

**Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update
11/30/21 Environment/Sustainability Topic Meeting - Summary of Comments**

Name	Affiliation	Subtopic	Summary of Comment	Key Points/Recommendations for the Comp. Plan Update
Rob Carpenter	LI Farm Bureau	Agricultural Preservation; Renewable Energy	There are a number of solar farms on farmland. Solar can only be done on industrial land; that land is mostly along Route 25 in Calverton. Agriculture has existed there for many years. NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets has come up with concept of co-locating solar on farmland. How is decommissioning handled to not destroy the farmland? In Riverhead mostly the solar companies have bought the farmland outright. But important for industry to restore the farmland. Need to look at the potential benefits and drawbacks. Farmers need to be profitable. Solar can offset some of their costs; can be a farmland preservation opportunity to allow farming to continue on the remainder of the property. Until Town has enough funds through CPF, TDR, etc. we should consider solar as a way toward preservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar should be allowed on farmland as a means toward preservation.
Mark Haubner	TOR Environmental Advisory Committee	Vision statement; freshwater wetlands; I/A systems; public education; climate change; renewable energy; water conservation; mapping tools; recycling	Do we have the vision already written? Are we looking to expand it or change it from what it was in 2003? We have an inventory of freshwater wetlands that is outdated from the 70s; will we redo the freshwater wetlands inventory? About 110 that are over 1/2 acre-1 acre; do we want to follow DEC replacement requirements that you have to replace with a piece 3x larger or can we use sending/receiving for that? I/A systems - there are 94K that are needed in the coastal areas of the County; Town did 14 of them in a year; can we strengthen the Town Code or make greater efforts in public education to subsidize these for people. It's twice the cost of a conventional system. Trees - would like to code a policy for tree replacement/protection. Smithtown created a tree inventory - can the Town do one? Would like Town to hire enforcement personnel. Revitalize the Climate Smart Community Task Force (requires matching funds). Town is a Clean Energy Community as well; NYSERDA has non-matching funds. Water conservation and landscaping - public education is needed and Town should reduce use of water. USGS has easy-to-use mapping tools; MIT Mitigation Tool is another resource for reducing emissions. Columbia has flood visuals. 20 years may be too long a period; consider doing revisions once every 5 or 10 years. We need a media/marketing person to educate on recycling. Glass is subject to market pressure; we have to pay to get rid of it. We are now capping landfills with broken glass, that requires energy. We need a glass repurposing facility (e.g., at EPCAL); they're not large.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town should update its freshwater wetlands inventory. • The Town Code should require I/A systems. • Public education is needed (e.g., water conservation). • The Town should implement a tree replacement/protection policy. • The Town should hire enforcement personnel; revitalize the Climate Smart Community Task Force; and reduce use of water. • Consider updates the plan every 5 or 10 years. • The Town is need of a glass repurposing facility.
Bob DeLuca	Group for the East End	Development pressure; implementation schedule; subdivision review procedures.	The interactive map is very helpful. There needs to be an implementation schedule that is fixed, pursued, and funded. What are the things that are threatening Riverhead's environment? Incremental commercial, subdivision development will eat up what's left of Riverhead (i.e., rural character). We need a good subdivision process and SEQRA process. Need to bolster our decision-making boards with the information and policies they should be following. The constitutional amendment - not clear what it does - but it got people's attention. We need to make the daily operations of government focused on conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be an implementation schedule that is fixed, pursued, and funded. • The Town needs a good (rigid) subdivision process. • The Town should focus on conservation.
Dr. Joyce Novak	Executive Director, Peconic Estuary Program	Critical Lands Protection Strategy	It's great that the Critical Lands Protection Strategy is on the Town's radar. GIS data is freely available. PEP went through great stakeholder engagement; agricultural lands are separated by developed and undeveloped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town should use utilize GIS data from PEP's Critical Lands Protection Strategy is available.
Kevin McDonald	Nature Conservancy	Zoning; water resources; innovation	The Town Board is commended for taking this initiative seriously. Riverhead is important with a lot of resources. New zoning innovations; water resources/nitrogen impacts has room for improvement. Land use intensities get greater over time. Too much land may be zoned industrial. Town has an airport, large former weapons facility. What is the next best use that possibly has the innovation that Riverhead needs to manage its future. Water resource management - how do you manage growth, water infrastructure demand? Government is about allocating money for the greater public good. Nature Conservancy has modeling on sea level rise for various climate scenarios. We are planning now for a future that we want. We need to foresee it well enough to be able to plan smartly. Anyone who says this is as good as it gets is lacking innovation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town needs more innovative zoning/uses; removal of nitrogen from water resources. • There is too much land zoned industrial. • The Nature Conservancy has modeling on sea level rise.
Julie Wesnofske	Peconic Land Trust	Farmland preservation	Riverhead has its challenges with funding for preservation. PLT has applied to NYS Ag & Markets, which is a great partnership b/c they haven't been too active on LI. They are looking at preserving around 38 acres. Most of it is contiguous with another property across the street.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland preservation is important.
George Bartunek	Town of Riverhead Environmental Committee	Climate change; public education	Attention being given to climate change is reassuring. The 2003 Comp. Plan didn't mention climate change, except it was mentioned with the local waterfront revitalization plan - the one mention that recognized that sea level rise was going to be an issue. There have been many changes since the last comp. plan update. Ch. 22 could be used to get the word out, to educate the public with regard to availability and importance of the septic systems, groundwater protection (e.g., cartoons).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change must be addressed. • There needs to be public education (e.g., Ch. 22 regarding groundwater protection).
Chuck Thomas	Local architect	Mapping, public education, I/A	On the CAC level it is important to update our maps, so we can help people develop their land in a responsible way. Implementation of I/A systems is a great thing. Public education about what to do if they have wetlands, etc. on their property would be helpful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping is important. • I/A systems should be encouraged. • Public education is needed (e.g., wetlands).
Priscilla Devine	Jamesport resident/civic assoc.	Consumer education	Consumer education is important (use of pesticides, solar panels, etc.). Civics can have input. Need to spread the word. Need to define "sustainability." Put more quantitative/measurable goals down. There is data on nitrogen levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer education is important (e.g., use of pesticides, solar panels). • Need to define "sustainability." • Put down more quantitative/measurable goals.

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Phil Barbato	Organic farmer, Jamesport	Groundwater quantity; trees	Owns and operates a farm preserved in the 70s. Groundwater quantity will be affected by sea level rise/salt water intrusion and development; is Town planning on modeling that through USGS groundwater model to see if there will be enough water to service this plan? Are any wells going to become salt/no longer usable? Use worst-case SLR assumptions and review every 5 years or so. Plant more trees for beautification and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. There is significant state park in Riverhead that could be a sending area if Town came up with ordinance for cutting down trees. Significant open space Town has purchased can also be used for that purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town could benefit from a USGS groundwater model to see if there will be enough water to serve the plan/future population. • Use worst-case sea level rise assumptions. • Review the plan every 5 years. • The plan could include policies aimed at preserving more trees or an ordinance for cutting down trees.
Frank Mancini	TOR Water Superintendent	Water supply	Town is studying with USGS; aligns with USGS sustainability study being done throughout Nassau/Suffolk; defining salt water interface around Riverhead which will be used as tool for future water supply development moving forward. Town is on a sustainability siting team with USGS and will advocate that state investment be used in Riverhead. Drilled 2 wells that can be used to monitor impacts caused by pumping, global warming, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town should utilize the USGS sustainability study, which will define the salt water interface around Riverhead, as a tool for future water supply development.
Toqui Terchun	Calverton resident	Solar farms	Need to reexamine zoning in Calverton. We need a more holistic approach. We missed an opportunity with the 36MW State-controlled process. Idea for sustainability for farmers. Tree inventory - including how old they are - would be valuable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town should reexamine the industrial zoning/solar permitting process. • A tree inventory would be valuable.
Barbara Blass	Jamesport resident	Wetlands, preservation, trees, solar	Wetlands map needs to be updated. CZM line may need to be updated. Need to add Environmental Justice areas, as well as Opportunity Zones, which have development implications. Pine Barrens Plan is being updated. Town is looking to Pine Barrens Commission to reassert its jurisdiction. Need to address importance of 1000 acres that are supposed to subject to a critical protection land, whether we own the land or sell it to somebody, the requirement has to run with the land; that plan should be part of the whole inventory that needs to be preserved. Lot coverage should also be looked at, as well as tree clearing limits. People need to understand the importance of keeping trees on their property - it adds value. Town should set guidelines for utilizing solar/renewables/recycled products in site plans. Cliffs program has been updated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town needs an updated wetlands/coastal zone/environmental justice maps. • The Comp. Plan should consider the Pine Barrens Plan that is being updated. • The Town should revisit lot coverage allowances and tree clearing limits. • Public education is needed (e.g., trees). • The Town should set guidelines for utilizing solar/renewables/recycled products in site plan.
Resident	Calverton resident	Carrying capacity; solar on farmland	This plan should address carrying capacity, modeled. Solar on farmland may soon become a different issue. Some have tower systems for solar panels; technology is changing; with vertical panels you have more room to continue farming. This plan needs to consider the future of solar co-locating with farm. For example, maybe towers could be required at such a time that they are viable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan should address carrying capacity. • The plan needs to consider the future of solar technology/co-locating with farm; for example, vertical panels could be required when they become viable.
Syd Bail	GJCA, CAC	Solar projects	Town of Brookhaven incentivizes projects to incorporate solar, connected to FAR. Town can also mandate solar for large industrial projects. Solar can become integral part of farming if it's a component of the farm but not if it becomes the entirety of the farm. Solar rating could be required to sell a house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town can mandate solar for large industrial projects. • Solar may be permitted on a portion of the farm. • Solar rating could be required to sell a house.
Resident		Solar, consumer education, solid waste management	Supports solar as a component of the farm. Town needs to educate homeowners and work with landscapers to provide waste reduction services, versus bags on sides of roads being sent to community landfill. Solid waste management would focus on reducing food waste; Town would set up model to follow. Ch. 22 may be utilized for consumer education. Solar on new development or energy efficiency on all new development, specifically on large projects - we need to see how that land can sustain itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar may be permitted on a portion of the farm. • Public education is needed (e.g., solid waste reduction; Ch. 22). • The Town should require solar or energy efficiency on new development.
John		Solar requirements for new homes	All new residential projects in Brookhaven were to be situated in such a way that solar would not be a problem. There was opposition. In Riverhead, new projects should have 100% of the homes situated to take advantage of solar heating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New projects should have 100% of the homes situated to take advantage of solar.
John Cullen	Northville	Public education; recycling; wetlands protection; trees; climate change	Ch. 22 should be utilized. Recycling is important. Wetlands protection is important. They are building on side of North Fork Preserve. They are cutting trees in East Hampton due to beetles. Climate change is real and is important for future generations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education is needed (e.g., Ch. 22).
Karen Bluer	Calverton	Watershed mapping; carrying capacity; interim plan progress	There are subwatershed studies and USGS maps; we should do maps by watersheds to help people locate exactly where they are and where the flow is going and bring awareness about groundwater and surface waters. Planning should be by carrying capacity to determine how much growth can be supported without destroying our environment. Town should develop goals for zero waste. Town should check in on progress every 1-5 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town should create maps by watersheds. • The plan should consider carrying capacity to determine the amount of new growth that can be supported. • Develop goals for zero waste. • Check on plan progress every 1-5 years.
Margaret DeCruz	Greenport	Regional issues; trees; public awareness	We are all one area related to the Peconic River and Sound. There needs to be regional collaboration and a wholistic approach. There should policy to pay to replant trees that are cut down. Ch. 22 should be used to advertise meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be regional collaboration. • The Town should implement a tree cutting/replanting policy.