

The Richfield Springs Village Board determined the need for a Village Comprehensive Planning Committee (VCPC) in March, 2014.

The VCPC was comprised of nominated voting residents as volunteers with 7 sworn regular members and 2 alternates. All meetings were announced, open to the public and were held on the third Monday of each month at 6:00pm at the village library meeting room.

The purpose of the CPC is to develop a Community:

- * Profile and Inventory / **Assessment**
- * Vision Statement with a set of Goals / **Plan**
- * Series of Strategies / **Implementation over time**

The Committee considered the problems facing the Village and reviewed other community plans and sample surveys. The Committee considered the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the Village of Richfield Springs (S.W.O.T. analysis). In June 2014, The Otsego County Industrial development Agency (IDA) expressed interest in the Richfield area for future economic development. This was viewed as a very positive sign.

During that Summer, the VCPC developed a Community Survey and sent it out to Village residents based upon the voting rolls. Of approximately 300 surveys sent out, half were returned (and 50 were found to be undeliverable). There were many challenges in tallying the multi-question surveys, which also included several fill-in-the-blank answers. Changes and concerns within the Village were continually discussed at each monthly meeting. A special meeting for tallying the surveys was held in August.

Each Committee member suggested up to five residents names for special Village Focus Groups. The two-hour Focus Group Meetings were held in October and required an extra meeting held on October 6, 2014. Residents represented the following groups: Seniors, Organizations and Churches, and two group sessions for local Businesses. The meetings were quite productive.

In the Spring of 2015, the VCPC determined that infra-structure fixes and any zoning changes were beyond their scope of responsibility. The designation of a separate Zoning Board and a Village Health Officer were recommended to the Board. The Committee began the task of "inventory" to assess the current state of the Village Richfield Springs. Each board member was assigned areas (demographics, school, taxes, etc.) to research and then report back the statistics.

In February 2015, the Committee learned that the IDA was publically supportive of the planning and development of a Commerce Park on property under IDA negotiation near Federal Corners. The IDA gave presentations to the board and area residents in April. The IDA and planners began public meetings in May, and committed to assisting in the development of a combined vision statement and **Joint Village and Town plan**. The Village Board then dissolved the VCPC, and requested current (VCPC) members continue as part of the joint Village and Town team guided by the Elan Planning professionals.

Many issues remain, including: site(s) testing, utilities and infra-structure for any commerce/ business/ or light industrial park. Main Street promotion and development are an important priority. Continued active community involvement in the planning process is key to addressing specific Village and Town concerns.

Thank you, Sincerely, -K. Zurmuhlen, Village Chair -Joint Town & Village CPC