaths which currently provide for year-round outdoor, off-road recreational areas for walkers, bicyclists and cross-country skiers. The improvements to those historical trails also produced public accesses to the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers. The creation of those historical trails helped to remove several eyesores which had developed over the years from misuse and abandonment.
- The town took an active role and cooperated with Saratoga County, the old Heritage Trail Committee and Saratoga PLAN when federal grant seed monies were made available to develop and then to expand the Zim Smith cross county trail through Halfmoon– a result of over 20 years planning and commitment. The town has taken the initiative to expand on that success by adding a new paved parking area with restrooms and is contemplating adding a nature preserve.
- Worked with developers to provide a trail system within subdivision plans to help to connect to the Town’s major trail system, town parks or provide access to natural sites like Swatling Falls.

- The Town created Lighthouse Park on Rte. 32, Hudson River Road, to launch car-top boats, provide picnic shelter and public restrooms. The park also connects to off-road access to the Champlain Canal Trail. Grant monies provided the incentive to make expanded improvements.
- The creation and expansion of the Crescent Trail along the shores of the Mohawk River provided impetus to the State of New York to add the new car-top boat launch at the state dock adjacent to the Crescent Bridge on Route 9.
- The town's summer recreational program for children has to be mentioned as it proved popular with residents and has grown considerably over the years with the expressed support of the town.

#### Cultural Improvements

- Reviewed the historic sites in town and revised the list of historic sites. Great interest was shown in working with and highlighting the old Mechanicville Power Plant (ca 1895) along Champlain Canal Lock 2. That hydropower plant associated with Steinmetz is still operable to this day with some of its original turbines.
- Halfmoon joined the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway and partnered with Lakes to Locks Scenic Byway to highlight several historic sites and trails along the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers within its borders. Kiosks were provided by these two organizations to help inform the traveling public of Halfmoon's history.

- The Town purchased and refinished a small building which provided much needed space for the Historical Society to meet and to display the town's growing collection of historical artifacts which had accumulated over the years.
- Several major improvements to the Senior Center which receives the full support of the town and which provides many popular programs year-round to serve the interests and camaraderie of its seniors. Senior van service provides transportation to those in need.
- Created "Welcome to Historic Halfmoon" signs installed at key road entrance points near town lines to increase identity and to provide awareness of the town's borders.
- Assisted in the effort of residents to create a National Historic District on Church Hill Rd in recognition of its early settlement along the Erie Canal. Due to interest and active participation of the town historian, several other historic sites have been marked and added to a growing list of historic designations in the town. Halfmoon truly is a historic town.

### CONCLUSION

The above represents some of the improvements that I was involved in and observed from the period of 2002 to this date. There have been many other improvements and services of major importance and consequence by the Water, Highway and Parks Departments. Where there is safe municipal water, there is major growth. Public input

continues to be important in your deliberations. I wish you thoughtful considerations as you work through this process and success in your final draft.

#