



TOWN OF HALFMOON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP MEETING
HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT AUGUST 2024



Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

History, Culture, Community Organizations

July 31, 2023

10:00 AM – 11:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

What are some concerns and opportunities that you see in Halfmoon?

- Events continue to grow, and parking/ traffic is becoming an issue.
- Sidewalks throughout the Town.
- Events at the Town Hall can be tricky difficult because there are no sidewalks to get to the park. Parades up and down 236, Guideboard, and Route 9 are hard because no crosswalks, sidewalks, or pedestrian signals.
- Feels like the land is becoming scarce, as Halfmoon is a great place to want to be as it sits halfway between Albany and Saratoga.
- adapt more to green initiatives, especially with more modes of people wanting to move.
- Local businesses are relied on by Halfmoon Celebrations and are often willing to contribute but do not take more opportunities for perks.
- Events that take place in Halfmoon include drive-ins, concerts in the park, and Harvest Festival (which draws over 6,000 visitors).
- Outreach relies predominantly on Facebook. All events are completed in conjunction with the Town of Halfmoon.
- Worked with the library on several occasions including displays of shows and scavenger hunts.

What are some of the major issues with connecting people to resources, like the library?

- Traffic is a concern, especially for those coming from the Halfmoon.
- Looking at priorities from the old plan, a community center is still an opportunity
- Public transit is difficult, even with CDTA flex bus, but more access is needed as there are many limitations. Sometimes patrons will wait several hours.
- Participate in Harvest Festival and Trunk of Treat.
- Work closely with the Halfmoon Historian.
- There is a free library in the Town Park.

- Feel open space and dedicated recreation space is a must in the Town, especially as more development goes on in the Town.
- Two Towns One Book, a town-wide read program, acts as a way to link the two Towns.

Legal – There is a grant that has been awarded, but funds have not been released yet, to build a Community Center. So, it may be coming sometime soon in the future once the money is released by the NYS Legislature. Community Center would have courts, parking, and space for more recreation and space for Town gatherings.

What are some wishes and hopes for the future?

- When new businesses come in, provide them with information about connecting to nonprofits and how to get involved.
- Flyer placed in the many Hotels about local organizations.
- Information is sent to realtors and sent mail to new residents.
- New residents receive packets of information about the Town.
- Town website could have a news or events tab to help, especially with the new website.
- The Navigator is a quarterly newsletter that has ads and updates for the Town. Celebrations events are included and are distributed to all residents.
- Friends of the Library has a newsletter, Library uses Facebook and Instagram, and constant updates are key in engagement.
- Clarify the location of news updates, make flyers about following, and post more! Paid promotions also work well for larger events.

Name	Affiliation
Dave Maxfield	Halfmoon Celebrations Associations
Alex Gutelius	Clifton Park/ Halfmoon Library
Lou Ann Stewart	Clifton Park/ Halfmoon Library
Steve Kucskar	Halfmoon CPUC
Dan Wojcik	Halfmoon CPUC
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Alison Starkey	Clifton Park / Halfmoon Library
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Transportation and Infrastructure

July 31, 2023

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

What are some of the challenges in Halfmoon that relate to Transportation and Infrastructure

- Water infrastructure in the oldest areas of the Town is 42 years old and replacement projects are currently being done.
- Water system expansion (120 miles of pipe throughout the Town) 95% of the Town has municipal water now. 4 water tanks and a 5th 1,000,000-gallon tank being completed now. 2.2 million gallons of water are used per day.
- County controls sewers and causes problems when there are lots of development.
- Pedestrian and cycle-thru connections are needed.
- Resiliency planning for larger storms to address flooding. Need to look beyond 100-year storms.
- Route 9 and 146 intersection was identified as a safety concern, especially for the slip lanes, which are to be modified.
- Improvements to pedestrian accommodations at the intersection.
- Need for a long-range plan to alleviate pressure along the major corridors that are causing so much traffic.
- Look into alternative funding sources for financing improvements to do mass expansions, especially when looking at land use within the town and how it impacts the transportation network.
- Address how the large-scale county is impacting the local Halfmoon residents. There is a lack of pedestrian accommodation that has not kept up with the rapid growth showing in the Town.
- Growth is not bad but needs to be packaged in a way that is a better fit for various means of transportation.
- Flex Bus is used where fixed routes are not in use. Still being rolled out and continue to learn more about best practices. (CDTA and CPHM Library about access).
- Flex Bus has helped significantly to alleviate tension on the Town transportation resources.
- Need a certain amount of density to support fixed route transit.
- Route 146 and Route 236 intersections will be studied. Potentially roundabout or removal of the slip turn lane. Wide shoulders could potentially accommodate bike lanes or crosswalks.

- Town does not currently operate any sanitary infrastructure (Saratoga County Sewer District). The town is not in the sewer business but feels the issues of development each time a project is approved.

In a perfect world, what would the transportation and infrastructure network look like in 10-20 years?

- Southern end is the worst in terms of traffic.
- At the northern end, there are Town Roads and development is slower than in southern Towns. There are a lot of unusable large parcels designated for agriculture.
- Development is larger tracts and connections between neighborhoods are present.
- No longer avoiding 236 and route 9. Adjacent communities play a large role in the congestion.
- Potential cut-through between Plant Road and Route 9
- More funding for sidewalks and pedestrian accommodation to find ways to pay for the improvements.

Name	Affiliation
Sandra Misiewicz	Capital Region Transportation Council
Megan Quirk	CDTA
Frank Tironi	TOH Director of Water
Greg Wichser	NYS DOT Region I
Steve Kucskar	Halfmoon CPUC
Dan Wojcik	Halfmoon CPUC
Bill Herman	Halfmoon CPUC
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Local and Regional Partners

August 2, 2023

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

What are some challenges you face?

- As the Town grows, capacity will need to be kept up with
- King PDD at Halfmoon Crossing has experienced significant traffic issues (There are studies being conducted all around the Town, which will end up impacting them)
- The Crossing Boulevard and Halfmoon Crossing Boulevard should be looked at for traffic and through traffic flow.
- Trucks trying to avoid weigh stations and large vehicles use the Town as a passthrough.
- There are many connections, especially through industrial uses, between Halfmoon and the surrounding Towns and Villages.
- take a regional approach to the greater transportation network, beyond just the Town.
- The upkeep of roads, especially around Sysco, can be very dangerous. Winter storms cause treacherous conditions for drivers.
- Increase attention to snow removal along Sysco since it is so close to housing units, apartments, and businesses.
- How can the perception of business impacts on the Town be changed so that businesses are better situated to thrive in the Town?
- Shenendehowa has experienced stable rates of enrollment, has 207 busses on the road, and new developments. Need to see infrastructure keep up with growth. Would love to include the transportation department from Shen in conversations about improving bus services.
- Better marketing towards a balance in the community – opportunities for all walks of life, but balance in resource allocations for all.
- Sysco has experienced growth since COVID ended. They have several opportunities over a range of tasks and could use the Town to help spread information.
- Many of Sysco employees live in the Capital District but come from all over.
- Developers are interested in smart growth. See that the schools are maintaining student counts, but birth rates are down, so how does that impact growth and development.

- Higher-density houses can provide the potential for increasing conservation, but at what cost? Needs to be balanced with the grand needs and wants of the Residents.
- Any considerations of wind power and the potential placement of this?
- Shen needs all-electric buses by 2035, but that goal is nearly impossible. To do so, a new substation that requires all the power is currently in Clifton Park. Power capacity is not there to suit the desired requirements of electric power.

What are some assets?

- Location is key. Perfectly between Albany and Saratoga
- Proximity to major connective corridors for the Capital District.
- Area 3 along the river has available properties which have access to Rail and the Canal.
- Town posts about job fairs, further connect local businesses.
- Solar panels provide a great opportunity for local power to jump the gun on a proactive approach.
- Known as “Solar Town” - keep that idea going

Are there any potential partnerships between the TOCP and TOH

- Recreation resources have transcended town borders with residents of both towns using the same places
- Commercial and residential opportunities along Route 9
- Earl Development at Routes 9 and 146 will bring in DOT.
- Overlapping of economic development. Can mixed use be brought in to entice younger families?
- Can we begin to plan for the ability to adapt to new technology?

Name	Affiliation
Todd Fischer	Equinox Companies – King PDD
Dr. Oliver Robinson	Shenendehowa CSD Superintendent
John Scavo	Planning Director for the Town of Clifton Park
Dave	Sysco
Kelly	Sysco
John	Sysco
Ed Caples	Sysco
Pete Bardunais	Halfmoon CPUC / Capital Region Chamber of Commerce
Dan Wojcik	Halfmoon CPUC
Steve Kucskar	Halfmoon CPUC
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

August 2, 2023

10:00 AM – 11:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

When you hear “Parks, Recreation, and Open Space” as it relates to Halfmoon, what thoughts come to mind?

- Halfmoon has a lot of resources to offer ranging from the Town Park, baseball fields, agricultural spaces, forests, and recreation access.
- Access and equity for all types of people can be seen at the Town Park with ADA access to parking and trails.
- Flooding and steep slopes are becoming a major concern, especially as severe weather events are becoming more prevalent. Need more updated maps that can identify priority areas.
- Recreation has been trying to provide a holistic approach to activity in Halfmoon starting from accessibility for all and providing these resources at an acceptable price point.
- Town Park is great for accessibility, trails, and equipment for all to use, and provides high-quality recreation areas for organized sports and general recreation.
- Potential opportunities to work with The Nature Conservancy and DEC to identify important or protected species of flora and fauna in the Town.
- A large part of preservation efforts within the Town will stem from agriculture and maintaining that part of Halfmoon’s identity.
- There are several options for preservation, all coming back to reaching specific funding goals. Getting placed on a State or National Historic Register is one option, but must be strategic as there are many requirements and restrictions that come with the status.
- Neighborhood connectivity and access to Town recreation amenities should be a major priority, especially with the large influx of people moving to the Town and constant development.
- Investigate what parkland conveyance is required for developers; is it enough?
- ADA accessibility for amenities throughout the Town. More bike lanes and more sidewalks are needed.
- The Town’s map of Trails to be updated?

- Access to the waterfront is often forgotten and can create water-related maps for boaters in addition to land trails.
- By outlining open space and preservation initiatives or creating an open space fund, the Town will be significantly more competitive in applying for various forms of preservation funding.
- The Bond Act is an opportunity for the Town to provide the state with its priorities, especially surrounding climate resiliency. The team from Saratoga PLAN forwarded the info to the Town about the Bond Act. [Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov/clean-water-clean-air-and-green-jobs-environmental-bond-act)

Name	Affiliation
Jeff Ryan	Town of Halfmoon Recreation / Resident
Tori Roberts	Saratoga PLAN
Robert Davies	Saratoga PLAN
Michelle Culbert	Saratoga PLAN
Dan Wojcik	Halfmoon CPUC
Bill Herman	Halfmoon CPUC
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Emergency Services
October 5, 2023
10:30 am – 11:30 am
Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

What are some needs you might see in Halfmoon?

- Ambulances need to be able to keep up with increasing populations. Want to remain involved in new development, especially in places that may have higher concentrations of people who use Emergency Services.
- With new developments, EMS will look to work with the Town to understand potential increases in call volume. Need to be aware so that they can better deploy resources to areas that have increasing needs.
- Relationship with the Town and Planning Board has been extremely helpful in 1) forecasting future needs and 2) bringing up concerns and ideas to developers to be proactive.
- Fire Departments have been involved in the review process lately, which is satisfying now
- Traffic is a concern as it has become more difficult to navigate the Town.
- New development is on the fringes of the districts, and longer response time is becoming an issue, so more coordination with other districts.
- The Fire Department wants to maintain coordination with the Planning Board and Site Review and holding developers to strong standards.
- Mutual aid is very important to responding quickly. Box Alarm System is used.
- Mutual training is also encouraged and brings in Departments from all over to work and train together.
- West Crescent has a new training facility in the works and will likely become a hub for specific types of training.
- With growth comes call volume, and larger developments are becoming more difficult to handle, especially for volunteers who are coming straight from day jobs.
- Resources are becoming more strained because population growth is not just occurring in Halfmoon, it is nearly all the Towns.
- As recreation is added to the Town, does the EMS have the ability to do a rescue at those locations? The river creates a potential for ice rescue and water rescue, which needs to be trained for.

- Trails are being incorporated into rescue plans; access is extremely important.
- Milltown Road is the only firehouse that has a traffic light. Calls may be extended drastically due to traffic. The state will not allow it.
- Rte. 9 and 146 are some of the worst roads to access, especially for the truck. There have been multiple accidents at the intersection. If the intersection can be controlled, response times should increase, and danger should decrease.
- Rte. 9, Rte. 246, and Guideboard Rd are extremely dangerous. The Town is interested in paying for improvements despite it being a Town Road.
- Control traffic lights are not currently available but would be interested in learning more/ eventually obtaining them.
- There is a great deal of discussion between Halfmoon and Clifton Park, especially in Planning initiatives. Cooperation will be pivotal in future development.
- The water system is a mixture of old/ new areas. There is interest in a contingency plan, should the water system fail. MJ water/ wastewater team is currently working on replacing and upgrading the pipes in these sections of time.
- Look into potential ways to avoid catastrophic events (ex. Radio going down and not being able to respond or coordinate a call).

Name	Affiliation
Anthony Bonventre	Halfmoon Fire
Mark Freiberger	CP/ Halfmoon Ambulance
Scott Trefethen	CP Fire Department
Shawn	West Crescent Fire
Chuck Kuhns	Halfmoon Fire
John Wasielewski	Town Board Member & Emergency Services Liaison
Paul Hotaling	Deputy Supervisor
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Dan Wojcik	CPUC
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Emergency Services

August 3, 2023

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

What are some needs you might see in Halfmoon?

- Getting ahead of potential issues in water and wastewater and how we mitigate issues ahead of time.
- Continuity of operations is a major factor for the County.
 - o Services need to always be provided, even if not in the office.
- Town of Halfmoon is considered a dispensary site and acts as a shelter (partnership with the County)
- No physical building in the Town for SC, but provide shelters, beds, and vaccines.
- “Town has been doing a great job being a leader in the County” for providing services.
- Senior center drive-thru can function as a place to distribute.
- Summer camp has 400 kids and 50 staff to oversee the program.
- Character Counts Program helps to make money to help pay for the food pantry and
- Demand for emergency services continues to rise, with different services being very volunteer based.
- COVID brought about many changes, but numbers are returning to the original prior pandemic #s.
- 2 sites for Camp. Town Park for younger and Pavilion at town hall for those that are older.
- Rec Department offers trail walks throughout the year (Zim Smith Champlain Trail and Erie Canal) but trying to continue the effort.
- Emergency responders often visit trail locations in the Town, and the county maintains some of the major trails. They are always making sure access isn’t obstructed.

Are there any opportunities specifically in the Town of Halfmoon?

- Very satisfied with regular interactions
- It has been a very hot year, the state pushes for cooling and warming and sometimes can use senior centers to provide a location for people to go, especially when there are power outages.

This meeting was cut short at 3:30pm due to power outages in the area.

Name	Affiliation
Ross MacNeil	Recreation and Senior Center Director
Mike Stanely	Saratoga County Emergency Management
Andre Delvaux	Saratoga County Emergency Management
Steve Kucskar	Halfmoon CPUC
Dan Wojcik	Halfmoon CPUC
Mike Morand	Halfmoon CPUC
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
Nora Culhane Friedel	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.



Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Focus Group Meeting Highlights

Development / Developers Focus Group

February 26, 2024

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

- Residents of the Town have been focusing on open space and green space.
- Consider the types of development that the Town is going to allow in the future.
- DCG built and developed Twin Lakes, Squire Park, and other locations.
 - o Long history, since the 1970's regarding developing the land within Halfmoon

Prompt: What are some trends that you are seeing in development within the Town?

- The Town will look into programs that will allow active farmers to try and receive tax relief or assistance.
- Solar development is coming to the Town and will bring in a lot of money and assist in offsetting tax costs.
- Have seen positive growth in the Town, the biggest issue is traffic.
- There has been a change in demand for commercial and office space in post-COVID Halfmoon and Saratoga County.
- There are high vacancy rates for office space, may want to look at alternative uses to office space as a use consideration.
- Residential demand in Saratoga County will continue to grow.
- There is a shift from the "classic" Saratoga County single-family housing and should look at alternative forms of housing products.
- Look to centralize housing and commercial near the established corridors to alleviate pressure on the large agricultural parcels.

Prompt: Do you see any challenges or opportunities in the Town?

- Focusing growth in concentrated areas may be able to preserve parts of the Town that people do not want to see changed drastically or developed upon.
- Farmers and Agricultural landowners could use a compilation of resources that outline assistance programs to help with costs.
- Concern surrounding continuing the use of PDDs in the Town

- Traffic is an issue, but understand that it will require DOT coordination and funding opportunities
- Seek alternatives to addressing office space – analysis of current demand and potential loss in office space
- Look at adaptive reuse based on anticipated changes in the future.

Name	Affiliation
John Higgins	Power System Consulting and Agricultural Land Owner
Donald MacElroy	DCG Development
Steve Kucskar	CPUC Member
Dan Wojcik	CPUC Member
Lyn Murphy	Town Attorney
Rich Harris	CPUC Chair
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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Town of Halfmoon

Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft Focus Group Meeting Highlights

HOA and Neighborhoods

February 26, 2024

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Zoom Meeting

Focus Group Feedback:

- Glen Meadows has 126 homes in development. The HOA takes care of the homeowner's property. HOA has existed for about 10 years.
 - o Trying to work on the walking trail behind Somerset Drive. It connects to Swatling Falls and serves as a connection.
 - May eventually connect to the Champlain Trail.
 - Traffic concerns at the end of Upper Newtown Road and trying to get onto Route 146.
 - o Interested in if there is a composting plan for the Town.
- Arlington Heights has 70 homes and started 15 years ago.
 - o Traffic on Farm to Market Road is a concern.
 - o Want to see more trails and recreational areas in the northern part of the Town
 - o Connections and trails between the new developments in the northern portion of Town.
 - o Sidewalks, streetlights, and curbs are present in Arlington Heights. Also, Maintenance is free.
 - o Coordination with the Town has improved over the last several years.
 - o Town could consider a small advisory Board to help assist existing and new/upcoming HOAs.

Prompt: What are some challenges that you experience in Halfmoon over the next 10-15 years:

- o Traffic is one of the largest concerns.
- o New developments are a matter of concern.
- o Traffic on Rte. 236 has made it difficult to get out of Knox Woods
- o Stormwater concerns and runoff during/ after big storms.
- o Coordination with the Town in maintaining drainage infrastructure, even if it is the HOA that is responsible for the maintenance.

Prompt: What are some opportunities in Halfmoon?

- Set aside more accessible or connecting properties as park/open space areas when building developments.
- Assistance for maintenance costs that the HOAs face, especially regarding park areas that have lots of space.
- Increase connections between the neighborhoods in the north.

Name	Affiliation
Joanne Owens	Glen Meadows HOA
Diane Smiel	Glen Meadows HOA
Michael Imfeld	Glen Meadows HOA
Daniel Street	Arlington Heights HOA
Nancy Morris	CPUC / Knox Woods
Steve Kucskar	CPUC
Dan Wojcik	CPUC / Sheldon Hills
Bill Herman	CPUC
Paul Marlow	Town of Halfmoon
Rich Harris	Town of Halfmoon, Chair CPUC
Jacob Landis	M.J. Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C.
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