

A Review of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update Goals

Below is a review of the different subjects addressed by the 2021 Comprehensive Plan. A description of each subject is in the 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update. Each subject includes an overarching goal, sub-goals to achieve the overarching goal, strategies, and indicators of success.

Goals – generally fairly lofty in nature.

Sub-goals – specific objectives to achieve the goal.

Strategies – pathways to achieve the goals.

Indicators – observable metrics to show the sub-goals have been achieved.

A summary has been included for the sub-goals, indicators, and strategies. In most cases there has been activity towards achieving the goals, but not all sub-goals have been completed. Often there is more work that must be done to achieve the goal.

In developing the 2026 Comprehensive Plan each of the goals below will be assessed to determine if the project is fully complete, if more work should be done, or if the goal should be removed, or made eternal.

A. NATURAL RESOURCES

Goal:

The important natural resources that occur throughout New Lebanon will be responsibly and sensibly managed and protected.

Sub-goals:

A series of goals related to Critical Environmental Areas and protection of natural resources were proposed. Justification and ratification of Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) by the Town Board, including the following possibilities: cool ravines; the Warm Spring; Shaker Swamp; areas rich in unconsolidated aquifers; hedgerows in agricultural fields; ridgelines with steep slopes and ledges; riparian corridors threatened by erosion; unfragmented forest expanses; floodplain ancient forest patches; areas rich in intermittent streams and woodland pools. Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) must be justified to the Town Board and then adopted before they are listed on a registry maintained by NYSDEC. Please note:

- a. The registry has no regulatory authority other than requiring that CEAs receive special attention during SEQR reviews in land use decisions.
- b. Various Town officials received free training and technical assistance from Hudsonia and the Hudson River Estuary Program in identifying potential CEAs and proceeding with the justification process.
- c. Assuring landowner involvement: the Town would not proceed with identifying and then justifying a CEA without buy-in from the landowner(s).

d. The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals consistently afford strong consideration to natural resource information in their decisions via the SEQRA process.

- This has been completed for 3 of the cool ravines and the warm springs in Lebanon Springs.
 - Maintain intact floodplain forests wherever possible, especially “ancient” forests. Nothing happened here.
 - Prevent degradation of steep slopes. A steep slope overlay map was created but not adopted and regulations have not been completed. Ongoing
 - Prevent disturbance of wetlands and development within the floodplain that would impact downstream properties and the natural functioning of stream systems. This is covered by NYS and federal wetlands protection. The Planning Board takes this into consideration during Site Plan Review.
 - The Town will study the need for and extend appropriate protection to small streams and isolated wetlands and buffer zones that are critically important to ecosystems and water supplies, but are not protected by state or federal regulation. Incomplete
 - Promote environmentally sensitive management and use of forest resources that will preserve woodlands and minimize forest fragmentation. No activity here.
- Protect pristine riparian corridors from erosion.
 - The CAC will take the lead to work with private landowners and the Town to apply for additional Trees for Tribs projects to prevent erosion along riparian corridors. Work is ongoing.
 - Encourage where possible in farm operations, adopt wildlife-friendly agricultural practices that protect water supplies, build living soils, support native pollinators, and accommodate ground-nesting birds while maintaining efficiency and profitability.
 - No activity
 - Promote environmentally sensitive mining practices while preserving extraction of sand and gravel deposits in the floodplain as an allowed land use.
 - The Town will explore the creation of a Mining Overlay District in areas of glacial outwash deposits, requiring that continued accessibility to sand and gravel resources be considered during reviews of land development projects. Incomplete
 - Continued accessibility of sand and gravel resources is preserved. Mining requires a special permit as per Section 205-13 of New Lebanon Zoning Regulations.
 - Protect sensitive wildlife habitats and migration corridors.
 - The Planning Board’s Site Plan Review and SEQRA take this into account. Additionally, the work by the CAC to establish CEAs protects wildlife habitats.

Additional Activities

- A water testing program has been established and is now in the purview of the CAC. New Lebanon is the only town in Columbia County that is testing residents’ water for them and the only town with

an approved plan. Many wells across the town have been tested for free. Of the 40 wells tested in the central commercial district, 11 tested positive for E. coli, and 22 tested positive for coliform. All are remediable. No PFAS or PCBs were found. Testing continues with some focus on properties near Country Squire due to some gravel mining in the area which may stir up heavy metals. Interested parties can read more on the CAC webpage.

- The Town was to update the 2014 Open Space Inventory and create an Open Space Index with funding received from the Hudson River Estuary Program.
 - The Town's Open Space Inventory was completed in 2014, but has not been updated. The CAC is looking to digitize the inventory for better access by the public.
- The Town assessed the results of the 2021 study by Cornell MPA students on the Town's climate vulnerability and, as deemed appropriate, implemented their recommended revisions to the Hazard Mitigation Plan. This is expected to include a review of stormwater management approaches throughout Town, such as culvert upgrades, among other recommendations.
 - Hazard Mitigation Plan Complete and adopted by the Town. The CAC will now begin implementation of their recommendations.
- The Climate Smart Communities Task Force, with CAC assistance, was to promote resilience in all land use decisions.
 - Whereas the CAC has not directly participated in ZBA and Planning Board actions, they are involved in the ZRC, (Zoning Rewrite Committee).
- Habitat Assessment Guidelines produced by the CAC will be adopted by the Town Board to help ensure that adequate natural resource information becomes part of the decision framework of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals with every land use proposal. Water resources, sensitive habitats, good farmland soils, and important scenic and recreational resources would be seriously considered in land use decisions.
 - Incomplete, although much of this is taken into consideration via the SEQRA process by the Planning Board.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal:

The Town will work to protect its environment and safeguard it for current and future generations.

Subgoals:

- Contribute to decreased dependence on fossil fuels and support energy efficiency and renewable energy production. The Town will actively take energy efficiency and carbon minimization into consideration when purchasing new vehicles and equipment, and when building or maintaining Town buildings.
 - The Town has moved to solar energy and heat pumps to replace oil and gas fired boilers for the Town Hall, Community Center, and Town Garage. Complete
 - Town government will work with the State and private vendors to establish low or no-cost EV charging stations, preferably in the vicinity of existing businesses. Charging stations for electric vehicles are available and in the process of being relocated to the Community Center. Complete

- The Town will explore the option of pursuing community solar as a Town-wide program, which would reduce energy costs for a majority of residents. Complete
 - The Town will develop an understanding of the aggregate energy needs of residents and businesses. Incomplete
- The Town has a strategy to inform, encourage and update citizens about smart energy choices such as heat pumps, solar roofing, and other appropriate measures to minimize carbon emissions.
 - Information on solar energy and heat pumps have been made available to citizens via the town's website. Complete
 - Information flows via website, newsletters, and TB Meeting minutes. The CSC Task Force webpage also has information. Ongoing
 - The Town will add to its website a web page that summarizes all desirable environmental solutions and options for energy-efficient private purchases such as heat pumps, solar roofing, and low glare LEDs. It also will list sources for available tax breaks and grants for such purchases. Incomplete, although the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Task Force has a lot of useful information on their webpage.
 - The Town will continue to support projects and initiatives advanced by the Climate Smart Communities Task Force in addition to those that require explicit Town Board approval. The Town will commit to the CSC attaining Silver status. Complete
 - Leverage Clean Energy Communities program to promote Electric Vehicle awareness and adoption. Incomplete
- Minimize solid waste, including strategies to promote recycling and composting or anaerobic digestion of organic materials.
 - The town government will incorporate its already existing efforts of waste minimization, recycling and composting in a comprehensive policy. The policy will be reviewed and updated annually. Chapter 170 of the Town Code addresses recycling and waste disposal regulations in New Lebanon based on the County regulations. It has not been reviewed annually. Incomplete.
 - The Town has solutions in place to minimize solid waste, recycle all materials that can be recycled, and has a well-maintained composting site. Recycling is via trash haulers and county transfer stations. There is no well-maintained Town composting site. Incomplete
 - Coffee grounds are being composted. Saves a small bit of solid waste, Ongoing
 - Regularly scheduled Repair Cafes to keep items out of landfills. Ongoing
 - Town Clean-up Day is a big hit! Ongoing
- Any large-scale renewable energy facilities in New Lebanon are sited and built consistent with the goals of the community and this Plan, especially related to environmental and viewshed protection.
 - The Town will review and strengthen the existing solar section of the Zoning Code to ensure impacts to the environment and rural character are eliminated or mitigated for

large-scale renewable solar projects. Specifically, the code will address protection of prime farmland soils, sensitive environmental areas as identified in the Town's NRCP, and viewsheds. Complete. Zoning regulations for residential and commercial solar systems have been adopted by the Town.

- The Zoning code will be amended to fully address wind energy facilities and battery storage operations. Incomplete. There is a low probability of wind turbine and battery storage facilities in New Lebanon so this effort has been tabled.
- Preserve the Town's clean air and the relative quiet from excessive noise, protect the dark skies from glare.
 - Regulations are in place via Special Permit and Site Plan Review for noise and light glare.
 - Zoning ensures reduction in light pollution through use of dark sky compliant lighting development standards. Complete. This is part of the Site Plan Review, Special Permit, and SEQRA regulations.

C. AGRICULTURE

Goal:

Encourage the creation of new, sustainable and economically viable farms as well as the preservation of existing farms and open farmlands.

Sub-goals:

- The number of acres being actively farmed in the Town will continue its upward trend.
 - No activity on this project.
- Preserve prime agricultural lands.
 - Zoning is used to protect agricultural lands by restricting commercial development. However, there is often a trade-off between agriculture, conservation, and housing.
- Promote environmentally sensitive farm management and cultivation methods according to organic and regenerative standards and other agroecological approaches.
 - No activity here
- Increase the planting of easy-to-pollinate varieties on farms, private and public gardens, parks, and meadows. The Town will refer to the NYS Utility Corridor Pollinator Habitat Guidelines that addresses soil preparation, seed selection and a planting list.
 - A portion of the Town-owned Shatford Park is converted into an aesthetically pleasing pollinator-friendly meadow. Incomplete but there are plenty of flowery fields around for bees....
- Educate farmers, would-be farmers and food processing facilities about the possibilities of the GROW-NY program, specifically the Grow New York Food & Agriculture Competition. The program consists of a New York state-funded, Cornell University-administered annual food & ag startup competition. It features pitches and judging and a symposium planned by the NYS Center of Excellence for Food and Agriculture at Cornell AgriTech. Incomplete

- Disseminate information about NY Farm Viability Institute grants and tools, especially with respect to the use of data in agriculture, measures to improve soil health and productivity, and support for farmers with measures to increase resilience to climate change. The Institute is a nonprofit grant-making organization that runs a competitive grant program seeking to fund agricultural research and education projects that will create and share knowledge to improve the economic viability of New York’s farmers. Incomplete

D. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Goal:

Protect and enhance the Town’s natural scenic vistas and the publicly visible aspects of the man-made environment.

Sub-Goals:

- Preserve scenic vistas of the area’s natural beauty including vistas of woodlands, fields, ridgelines, hillsides, hilltops and valleys, and open spaces. Hilltops and ridgelines will remain in a natural state; undisturbed by man-made structures. Prohibit development on hilltops and ridgelines and strictly regulate development within a specific distance of hilltops/ridgelines in the following ways:
 - Review and adopt the previously drafted hilltop/ ridgeline overlay zone. A series of maps defining an overlay zone that incorporated prominent hilltops and ridgelines was developed, however, the zone was never adopted. Required standards for this overlay will need to define the elevations to which the standards will apply and could include careful siting of structures away from hilltops and ridgelines, structure design to help buildings blend in with natural surroundings, control of exterior lighting, preservation of existing vegetation or provision of new vegetation for screening, burying of utilities, and preservation of open space. Incomplete
 - The Natural Resource Conservation Plan, NRCP, contains a viewshed analysis. Prime vistas have been identified. The zoning code should be updated to include design standards that protect these viewsheds. These standards could cover the same items described above for the hilltop/ ridgeline overlay but should also include siting and design methods to ensure that buildings are carefully sited so that they are in the least obtrusive location and designed to fit in with the natural surroundings. The Town also needs to determine the extent to which these standards may be applied to structures installed by utilities. Siting guidelines and other protective measures to maintain a rural feel and protect viewsheds/vistas are already in place and taken into consideration during Site Plan Review.
 - Another direction is to develop non-regulatory, voluntary techniques to protect scenic and rural landscapes, such as educational initiatives to assist landowners on how to preserve the character of their land. Incomplete
- Preserve and/or improve scenic vistas that involve man-made structures.

- Continue and where possible, strengthen enforcement of Town and building code provisions related to junk and junk cars; storage of equipment, materials, junk, etc. in yards and local property maintenance. Incomplete
- Equipment storage screening and screening of disparate uses is part of the zoning code. The Planning Board continues to work to screen facilities which are not so nice looking from public view according to regulations. Procedures related to Site Plan Review direct applicants' attention to these design elements contained in the code as they prepare for Site Plan Review. Ongoing
- Mainstreet Design Guidelines were developed to provide guidance to building owners in the Central Commercial District regarding construction styles and color schemes to develop a cohesive look and feel. The guidelines have been adopted by the Town and are appended to the Zoning section of the Town codes. Complete.
- Continue Town Clean-up Days. Ongoing

E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal:

Achieve the long-term economic vitality of the Town through constructive growth of existing businesses and attracting appropriate new businesses, consistent with preserving the Town's rural character and environment.

Sub-goals:

- Monitoring the business and economic activity
 - A greater proportion of employed Town residents work locally. No way to measure
 - Existing retail businesses achieve increased revenue through "buy local" and other promotion initiatives. No recent promotional initiatives. Prior efforts not well supported by town merchants.
 - Vacant commercial space is repurposed and/or occupied. Storefronts in the Valley Mall and Midtown Mall are mostly full. Some vacancy still exists in free standing buildings.
 - New businesses move to New Lebanon and thrive. Need to have a survey. Several businesses have arrived, some have left.
 - A listing of town businesses is available on the Town website but it needs to be updated.
- Increase the ready access to "basic" goods and services, including support of the Rolling Grocer and the Farmers Market.
 - The Rolling Grocer has disappeared. The Farmers' Market is successful, but this is not a Town issue. A Town project to gain access to a pharmacy in town has not been successful. For a short period a market/bakery struggled to exist in the town but has closed.
 - More support services for businesses are available, such as a UPS drop-off, an Amazon Locker, and an establishment that provides copy or printing services. Incomplete.
- Increase non-motor vehicular access to Town businesses through their concentration within commercial districts.

- New zoning for the Central Commercial District is intended to encourage development in the center of town. This would drive concentration of businesses. The future sidewalks will provide the ability to move between facilities. The rail trail concept for access has not been realized. Ongoing
- Promote additional commercial activity in West Lebanon.
 - Nothing done here except allowing Dollar General to build a store and now an appliance repair business homebase will open. Zoning changes may be required to develop this area further.
- Achieve greater use of un- and under-utilized properties, in commercial zones as well as historical properties throughout Town.
 - The Shaker Preservation Committee was formed and should sometime in the future promote re-utilization of old shaker buildings. Ongoing
 - Nothing restricts re-utilization of old buildings in town.
- Assure environmentally appropriate economic development through continued prohibition of heavy industrial and highly polluting business and big box stores.
 - Heavy industry and big box stores remain restricted by the zoning regulations. Complete
- Expand the home-based business sector by providing necessary infrastructure, notably high-speed internet throughout Town, and other support services.
 - High speed internet is available everywhere in town. No input as to what other support services are needed.
- Improve water and sewer availability if this has proven to be a hindrance to business activity and is determined to be economically feasible.
 - This is in the works for the downtown area. The BEDC and CAC are working on a feasibility study and determining the extent of state funding available. Ongoing
- Continue to support and encourage the BEDC to act as an incubator of ideas and a resource for economic development. It is supported.
- Working with the BEDC, create an official entity (Development Corp.) to pro-actively pursue economic development. Incomplete
- Establish relationships at the County, State, and Federal levels with entities such as the Center for Economic Growth, Empire State Development Corp. and others to explore economic opportunities and to learn about new strategies for pursuing the Town's economic development goals. Incomplete
- Develop a multi-year strategic plan for the Town's economic development. Once plans are formulated, seek economic development and micro enterprise grants to pursue defined projects for supporting current businesses and attracting desirable new ones. Incomplete
- The Town should consider the development of targeted marketing strategies directed at specific business sectors as well as prospective residents who may wish to work out of their homes.
 - Conduct focus groups with current residents who work out of their homes, either as a home occupation, home based business or remote working to determine their needs to help target marketing strategies. Incomplete
 - To the extent possible, use in-person outreach to potential businesses. Incomplete

- Reach out to commercial realtors in an effort to steer prospective businesses to New Lebanon. Incomplete
- The Town will facilitate the entry of new businesses through improved information about regulatory requirements and public information
 - Create welcome packets for new businesses. Welcome packets were created for homeowners and businesses.
 - Create a “user manual” to assist prospective new businesses, or current businesses that wish to expand, to navigate the Town’s land use processes. The Building Department has streamlined processes and is going to a paperless application process. The Building Department webpages provide applicants with lists of information, forms and instructions to aid them in their filings. Land use applications were revised to help guide applicants through approval processes. Applicants work with the Building Department to develop their application packets for the Planning Board. Ongoing
- Identify new business opportunities and jobs that may be created by the transition to a greener economy, including green energy jobs and infrastructure development.
 - Compile and make available information and resources related to green energy career opportunities. There is a document on the CAC webpage covering job opportunities in the green sector. Complete.
 - Support training opportunities. Incomplete

F. HOUSING

Goal:

Housing opportunities will be available for all economic levels and age groups.

Sub-goals:

- Expand housing options for seniors with emphasis on safety, affordability, and access to daily needs. Also expand housing options to retain and attract younger and lower income individuals and families. The location and density of homes must match the ability of the land to support them and the community’s desire to preserve the Town’s rural, small-town character.

Options for affordable housing can be encouraged through zoning. Several activities are ongoing in this area. The impact of these changes, more young families in town, and retention of seniors, is not apparent yet.

One approach was to form a working group to examine what other towns are doing to accommodate the needs of older residents and to retain/attract younger individuals and families.

- The Quality-of-Life Committee completed an extensive study of many of the factors and provided a report to the Town. A summary with recommendations is in the minutes of November 2024. Complete!

- The group would conduct market surveys to determine if sufficient demand exists. Not conducted by the Town, although a private survey shows a need for senior and affordable housing in the area.
- The group would interview local realtors to define what they consider to be barriers to attracting younger families to Town as well as the types of development options that may suit the Town's needs. The working group did not do this, but the Room for Both Committee did meet with realtors and developers.
- They would consult the County Department of Health on the potential need for additional septic, water or other infrastructure that would be required. See discussion on water and septic elsewhere.
- The group should also develop welcome packets for new residents and local realtors. This was done for residents and businesses.

Although all of the working group activities above were not completed, local and county information shows that senior and affordable housing is in need. To address this housing shortage steps have been taken.

- Accessory dwelling units, (ADUs), are now allowed in residential areas by Special Permit. ADUs provide small living spaces for seniors, family members, etc. and can provide some income for the owners. Complete
- Zoning changes, resulting in a Central Commercial District where retail and residential development is encouraged, have been adopted. The intent is to have a vibrant community of retail and housing in this corridor. Multi-use structures can be built providing apartments for seniors and others combined with retail. Additionally smaller building lots, ¾ acre, are now allowed in this district to encourage affordable detached housing. Complete, but more to follow.
- The Town is working with a consortium of four organizations: Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, the Pace Law Center, Hudson River Estuary Program, and the Hudson Valley Alliance for Housing and Conservation, to combine the needs of Affordable Housing and Conservation. The intent is to determine areas in New Lebanon where housing development could occur, while at the same time preserving the rural nature of the town. This is an ongoing project and more information can be found on the Town website. Search for "housing".

G. TOURISM

Goal:

Increase the utilization of local businesses, historical, cultural, entertainment and recreational resources, programs and events through an increase in awareness of them.

Sub-goals: and surrounding areas.

- Leverage the Town's proximity to world-class cultural and recreational resources in the surrounding area in its informational campaigns.
 - The town website provides some information to the public about cultural and recreational resources in town and the surrounding area. Complete

- The Town has expanded its website to feature Town and area attractions, provide links to the websites of these resources and maintains an event calendar. The website maintains schedules and minutes/videos of all meetings to provide transparency to Town government activities. Ongoing
- Develop a task force of organizations (public and private) that maintain public information platforms to coordinate promotional and mutually supportive messaging. The task force should explore grant opportunities to obtain professional help in effective information dissemination and communication strategies. Not accomplished.
- Increase the public availability of digital resources, including access to high-speed internet, to enable resident access to the aforementioned media outlets. This strategy could include obtaining grants to provide those lacking digital resources to obtain them and learn how to use them. It could also include working with community organizations to create additional public access to computer equipment, such as that at the library.
 - High speed internet is accessible to all residents. Computers with internet access are available in the library.
 - Provide technology training to seniors and others who will benefit. Complete
- Create a distinctive, positive identity for the Town.
 - We now have a logo and a tag line for use on the informational platforms as well as on correspondence and messages. Brochures about New Lebanon were developed and sent out for distribution. Complete
- Assess the engagement of residents and visitors in Town activities and resources.
 - a. Increased participation at recreational /cultural / social programs and events.
 - b. Increased resident patronage of Town businesses.
 - c. The number of persons on distribution lists of current informational outlets (Town newsletter, Grow the Valley newsletter, Library bulletins) continues to increase.
 - d. The number of followers on social media sites related to Town businesses and organizations and businesses continues to grow.
 - There has been no overall assessment of the above activities, however there is an assessment of public participation at the community center. Incomplete.

H. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Goal:

Maintain and improve the safety and functionality of the roadway infrastructure and promote opportunities for alternative means of public and private transportation.

Sub-goals:

- Improve safety in areas of high vehicle and pedestrian usage and ensure safe pedestrian access to areas of identified need.

- a. The Town will consider joining the Complete Streets program to make roads convenient, safe, and efficient for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.
 - b. Use traffic calming methods when new development occurs such as curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, chicanes and other road engineering solutions to slow traffic and increase pedestrian safety.
 - c. Work with DOT to evaluate the possibility of conducting a linkage study and/or a pedestrian safety action plan for the New Lebanon area.
 - d. Develop alternative methods of transportation and routes to promote multi-modal transportation. This should include development of an off-road bicycle/pedestrian corridor focused on the old railroad bed (see Recreation).
 - e. Encourage the placement of bicycle racks in commercial and recreational areas.
 - Much of this is part of the sidewalk project and is also part of site plan review for new developments or venues where high traffic is anticipated. The sidewalk project will include cross walks with refuge in the middle, turning lanes, and narrowing of the streets in certain areas to calm traffic, along with sidewalks.
- Ensure safe, adequate and accessible parking to meet commercial and public needs.
 - No action here, except for code enforcement of problematic parking lots
 - Design, build and maintain roads and parking lots consistent with rural road standards and small-town character.
 - Ghost road was evaluated, found to be well constructed, and adopted by the town. The new Highway Superintendent is rebuilding the Highway Department to provide better service.
 - The Planning Board ensures sufficient parking is built to support development. Parking lots are preferred to be on the side or in the back of buildings to improve appearances. A recent zoning change made this mandatory.
 - Roads are constructed to state and local specifications.
 - Increase opportunities for public transportation and non-motor vehicular transportation within Town.
 - Conduct a local survey to determine commuting patterns of residents as the first step to identify a need, and possible routes that would be used. Incomplete
 - Work with Columbia County agencies to explore options to extend/increase transportation service for the elderly and disabled in New Lebanon. Ongoing
 - Identify flexible innovations to promote transportation for seniors. Incomplete
 - The county bus now comes to Chatham! Otherwise, no change to public or alternative modes of transportation.
 - There is a free bike program in town and bicycle racks at four locations. Complete

Strategies to Promote Scenic Enhancement of Roads and Highways:

- Use the Viewshed Map and information in the NRCP to create an interactive, online scenic inventory.
 - The CAC webpages have the viewshed map and scenic resources.

- Formally adopt the local roads identified as scenic in order to elevate the importance of viewsheds when projects in those areas are subject to SEQR.
 - The roads are identified in the Natural Resources Conservation Plan
- Make DOT and the County aware that the Town has identified scenic vistas along their roads and then work with them to ensure vegetation control in those locations is appropriate to maintain such vistas. Incomplete
- Identify scenic locations in the various media and communications promoting the Town. Some success here with picturesque views on publications.
- Review and update as deemed necessary zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure that viewsheds are adequately addressed and protected. Regulations are in place to protect viewsheds and consideration is given during Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. No updating has been conducted.

I. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal:

Provide convenient, safe public facilities and maintain appropriate services that meet the needs of the community.

Sub-goals:

- Promote opportunities for building community and increasing volunteerism within the Town.
 - Requests for volunteers go out for many committees and projects around Town including Clean-up Day, various committees, working in the park, roadside clean up. A Town Board member has been appointed as a volunteer coordinator.
- Maximize use of existing public facilities to meet needs of residents, notably, seniors and youth.

Ongoing

 - The community center is now in place and busy with activities for seniors, youths, schools, and the public in general.
 - Shattford Park has had additions such as the walking path, pickle ball courts, a new splash pad, updated pavilion facilities, renovated restroom facilities, etc.
 - A Playground Committee has been working to install a new playground which will be ADA accessible. This is scheduled to be completed this spring.
 - The Recreation Commission has been active in organizing town picnics, Music in the Park, and other events.
 - The Recreation Commission has been re-purposed to conform with its legislative mandates, split off from a newly formed Events Committee. The Recreation Commission is now more focused on the physical plant aspects of the Town Park and other recreation resources.
- Provide well-designed facilities for local government, with adequate space for staff and public meetings and security for records and judicial proceedings.
 - The town Hall is capable of this, but needs to be renovated in the old section. New HVAC is in place with heat pumps and solar panels. The community center is used for larger

group activities. Currently there is a need for infrastructure maintenance especially at the town hall and community center facilities. Ongoing

- Maintain a safe and well-maintained Town road system (see also Traffic and Transportation). Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to plan and budget for updates needed to ensure Town facilities adequately meet resident needs. The Capital Improvement Plan should address Town roads, including capital investments in equipment and buildings, as well as staff to ensure high quality maintenance of Town roads.
 - Ongoing. The Highway Department has developed a more long-term planning approach to equipment and projects. They have been updating their equipment to provide more efficient service. Good reviews!
- Provide affordable high speed internet service throughout the Town. Continue to assist residents to work with providers to increase the speed, quality and affordability of service delivered to them.
 - Hi speed internet is available at the regional price.
- The Town should work with cell providers to increase the number of cell towers or come up with some other solution to increase the availability of cell service.
 - No action to increase the availability of cell service in town. However, a new zoning regulation has been adopted which provides guidance for small wireless installations.
- Continue to invest in, support, and evolve fire, police, and emergency medical services to meet current and future needs. Ongoing
 - State troopers are leaving for a new barracks in Chatham, although there has been talk about a Sheriff satellite station located in the community center.
 - The LVPA is a private corporation contracted by the Town. LVPA membership is growing and other towns respond to fire emergencies in New Lebanon as well.
 - The ambulance service is also contracted with by the Town and is available but from Chatham.
 - A new 911 communication tower is in place
- Evaluate the need for municipal water and sewer in certain areas of the Town. Such evaluation must include: a needs analysis then a cost/benefit analysis as an initial stage. If determined to be feasible and cost effective, such evaluation should also explore a wide range of technological alternatives for the provision of these services.
 - A feasibility study is in process for wastewater and municipal water, with wastewater being looked at first. Water testing in the to-be-served area has shown coliform bacteria and e. coli in the well water of 11 of 40 wells. The proposed increases in water usage could also pose a supply problem long term in the Central Commercial District. More information is available on the CAC webpage.
 - A feasibility study is in progress for a sewer system. Establishment of a sewer district in the Central Commercial District would improve the water quality and allow better development in this area. More information is available on the CAC webpage.
- Ensure the water in the Lebanon Warm Mineral Spring is potable and available for public use.

- The Lebanon Warm Mineral Spring water supply is a private water system. No action
- The Shaker Swamp Conservancy makes strides in opening the swamp to the public for educational and recreational purposes.
 - The CAC has been working with the Shaker Swamp Preservation Committee to gain trail access to the Shaker Swamp from Darrow School property. Access is also available via a right of way along the east side of the Roaring Twenties Brewery. Ongoing
- Form a Health and Wellness committee, whose purpose is to improve information disbursement to residents.
 - Improve the availability of and dissemination of information regarding both mental and physical health services, including alcohol and drug-abuse services. Recommendations were made to the Town Board. The Quality-of-Life Committee has sponsored a number of informational forums on this subject. No further action.
 - More outreach to residents from the Town is conducted to get people the treatment or services they need. Recommendations were made to the Town Board. No further action. Some information is available on the Seniors website.
- Identify potentially vulnerable populations, such as seniors, or residents living in flood and drought areas, and develop mitigation strategies. Develop cooling center plans.
 - During times of high heat or power outages the Town makes cooling and warming areas available for all residents as well as dry ice or water. When there is a potential for flooding residents are informed. Notification is through E-mail and text systems.
- Continue to support food insecure residents through the farmers market support programs.
 - There is free food available in the New Lebanon Community Center, Charlie's Pantry located behind the Immaculate Conception Church on US Route 20, and in a community refrigerator in Mavericks. All of these locations could use some more volunteers to help stock and maintain the food. More information on the Town website under New Lebanon Cares.
 - There is also a Meals on Wheel program for seniors. Ongoing

J. HISTORIC RESOURCES

Goal:

Preserve and promote New Lebanon's historic heritage as an integral part of the Town's culture, character, attractiveness, and economic future.

Sub-goals:

Explore historic overlay zones. Areas to consider include the Shaker Museum, the original Mount Lebanon Shaker settlement, the Warm Mineral Spring and its surrounding area and the Mill Road area, among others.

- a. Determine if the newly created overlay zone(s) qualifies for designation under the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). This, potentially, could open up funding and technical help from SHPO to the Town for further protection of historic buildings.
 - b. Seek grants and other sources of funding to promote rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings.
 - The Shaker Preservation team consisting of ZRC, businesses, and residents have been working to develop a historic overlay district for the Shaker Museum/Darrow School/Abode area which would allow additional development to re-purpose historic buildings. Key in this effort is the need to preserve the history and rural nature of the area but at the same time allow development to provide more income to preserve the buildings. If necessary, grants would be sought.
- Preserve, make accessible and if appropriate, adaptively reuse historic resources, properties, and structures within the Town, particularly those associated with the Town's Shaker heritage. Existing un- or under-utilized historic buildings or sites are constructively and creatively used to enable their appreciation by the public.
 - This is part of the Shaker Preservation project, and SEQRA seeks to protect historic sites as well. Ongoing
 - Assure that any new development is protective of and consistent with any surrounding historic resources. Provide land use boards with the information and tools to ensure that environmental review of matters before them includes consideration of its impact on historic resources. This would include:
 - The cataloguing of historically significant buildings and sites by the Town Historian and LVHS. Incomplete
 - The Town Historian will work with the Columbia County Historians group, with assistance from the County, in creating an online map of historic places that will serve as a gateway for tourism and for those interested in a historical tour of New Lebanon. A number of historical sites are indicated on the Columbia County Historian map but more should be added.
 - Training the boards on NYS CRIS (Cultural Resource Information System, cris.parks.ny.gov) so that they can easily access maps and other information about historic resources as an aid in project review. This is managed through SEQRA review by the Planning Board. The NY CRIS map is quite easy to negotiate.
 - The Town Historian and Lebanon Valley Historical Society (LVHS) will continue to catalogue, preserve, and display known artifacts of Town history.
 - Done, timeline and display case in the meeting room with artifacts. More in Historical Society but access is limited.
 - To the extent possible, provide technical assistance to residents wishing to access Federal and State grants and other incentives to support the re-use of historic buildings. The Town should consider establishing a revolving loan fund to provide mini-grants and loans to those who are adaptively reusing and rehabilitating historic buildings. Incomplete.

K. RECREATION

Goal:

Expand recreation opportunities in keeping with the Town's rural, small-town character.

Sub-goals:

- Increase availability, with appropriate conditions, of multi-use trails for activities such as walking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, fishing, boating, and horseback riding.
 - The walking trail at the park has been completed with exercise areas. The Rail Trail has not been extended. State parks have trails but are not town controlled. A recent addition is expansion of mountain biking trails at Darrow School!
 - Assist and support the Corkscrew Rail Trail to pursue State and Federal grants to acquire easements to continue expansion of the trail. Incomplete
 - Work with OPRHP to identify potential corridors to link New Lebanon into the statewide snowmobile trail network. Seek designation of any existing local snowmobile trails to ensure eligibility for snowmobile grant programs. Incomplete
 - In cooperation with neighboring residents and landowners, acquire and develop one or two parking/ trailhead areas that provide hiking access to the Pittsfield State Forest (MA) trail system and Taconic Crest Trail from New Lebanon. Incomplete, although Woodlife has recently provided access from the Taconic Crest Trail snowmobile trail to their Farm Market.
 - Use examples of Red Hook and Kinderhook in identifying and developing local bicycle routes along safe and inviting Town and County roads. (See Transportation Section). Investigate creating a link to the Hudson Valley Bikeway. Working with the Columbia County and Town Highway Departments, use local land use planning tools and roads policies to maintain these routes as attractive, low volume/low speed corridors. Incomplete.
 - Work with DOT to maintain the quality of the biking experience along Route 20, which is designated as State Bike Route 5 and connects to Bike Route 9/ Greenway Bike Trail; provide appropriate signage so designating. Route 20 shoulders need improvement for bicyclists, and no signage has been installed.
 - Protect and expand public access to fishing and boating resources of the Kinderhook and Wyomanock Creeks and Spiegelberg Pond in the State Forest. Identify areas of Kinderhook Creek with sufficient summer flow to allow potential canoe/kayak use and identify parking, access, and launch points. Incomplete
 - Identify and acquire land or easements for potential links between fishing access corridors and the old rail bed. Incomplete.

- Continue to expand/enhance Town Park facilities to broaden the range of passive and active activities it is able to support.

- The park is being revamped with walking trails, pickleball courts, restrooms, pavilion kitchen, and BBQ area. Also, the playground area is being made more inclusive and updated. The skateboard park remains uncompleted.
- Encourage the development of indoor community facilities and programs for recreational activities (see also Community Facilities and Services).
 - The New Lebanon Community Center is up and active!
- Provide safe and adequate parking and pedestrian access to recreational facilities.
 - Lots of parking at the park, but better to drive, not walk as there are no sidewalks. The community center also has parking.
- The Town Recreation Commission should develop a community recreation plan to enhance and expand municipal recreational opportunities as well as coordinate with other public and private organizations. The Commission will:
 - Develop a plan for the use of the newly-acquired property in West Lebanon. The anticipated purchase of this property did not occur.
 - Identify funding sources to support development of a recreation needs and facilities plan. Possible sources to explore are local legislative representatives, NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) grants, the Governors' Office for Small Cities and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal. A NYS grant for \$500K has been obtained requiring matching funds of \$125,000 (plus \$75,000 in kind work). Construction should begin Spring 2026.
 - Work with the school district to find ways to expand and build on programs using existing school district resources to benefit the broader community. The town has access to the school pool for a variety of programs. The school district uses the community center for activities.
 - Examine the creation of larger-scale events/ activities that will engage a significant number of residents and non-residents (e.g., tournaments). Recruit volunteers to help organize and supervise activities. Outreach to the Lebanon Valley Speedway to explore use of its facilities for such events/activities. Incomplete
 - Create a map that details public and private recreational sites within the Town that includes key access points from public roads. Identify and map other appropriate recreational corridors, such as abandoned Town roads, for multi-use and hiking-only trails. Incomplete, although the Town website does provide a listing of activities with information.
 -

L. LAND USE

Goal:

Land use patterns will promote reaching the goals and sub-goals set forth in this Plan Update.

Sub-goals:

- Continue to evaluate and revise as necessary, land use codes for compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives.
 - Land use codes must balance what are potentially competing goals. More housing, more land conservation, additional retention of farmland, and maintaining a rural character are all desires of the town's residents. The Zoning Rewrite Committee, ZRC, adjusts zoning districts and regulations to provide for the controlled growth of each of these activities in prescribed areas of the town such that all desires can be met, albeit not in the same space. Some areas are designated for commercial activities such as retail, restaurants, mixed use facilities along the central corridors, other areas are retained for housing with 2/5-acre minimums to retain the rural character. Ongoing
 - The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals take the Comprehensive Plan into account in their deliberations and SEQRA process. Ongoing

- Evaluate the existing zoning, subdivision and related regulations and amend as deemed appropriate to achieve consistency.
 - The ZRC continues to adjust and add to the zoning regulations as requested by the Town Board or as recognized as a need. Examples are regulations for self-storage, communication towers, solar panels, ADUs, events, etc. There is a need to finish the ridgeline and steep slope regs, and get several overlay maps accepted by the town. Ongoing
 - The Central Commercial District was created to encourage development in the city center providing housing and business space to form a vibrant community center while not impacting the rural nature of the outlying areas.

- Evaluate the need to update/revise the current incentive zoning provision in the Zoning Code which has not been used since its adoption in 2011. Consider how the concept of densities (dwellings per acre) for each residential zoning district, as a substitute for minimum lot size can be more creatively applied to make the incentive zoning provision more attractive to developers. Incomplete

- Evaluate the re-introduction of Planned Unit Developments (PUD) into the Zoning Code. Incomplete

- Evaluate the zoning overlays that were proposed in the 2005 Plan for which maps were prepared, but never adopted: Flood Zone Overlay (adopted, but needs updating), Hamlet Overlay, Ridgeline and Hilltop Overlay, Historical Overlay, Agricultural Overlay (may be moot based on state designated overlay), Scenic Overlay. Incomplete.

- Ensure that land use codes and processes are easily understood by the public in general and potential applicants in particular.
 - Applicants are learning more, faster, as they come before the ZBA and PB! The ZEO and PB clerk provide information on how to submit applications and what documentation is required. ZRC, PB and ZBA meetings are now live streamed and recorded so the people can see the how and why of these groups. Ongoing

- Continue the equitable and consistent enforcement of land use regulations and policies through the Zoning Enforcement Officer and land use boards to support the goals and strategies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Ongoing

- Ensure the uniform and efficient administration and enforcement of land use codes.
 - The Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board continue their training to be more effective. Ongoing
 - Where possible activities have been condensed to shorten decision times. Ongoing