

PROCESS/METHODOLOGY

The Glenville Town Center Master Plan is the result of an extensive planning process designed to determine how Glenville residents and employees use the existing Town Center, how they envision the Town Center in the future, and what they consider potential opportunities or obstacles to development. A number of tools were used to gather and quantify the opinions of stakeholders and participants in the planning process. Those tools included:

- Town Center Steering Committee Meetings
- Business/Property Owner Interviews
- Public Forums
- Town Web Site - Master Plan Power Point Presentation

The following is a summary of the process and its findings. The ideas presented in the Master Plan are the result of a combination of professional and public input. Town planning staff, staff of the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) and the consulting firms of the Environmental Design Partnership and Peter J. Smith & Co. provided professional input.

The process utilized for creating the Town Center Master Plan involved the following:

- Delineation of study area boundaries
- Inventory and analysis of existing conditions
- Public forum held to discuss scope
- Draft Master Plan written
- Public forums were held to present the preliminary concept
- Master Plan revised to reflect comments and suggestions
- Final public hearing before the Town Board
- Formal adoption of the Glenville Town Center Master Plan by the Town Board

The planning process informally began on December 20, 2000, when Town representatives met with the consulting firm of Peter J. Smith and Town staff to gather preliminary information, conduct a brief driving tour, and to discuss general issues.

The formal planning process began on February 15, 2001, when the first Steering Committee meeting was held to review a preliminary physical inventory and demographic overview, gather contact information, and conduct the first visioning session. The visioning session involved questionnaires and general discussion.

On April 26, 2001, the first public forum was held to gather the public's ideas and comments. Between 30 and 40 people attended the public forum. The forum consisted of general introductory comments by the Town Supervisor and Town Planner, a slide show presentation by Peter J. Smith and Co. outlining existing physical and economic conditions, an input worksheet, and a brief comment session.

The next phase of the public input process occurred on June 5, 2001, with a presentation held exclusively for Scotia-Glenville, Burnt Hills, and Niskayuna high school students. Peter J. Smith and Co. presented a preliminary design concept for the Town Center based on the Steering Committee's visioning session and the public forum. Approximately 20 students attended the forum. The presentation consisted of a power point presentation by Peter J. Smith and Co. and a comment session.

Another presentation for the public was held on June 6, 2001, with approximately 60 people in attendance. Peter J. Smith and Co. presented the preliminary design concept for the Town Center, followed by a comment session.

A final public hearing by the Town Board was held on February 2, 2003.

Issue Identification

In synthesizing all comments gathered during the early phases of the planning process, a number of broad themes were repeated during discussions and in comments. Those themes are as follows:

Traffic & Circulation

The impact of traffic on the Town Center and the lack of a coordinated system for circulation were repeatedly mentioned. Residents see Saratoga Road as dangerous for pedestrians and the source of congestion. Easing traffic flow, formalizing parking lots and internal traffic patterns, and providing alternative routes in and around the Town Center were identified as worthwhile goals.

Mixed-Use Development

Respondents repeatedly indicated a desire for a range of uses in both the Town Center as a whole and in individual buildings. Retail, office, residential, entertainment, civic, and recreational uses should be assembled in the Town Center in an integrated manner.

Pedestrian-Orientation

Another recurring theme was the desire to create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The diverse collection of uses found in the Town Center should be interconnected with attractive, safe, and comfortable sidewalks, spaces, and paths.

Multi-modal or Alternative Access

Respondents repeatedly indicated a desire to be able to access the Town Center by other means than the automobile. Recurring features included sidewalks, bicycle accommodations, and expanded public transit.

Open Space

Respondents indicated a desire for both passive and active open space. Providing a gathering area, a park, and more public spaces in general were primary objectives.

Traditional Town Center & Civic Life

A number of comments revolved around features and common elements of traditional town centers, which by their design and attributes produce an active civic life. Common suggestions included a desire for traditional downtown retail uses and streetscapes, mixed-use buildings (retail on the bottom and office and/or apartments on upper floors), pedestrian-friendly design, and quality architecture. Civic elements desired by respondents included a park, a public gathering area for community celebrations, an arts center, and an outdoor amphitheater.