

Section II

Response to Public

Comment

A. SEQR Comments

Comment: The draft GEIS does not establish the thresholds necessary to allow future actions to be undertaken without engaging the SEQR process.

Response: There are limited land use policy decisions that can be made directly from the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan has identified the major issues, opportunities, and constraints facing the Town. A vision and associated goals and objectives have been established. However, the Plan recommendations and the list of future actions do not, for the most part, call for land use changes and related policy. The information/documentation necessary to support land use recommendations is not available and must be extracted from further study. Recognizing this, the Comprehensive Plan was developed as a strategic document that identifies all the actions necessary to provide the missing information and to adopt future land use plans. In the absence of this information,

it was not possible to analyze the potential environmental impacts of future land use plans within the DGEIS. Therefore, it is fully anticipated that most, if not all, of the future plans will be subject to further SEQR action. This point was not clearly discussed in the Draft Plan and has been expanded upon in the revisions to Chapter I provided in Appendix D.

Comment: The Draft Plan does not address future growth in Rural Guilderland.

Response: The potential for significant growth in Rural Guilderland in the near future is limited by the availability of water and the lack of sewer treatment capacity. Based on these limitations, comprehensive land use planning in Rural Guilderland was de-emphasized. However, some of the comments on the Draft Plan pointed out that the Plan is a long term document (20 years) and even though it should be reviewed and updated in shorter intervals, it should also consider the potential for growth 20 years from now. Rural Guilderland contains a significant amount of potentially developable land. It also contains some very important community, regional and statewide resources. Uncontrolled growth in this area would be disastrous to the environment and community character. Such growth is very unlikely to occur without the necessary infrastructure. Nevertheless, the Town should be proactive in establishing growth policy for this area. Actions leading to this policy are identified in the Draft Plan; however, their interaction and timing were not clearly defined. The Plan revisions provided in Appendix D recommend a clear plan for Rural Guilderland and will incorporate several tasks/studies to achieve a vision for this area, one of protection of natural resources, viewsheds, and rural character while allowing carefully planned residential and economic development.

B. Comments on Draft Comprehensive Plan

Few comments were made on the DGEIS component of the Draft Comprehensive Plan. There were, however, many comments on the plan recommendations and action plan made during the SEQR comment period. Some, as they relate to land use policy, have environmental implications; the most significant of which may be the comment on land use planning for Rural Guilderland. Since Rural Guilderland includes most of the undeveloped land within the Town and contains many significant environmental resources, actions within the area will potentially have a significant impact on any number of environmental issues, including community character. Therefore, this issue was identified and discussed separately in Section II.A. above.

Many other comments were received that resulted in changes in the Draft Plan. Each of the letters and comments made during the public hearing were discussed publicly during televised meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee (a combination of some members from the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board and the Revision Task Force). Revisions to the Plan as a result of these comments were determined at the committee meetings. The revisions are highlighted in Appendix D of this FGEIS. This represents response to the comments.

The comments did not result in changes to the intent or basic theme of the Comprehensive Plan. More importantly, they did not establish new land use policy that could impact environmental resources and community character and services. Mostly, the revisions refine and clarify the recommendations for future plans and studies that will be necessary to address land use policy.

Supplemental SEQR analysis will be necessary when the plans move forward and new policies are adopted.