

Richfield Springs : December 8th, 2015

Reflections on the Past: Share your knowledge and memories of the people, places and events that have shaped Richfield and Richfield Springs

- Re: Sulphur smell. Since the new water and sewer lines put in, the swamp between Route 20 and Dow Street was opened and the smell is back! How can the smell be reduced?
- Would like to see more outdoor activities: skiing/skating, swimming
- Gunset Ski Bowl
- Farming – need more! When farms thrive the community thrives
- More places for people to stay: look at all the past hotels
- Agriculture
- There were 4 or 5 business that farmers used – and ALL WERE USED and busy all the time
- I love it when people wave to each as they pass your home. Our kindness is our strength
- Gunset – could get cross country ski trails going – snowboarding
- Skating rink, Perkins, Forman’s Clothing store, two drug stores with soda fountains, mom and pop grocery stores, restaurants and watering holes
- Children’s activities – baseball diamonds, skating rinks in winter, roller skating all year – skating rink is a low cost suggestion that in partnership with a the village could be an excellent activity
- The bakery on Lake Street was great
- Need opportunities for kids within out community: Parks, little league fields, walking trails, etc. These are things young parents look for in their communities. If we want to attract young, professional families we must provide the amenities
- Good quality facilities, streets, bridges, sidewalks. We need to invest in the infrastructure of the community for the future. Not just talk about what we used to have!
- Much more bustling, bigger families, two-parent homes
- We should tap into the amazing history of the village of Richfield Springs
- Water – mineral springs, spas
- When I moved here we had 5 restaurants. A village police department and class sizes were 70-90 per grade
- Beautiful acres of farms and residents, we have great trails for snowmobiling, winter and summer sports. The beauty must be preserved, this is a huge asset and makes our quality of life here great

Some Background Information: any thoughts or observations on the background information shared?

- Surprised at number of vacant housing

- Richfield Springs is hot spot of Otsego County for family assisted living
- If we have more local jobs that would increase home ownership because that makes a stronger community VS increase rental properties increasing to rent to welfare residents
- Need an active and strict zoning board to handle all the trash and abandoned cars and vehicles on properties
- All storefronts full on Main Street
- Do not drive out those who own property and pay taxes by forcing them to live in an industrial zone (like wind farms).
- What about the homeless we have some living out of their cars
- Lots of welfare – renter occupied property!
- Need senior housing
- The data is only a snapshot of the big picture. Statistics are easily swayed based on the size of the group being disclosed. 1 or 2 people can sway statistics by 10-20 percent in some cases

Your thoughts on the Town and Village today: Describe some of the area's weaknesses...

What do you feel are some potential BARRIERS to attracting people to live, work or play in the town?

- BETTER government officials needed
- Our school needs to provide better education – more college, technical school education graduates
- Our community park: perfect location to attract visitors but who would stop? Play ground needs work ASAP
- Wind turbines are a HUGE threat to our town and village, research it!
- Need to travel distances to access almost everything
- Few local jobs
- Winter roads
- Town website needs work
- Close mindedness: town board and officials
- Lack of retail, you need to go to the valley, Utica or Cooperstown for clothing, lumber, general merchandise (appliances)
- No one wants to get involved or get out and do things that help improve the community
- We are a low wind source! And wind turbines will destroy our area
- Large industrial wind turbines
- Jobs
- Better officials. Must listen to people at board meetings
- Employment: What's bringing our children back to raise THEIR children?
- There is no new development in the west end of Richfield because of the threat of 500 foot wind turbines being built. We need to ban industrial wind

to protect the residents property value, health, quality of life and the environment

- Lack of good housing
- Lack of restaurants
- Lack of nightlift (dies down/rolls up before dark)
- Track record of town and village stopping or preventing change or development
- Garbage and trash and abandon vehicles on many properties especially farms
- Youth opportunities, sports fields, sports offerings
- People don't know what we actually have here!
- Employment opportunities – distance to jobs
- We need to promote and advertise the things we do have going on. Many times people do not know about “happenings” until they are over
- There needs to be more than just minimum wage jobs (gas station, mcdonalds, dollar store) to attract young people to the area
- Town officials need to be accessible and cooperative – make time spent at meetings worth while
- Wind turbines tear communities apart
- Wind turbines definite potential barrier
- Lack of reliable internet and lack of presence of social media
- No internet in country. We have a son in Niguargua who has better internet access than Richfield!
- People need to become part of the solution to improving our community instead of being part of the problem. Get involved, volunteer, speak out, quit complaining
- The school system is much better than perceived
- I am concerned that my neighborhood will become an industrial zone with 500' machines, and I will have to leave for a quiet place

What do you feel are some potential BARRIERS to attracting people to live, work or play in the village?

- Village and town boards do not want to do anything
- Perception that school system is sub-par
- Let's not lose our history trying to upgrade
- Housing for seniors and/or small families. Current homes are huge and need repair
- Restaurants
- Need more success stories, negative image
- Agriculture was the past and should be the future. We have let go out of #1 industry
- Vacant housing should be used not left empty
- Village not conducive to walking and spending time along Main Street

- Negativity at Town and Village board meetings – members rude to residents – they don't want input from community
- Lack of recreational places – other than lake
- Too many abandoned and un-kept buildings – both commercial and domestic
- Jobs
- All do not listen and respect each other: promoting teamwork and success
- Very rude town clerk – people afraid to go there for business
- Jobs for youth made available for the summer
- Town basically shut down at night – nothing stays open
- School system needs to publicize successes and entice young families
- Empty stores – especially by Price Chopper
- Keep the cats and dogs out of the Lakehouse Restaurant – more people would go there
- Town barn looks terrible, needs a paint job
- We have to stop living with the status quo and begin working towards solving the problems. Fix the fountain, replace the abandoned bridge, etc etc. Invest in and promote our community

Describe some of the area's STRENGTHS today...

What are some of the Town's assets that we can build upon?

- Historical resources
- Agriculture land
- Proximity to populated centers for potential commerce
- Local grocery store and pharmacy for basic needs
- School – financial, health – so many things offered that are not known to greater audience
- Grocery stores in village
- Natural beauty
- High quality farmland
- Low taxes
- Harworking people
- Good roads (Route 20 and Route 28)
- 30 minutes to Utica
- Lake
- Farming – produces local jobs
- Beautiful scenery outside village, our lake, the Historical character of the Village, our night sky is relatively clear of light pollution.
- The quiet of our hillsides
- Zone a great place for the kids – maybe more programs?
- The lake – no place to park boats, eat, drink, get gas – long gone and never replaced
- Good people, friendly

- Beautiful landscape
- History
- Colorful history and museum
- Strong wind resource near power lines
- Good water
- Low real estate prices and cost of living
- Great decorations on Main Street at Christmas
- Support agriculture – it is a huge economic boost for the town
- Wonderful community center for kids – use more, advertise more
- People are our greatest asset
- Natural resources, ie lake. We should capitalize on it's value as a natural asset
- Nice park. We need to use it more.
- Amish are taking so much of our land, which makes it hard for others to buy. This is hurting out school population. They also do not vote.
- Agriculture – our land – our farming community
- Great neighbors
- Excellent school system which is the heart of the community. Natural resources such as the lake. Beautiful landscape with rolling hills, agricultural land, great location (not far from Albany, Syracuse etc). All the necessary services: grocery, gas, post office, bank etc.

What are some of the Village's assets that we can build upon?

- We are wonderfully walkable as we are!
- Healthcare, pharmacy, Grocery store, bank, better than most
- We have basic needs: bank, grocery, pharmacy, hardware, Bassett healthcare
- Community Center
- Healthcare
- Dedicated supporting folks. If given resources they could get things done – start with the youth
- Organizations are great (but need young members)
- Great fire deparment
- Good grocery and drugstore
- Lake
- Pleasant place to live. Basic shopping here. Not much crime. Good fire protection and healthcare in area
- Low crime, close proximity to Cooperstown, Little Falls, and West Winfield. We are a “crossroads” community
- Low taxes
- Low water, sewer rate compared to others
- We have become more active in community concerns. This event is an example of that. Good job!
- Great people who want to do what's right

- I would like to see the Village park to be a friendly and beautiful place to spend time like it was in the past. Shown in old post cards
- The school. What more can do to use it for and with our community? Involvement and interest, built it!
- News paper to let people know what is going on
- Should revitalize the Spring's aspect of Richfield Springs
- Great quality of life in a rural landscape
- Beautiful school, declining population is hurting it

What do the Town and Village want in the FUTURE?

Give us 1-5 words about your vision for the future of the Town and Village...

- Fresh local foods and products at farmer's markets
- Great location needs to be used to potential
- An awesome place to raise a family
- Wind turbines will ruin us
- Working with and capitalizing on tourism
- Active Main Street, see people walking
- A bustling lake community
- Peaceful, quiet, friendly, considerate
- Sustainable, clean energy
- Quiet, peaceful, well respected community
- Capitalize on it's location relevant to Cooperstown and the Valley
- Need for pride and growth
- Suburb for Nanotech industry
- Young professionals raising families
- Rebuild downtown- accessible for our elderly population (walkable)
- Walkable, vibrant economic community
- Quiet family oriented bedroom community

Idea Center: Station 1

Housing & Neighborhoods: What do you feel are the advantages and challenges of living in Richfield and Richfield Springs compared to other surrounding communities?

- Advantage one of the most beautiful landscapes on the planet
- We could use more restaurants other than fast food
- Foster agriculture and historical character of town
- Replace Ann Street Bridge or at least make it walkable it's unsightly
- We need to ban industrial wind turbines and any other industries use that will destroy our natural assets. The beauty of our area is our asset
- We've lost our downtown and our park has nothing to offer
- Advantage: great place to live with close proximity to all necessary services

- Challenges: what lies ahead for a community without the proper leadership or ambition to make the necessary changes to move us forward
- We need more attractive and affordable leasing to attract employees in Bassett
- Excellent ground water
- REA electric
- Housing not concentrated in neighborhood
- A place for youth sports near the village – need fields, baseball, softball, soccer and football?
- Potential – the town could be beautiful
- The need for senior housing and patio homes
- Developments for younger families
- Need sidewalks on all streets – repair bridges on Ann Street – streets not walkable for elderly
- Advantages: quite and peaceful, proximity to other communities, low crime, good water and sewer, cell service, natural gas, Candarago Lake
- Price Chopper on outskirts of community
- Lots of driveways to cross
- Mixed use buildings along Main Street
- Complete streets
- Challenge: people isolated without a car transportation a challenge
- Sidewalk to community center and lights
- Less absentee landlords
- Affordable real estate
- No wind turbines
- Small community with shopping and everything in the area
- Need to do something about all the unoccupied homes
- Senior housing with attached Rec Center
- Challenges – questionable school performance – school needs to advise community on it's successes
- Delapidated housing
- Challenge: More communication needs to occur between the town, village, and school board
- Price Chopper, school, Kinney Drugs are all advantages
- Fix the bridge by the community center and mark the walking path (at least walkable)
- Need newspaper, senior housing
- Keep Agriculture going
- Preserve farmland, rejuvenate Main Street, Become an attraction to raise a family, better planning for housing/commercial construction
- Challenge: Distance to a community that is one step larger
- Senior housing near price chopper?
- Promote small businesses
- No heavy industry

- Community group willing to work together (most of the time)
- Advantage – Agriculture, our land
- Become a season recreation area
- Senior housing
- Real estate prices are low
- Appropriate housing for all age groups
- We have gas/internet/water
- Advantage : beautiful landscape and water
- Challenge: mess/buildings need repair and care – help by federal grant?
- The land bank can be a very important tool in the effort to revitalize the village

Idea Center: Station 2

Recreation and Environment: Where are there opportunities to strengthen and showcase the recreation and environmental aspects of the Town and Village?

- Building upon accomplishments of Richfield Youth Sports and collaborating with zone and school to offer more for youth athletics, music and art
- Parks need bike trail by lake
- Capitalize on the spring water and lake
- Do more at Baker’s Beach Playground, small dog park
- Revive Gunset Ski Bowl – cross country skiing, snowboarding, snowboard park
- Youth center is a huge advantage
- Park in town – how can you make it more user friendly and community oriented
- Adult fitness, in the park, walking groups, running groups
- Canadarago Lake a huge asset – people should know about it
- Lake is great – improve town public access
- Renovate bowling alley
- Outdoor recreation, cross country skiing
- Support and enhance the lake and it’s facilities plus Baker’s Beach
- Need a bike trail on the Lake Road
- Need an ice skating rink – low cost and fun for all
- Biking and hiking trails
- Boat rentals on the lake
- Bike trail/path around the lake – not safe to bike around lake with current conditions
- A youth sports field area near the village
- Use sulfur springs to advantage
- Create trail network that accommodates horses, bikes, golf carts – mobility for elders

- Tours of historic sites – get grants for improving historic sites
- Invest in the promotion of our resources – lake, agricultural opportunities, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling
- Most of what is being said here can happen at a park for baseball and soccer. This could be a center for it all
- Use of seasonal roads for bike trails, snowshoeing, cross country skiing etc
- Roller skating rink
- Ice skating
- Bike trails
- Dog Park
- Utilize lake – our biggest asset
- Develop half marathon and road races – could turn into charity events, training for the Boilermaker etc
- Take advantage of the opportunities in youth sports and provide our kids with what they need to live healthy, active, productive lives. Begin healthy habits early. More parts with usable facilities, baseball fields etc
- Hiking, swimming, snowmobiling, cross country skiing
- Ice skating rink
- Preserve/protect water resources for town and lake
- Create a mentorship program to get those in our community involved with those in our middle schools and high schools
- History is great – do more historical recreation
- Improve Baker’s Beach for swimming and activities
- Connect with Sharon Springs and get attention for springs
- Softball for adults
- Kickball for all ages, Volleyball league
- Biking and hiking trails – put in sidewalks or a walking trail
- Good restaurants with boat parking on lake – selling gas, lunch, snacks
- All development must be in accordance with the preservation and protection of ALL life!
- Hiking and biking trails – make the area a resort area for people to enjoy the beauty of our area
- The lake is a regional tourist draw (fishing, boating etc)
- The island
- Preserve our pastoral landscape, it is irreplaceable
-

Idea Center: Station 3

Business and Economic Development : Are there specific products, services or businesses that you believe would be successful in the Town and Village?

- Small electronics store
- A good bakery
- Encourage development of Ag related industries

- Horse boarding and operations are increasing in the area – both recreational and racing horses
- Wind turbine project will destroy landscape, residents home and health, animal habitats and provide very little income
- Develop the free wind power in the area
- Micro brewery
- Coffee shops
- Bookstores
- To have all the benefits the windmills would provide equity for our community
- Establish a farmland protection plan!
- Meathouse/slaughterhouse
- Protection of our open spaces, clean night skies from industrialization
- Residential, light commercial distributes the smallest footprint possible
- A 20 million dollar wind project would bring \$5-7 million to region during construction and up to \$500k per year of operation
- Business park to attract professional jobs
- No large wind turbines
- Youth park baseball, soccer possibly a building for indoor sports for the youth of this community
- Continue to support farming and acknowledge it's importance to the town
- We need a business park
- Micro brewery on Main St could be a Route 20 tourist attraction (Cooperstown Beverage Trail)
- Brew-pub
- Art store and artist guild
- Bike shop!
- Encourage the development of industry to provide jobs to keep our young people in the area
- Microbreweries are popping up all over – bring in good business
- Agri-Tourism – local products, food hubs, education
- Keep promoting the farmers market – buy local incentives?
- Business that supports agriculture
- Anything industrial would be a huge plus
- Reasonable family restaurant open for dinner!
- Aquaculture
- Town Newspaper with an editorial staff
- Educate people both children and adults how to create sustainable businesses in today's global economy. We just started this in the school with 5th and 6th graders. I collected the registration slips today and we have 19 youngsters signed up!!! Next stop, create an adult education class!!!!

Town Specific

- Internet café with free Wifi/PC's with internet for the public who may not have those resources – used book store
- Foster small businesses (no huge projects)
- No wind projects
- Storefronts need to be filled with small retail unique businesses
- Value added Ag products – year round farmers market?
- Horseback riding
- Solar development to feed grid
- Youth park with multi purpose for arts and music – could have young people working getting experience
- Ag – bring local products to our school – kids value fresh local food and grow-up to support Ag
- Develop Gunset into rehab center (think Veterans) with activities all year round
- Internet café on Main St for all to utilize
- Foster Ag related businesses
- No heavy industry – just small business
- Highlifthed Amish business = culture
- Farm parts store
- Better internet for IT business – low impract

Village Specific

- Concentrating development and new businesses in the village/main street
- No wind turbines near homes – destroys value
- Support IT and light building – need water/sewer and internet
- Need industrial park to do this
- Hydroponic farming
- Promote what we already have and make it work to our advantage instead of focusing on something that will become a liability to the community in the future

Idea Center: Station 4

Sustainability: What are some of your thoughts regarding how sustainability can be integrated into the Town and Village?

- Use the water resources we have
- Avoid industrial structures to destroy our view shed
- Richfield in many ways is the perfect place – community concentrated residentially and commercially surrounded by fertile farmland carefully watch over and worked – the very substance of sustainability

- Renewable energy is rural energy – and wind turbines use only a small fraction of production land
- Complete streets add to sustainability because it allows greater mobility
- Wind turbines will destroy the values of property in our area like it has all over the world where they are built. Wind is not a good source of energy. Not used locally either
- Prohibit heavy industry
- Community health through improved access to healthy foods and promoting physical activity
- Agriculture is key – Amish are a plus
- Improvement in homes (unoccupied)
- More senior housing
- Focus on Ag, the lake, the spring, the youth
- The power does not stay here don't take the farmland to do this solar or wind crap!
- More stores, antique stores, Aldi's?
- Preserve to attract tourism – commerce growth (positive)
- Don't turn countryside into profits for a corporation with little given back to our town
- We think energy of the future for us and town of Richfield
- School and or town go after grants for solar energy
- Will this town (honestly) be more attractive to those looking for a place to live if the hills are covered with 500' machines?
- Give the people what they want, attract families to the area and don't just satisfy the big corporations looking to make a buck off from what we have
- Go wind, go solar – conserve resources we have
- Wind turbines produce renewable energy without emissions. They are more than twice as productive solar and don't cover the land
- Solar well done (hidden)
- Industrial wind turbines destroy green space, night visions – not good solution
- Energy efficiency initiatives
- Teach youth how to create sustainable businesses
- Wind turbines provide very little energy, and hurt home values, drive people away

Town Specific

- The Amish do not have cell phones but know everything that is going on. Need to do more social – meet and greet
- Wind turbines will drive our locals and our potential residents away. People come for the peace and beauty
- High speed internet access for rural residents
- Shale bed on top of Route 20 would be an excellent solar site

- Utilize your local growers (farmers markets etc) more – build programs for them, to support and help grow
- Need better cell phone and internet coverage

Village Specific

- Better cell and internet
- Senior housing
- Tourism
- Solar
- Large waiting list for elderly housing
- Sidewalks added and maintained on all village streets

Idea Center: Station 5

Places and Spaces: In the table below, identify some ideas for how the waterfront and surrounding areas can best be used. Use the map to highlight special areas for reinvestment, access, and protection

- Snack bar at Baker's Beach
- Boat rental spot
- The lake is poorly managed something needs to be done about managing-nutrients and the depth before it can be a viable resource
- Use village property on Woodside Avenue for trails
- Path around lake for safer biking, walking
- Richfield residents need to utilize and others will go and then it can be improved
- Open island for public picnicking and swimming
- Dog area at Baker's Beach
- Improve Baker's Beach!
- Add a playground to Baker's Beach and grow the asset
- Need free public access to the Lake
- Canadarago Lake boating ramp was paid for by D-J funds from taxes so our fishing stuff and boats should be free! NY parks charges for it
- Boat wash
- Fix Dam
- Playground at Baker's Beach and small dog park – it also needs to be advertised
- Nicer beach at Baker's Beach
- State boat launch needs pavilion and snack bar in open area

- Hold events on the lake – all seasons
- More appropriate zoning for lake properties
- Publicly run “cantina” at Baker’s Beach
- Community needs to work with lake association to manage water quality
- Kids fishing derby, events on/around the lake
- Boat access should BE FREE!
- Encourage establishing affordable outside dining on lake
- Make Baker’s Beach more inviting – Better beach, small playground, less ducks

Idea Center: Station 6 :

Places and Spaces : Main Street is the area’s traditional center for social, cultural, and daily economic activity. Today, Main Street still serves an important function as a gateway for the community providing social and economic opportunity. In the table below, identify some ideas for new public investments and new business that could enhance the vitality of Main Street. Use the map to identify specific parcels for redevelopment and illustrate how Main Street can be “connected” for a complete Richfield Springs experience.

- Reuse of the Patterson Building. Market building
- Park enhanced for children and adult’s
- Clean up Cary Park (trees dead)
- Pickleball and exercise area in old Kinney’s building
- Outdoor patios on Main Street at Bakery, cybercafé, microbrewery, tasting room etc
- Incentive grants for people to fix property – need to be kid friendly
- No good place for little league to play in town or village
- Casual dining and drinks
- Park needs restrooms
- Have people upkeep their homes, tear several down
- Need codes that will be enforced by the judge and county
- Playground at Park – none for miles, can’t use schools
- Lumber yards (old Springers!)
- Office business park (route 28) and professional space
- Need more stores
- All Historic buildings – fixed and painted
- Good job with flowers on Main Street – now need new business on Main St!
- A new playground in the park and encouraging people to use the park would bring people to town. Bring your dog – get rid of no dogs allowed sign.
- Have events that include all ages
- Grow the farmers market – bathrooms?
- More pedestrian friendly businesses, off street parking, give people a reason to come and shop along Main Street

- Skateboard Park
- Use John D. Cary Park – dog area? Trails from there
- Love the window painting and museum storefront space
- Need a place for youth sports – baseball, soccer, football?
- Bring back the bowling alley
- We're a great location for a fitness center – people traveling through towns love to stop for that
- Subsidized rent can help sell businesses on Main Street

Idea Center: Station 7

Places and Spaces: In the space below and on the map provided, tell us about and show up the special places within the Town and Village that we should enhance, restore or protect?

- The bank (was restaurant at one time)
- Re-use spaces before allowing new space; special permits
- Restore all the old house and buildings that are our heritage!
- Improve park area to promote greater community use
- Protect farmland for farming uses
- Enhance and support community center – sidewalks (many walk this road)
- Park
- Bakers Beach
- The Lake
- Gladstone building, don't let it go (keep it up)
- Start a school garden
- Expand this look throughout the park
- Start a community garden area to rent
- Dooty bag dispensers on Main Street
- Better recreation for snowshoeing and cross country skiing, walking, hiking
- Cheese industry
- Support small farms
- Meet with Amish and see we can encourage more of them to live here
- Main Street needs to be protected from deteriorating any further, keep the old style buildings
- Keep problem people from sitting downtown
- Village needs to help improve it's own property looks
- Town needs to improve looks of Town Hall and Garage
- All historic buildings
- Park is a gem!

Idea Center 8

Creative and Open Thinking: Is there anything else that you would like to add to the discussion regarding the development of the Joint Comprehensive Plan?

- Good zoning is paramount to a healthy, growing and prosperous community. Once this plan is complete we need to visit the town land use ordinance.
- We need fire protection for the entire town. The FD needs to be located so all properties are within 5 miles of the FD.
- Village survey was never reported to the public! Needs to be done!
- Promote our history – many residents could help with this
- Survey our youth (18-32 year olds) – why do they leave – what keeps them away? What would bring them back to raise their children here? These are your best assets and the future!
- Heavy industrial development is not appropriate here
- The village planning committee did a survey. There was a high regard for the local fire department and also for healthcare and a few other things. This information should be made public but so far it has not been provided to the public – Pennysaver “news” – local papers and radio
- Use the youth (teach them) to clean up and repair the village. They have lots of strength and energy and need summer jobs
- Teach the children about the history of the area
- Get community buy in from all groups – keep kids busy and happy and they will work to raise their kids here
- Keep everyone talking together – don't let a minority of negative talkers stop development
- No wind turbines – please, we will move

Comments via Email and US Postal Mail

- We need broadband internet services -it's a serious limitation to living outside of the village. I work in IT now, and have to work from home and take call and our internet situation is brutal. Very few, very expensive options. I know it's off topic. But if there is a forum for that topic –I am interested in updates, etc.
- Aquaculture
- Town Newspaper with an editorial staff
- Educate people both children and adults how to create sustainable businesses in today's global economy. We just started this in the school with 5th and 6th graders. I collected the registration slips today and we have 19 youngsters signed up!!! Next stop, create an adult education class!!!!