



RIVERHEAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Environment, Sustainability, and Renewable Energy Meeting – April 12, 2022



Meeting Agenda

Presentation

- Project Status
- Summary of Issues
- Overview of Goals

Community Input

Next Steps

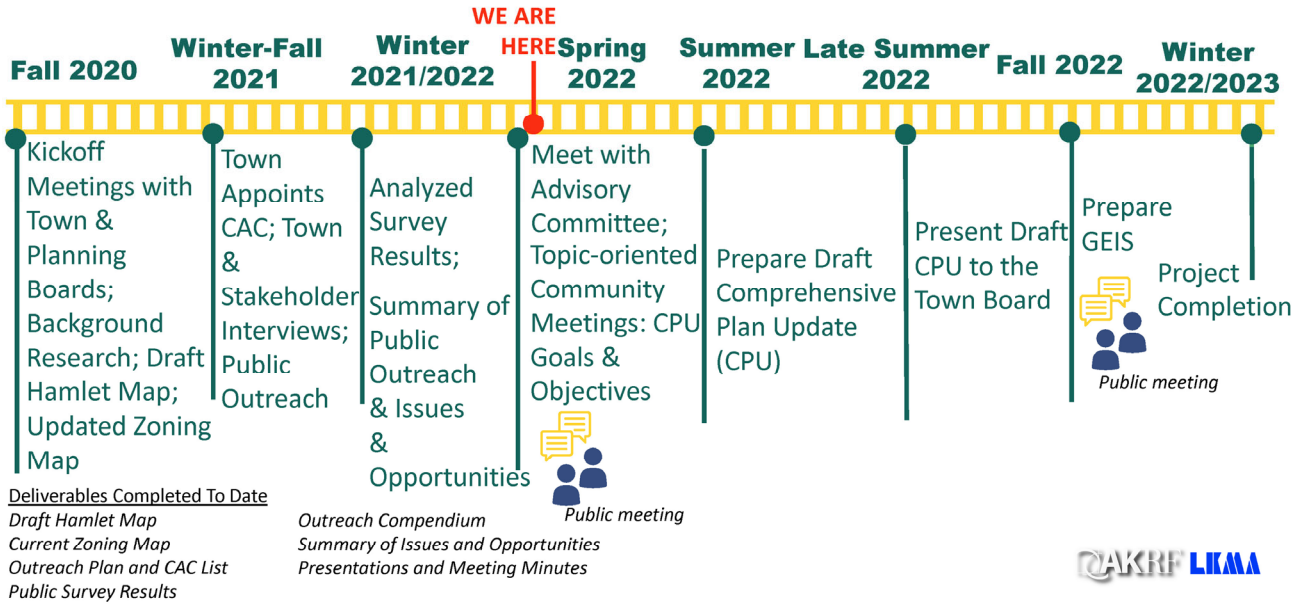


Source: Riverhead News Review



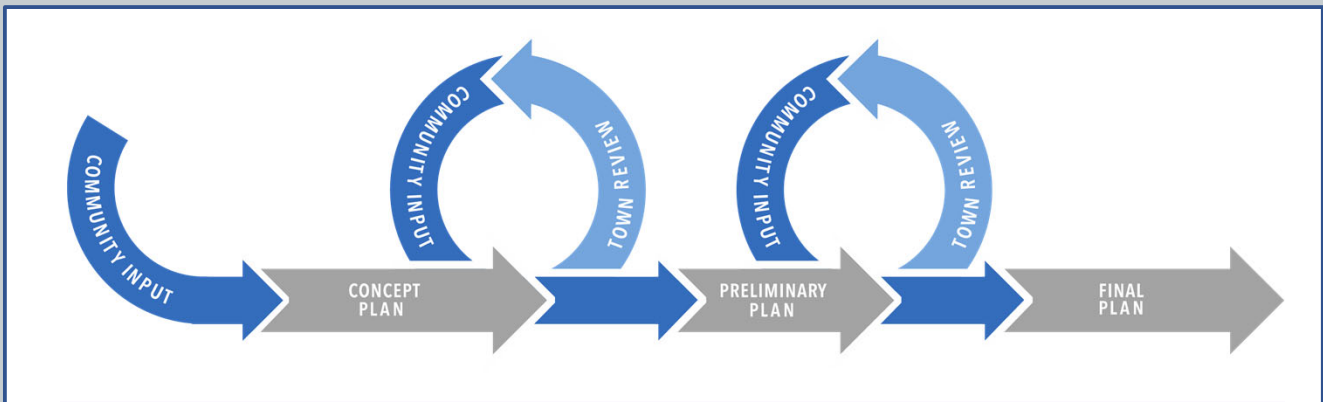


RIVERHEAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TIMELINE



3

CPU Planning Process



4

4

2003 Vision Statement – Natural Resources Element



TOWN OF RIVERHEAD
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
NOVEMBER 2003

PURSUANT TO SECTION 272-B OF THE TOWN LAW



*The natural resources present in Riverhead today — including **stream corridors and wetlands**, the **Central Pine Barrens** region, and the **aquifer** that provides high quality water to the Town — are integral to Riverhead’s long-term health, safety, and well-being, as well as its identity and economic vitality. As such, **the ecological integrity of Riverhead’s natural resources must be maintained and protected.***

2003 Comprehensive Plan: Natural Resources Goals

Goals

1. Protect and preserve the ecological integrity of Riverhead’s Central Pine Barrens area and the water quality of Long Island’s sole source aquifer.
2. Protect the quality of ground water and surface waters throughout the Town.
3. Limit risk of personal injury or property damage by addressing flooding concerns throughout the Town, but particularly along the Peconic River.
4. Conserve the bluffs and woodlands overlooking the Long Island Sound and the sensitive woodland and habitat areas found between Sound Avenue and the Sound.
5. Limit development on soils that are particularly well-suited to agricultural use.
6. Continue to protect rare and/or endangered plant and animal species and their habitat areas.
7. Encourage the preservation and planting of native plants and avoid the planting of invasive plants.
8. Support initiatives for natural resource conservation and open space preservation undertaken by private property owners, non-profit organizations, and other public agencies.
9. Increase public education with regard to best practices for natural resource conservation.
10. Increase the Town’s administrative resources for working on natural resource conservation efforts.
11. Limit future increases in impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff.
12. Protect properties from risk of damage and persons from risk of injury as a result of wildfires.

Community Survey and Outreach-Priority CPU Issues

1. Farmland and open space preservation (70 percent);
2. Reuse of vacant retail space on Route 58 (56 percent);
3. Reduced traffic congestion (54 percent);
4. Downtown revitalization (50 percent); and
5. **Natural resources and environmental protection** (50 percent).



Public Survey-Summary of Issues and Opportunities (2022)

- Sea Level Rise/Coastal Flooding/Resiliency
- Climate Change
- Alternative and Renewable Energy Systems (e.g., solar, battery storage/)
- Coastal Zone Resource Management
- Groundwater/Surface Water Quality
- Endangered Species/Natural Resources/Wetlands

Community Survey and Outreach-Key Environmental Issues

Flooding and Sea Level Rise/Resiliency

Coastal open space preservation priorities;

Flood protection projects;
Updated CZM policies
Guidelines for development.

Watershed Management

Peconic River watershed land preservation

Nutrient load reduction

Improving the quality of stormwater discharges.

Nitrogen reduction

Wetland restoration

Climate change and Emergency Preparedness

Reexamine and expand long-term planning initiatives related to extreme storm events (e.g., Nor'Easters, Super Storm Sandy)

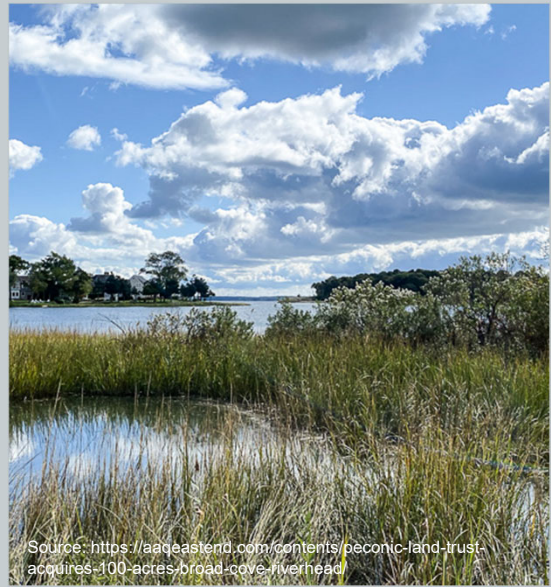
Wildfires

Other severe emergency conditions (e.g., power outage/reduction).

Alternative and Renewable Energy

Solar power (with direct benefits for Riverhead (e.g., lower electric rates, community benefits, etc.)

Solar panels within industrial and commercial properties (but only on buildings and in parking areas).



Source: <https://aageastend.com/contents/peconic-land-trust-acquires-100-acres-broad-cove-riverhead/>

Goals Statement for the Comprehensive Plan Update (draft)

- Address the effects of climate change and work on completing the Climate Smart Community Program
- Balance the need for renewable energy with other concerns related to siting solar energy projects (e.g., farmland preservation, visual concerns)
- Battery energy storage guidelines
- Groundwater monitoring and ensure clean drinking water.
- Define “sustainability” and develop initiatives
- Reduce solid waste and expand recycling
- Collaborate regionally on shared environmental protection initiatives

Goal – Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Program

▪ Address the effects of climate change and complete the Climate Smart Communities Program

- Address locally the issues of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change
- Initiate completing the Climate Smart Community Program.
- Achieve those elements of the certification checklist that support certification above the bronze level.
- Restart the Climate Smart Community Task Force

▪ Potential actions from the CSC Certification Action Checklist that the Town could consider:

- Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements (3-21 points)
- Climate Vulnerability Assessment (4-16 points)
- Climate Resilience Vision (3 points)
- Climate Adaption Strategies (2-8 points)
- Climate Resiliency in Local Plans and Projects (under review)
- Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates (under review)
- Watershed Assessment (2-6 points)
- Strategic Relocation out of flood-prone areas (under review)
- Nature-based shoreline protection (under review)
- Consideration of sea-level rise in coastal development (under review)

Goal –Develop Guidelines for Renewable/Alternative Solar Energy Systems (draft)

• Balance the need for renewable energy with other concerns related to siting solar energy projects

- Solar panel design criteria (site design, vertical panels)
- Initiate study to create guidelines for utilizing solar/renewables/recycled products in building and site plan design.
- Site and building design standards to take advantage of solar.
- Require solar for large commercial/industrial building.
- Establish solar ratings in house transactions.

Issues to Consider

- Solar can support agricultural economy and preservation.
- The Town should reexamine the industrial zoning/solar permitting process.
- Loss of productive farmland, visual

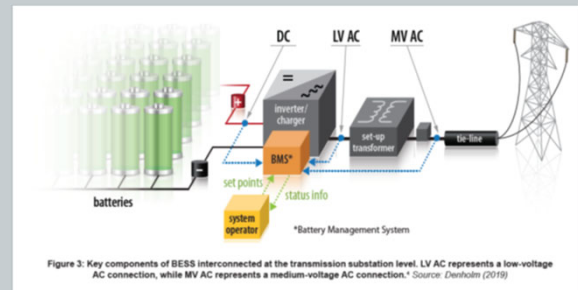
Goal – Develop Guidelines for Energy Supply Systems (Battery Storage)

Develop Standards for use/siting

Industry guidance code as a guide

Potential benefits (renewable energy integration, fiscal)

Potential issues (land use compatibility, visual and setbacks, emergency and fire safety).



Goal– Expand Groundwater Protection and Watershed Management Objectives

- Coordinate with the USGS modeling and mapping and well impact assessments and
- Utilize the USGS sustainability study as a tool for determining future water supply/demand analysis under the long range plan.
- Define the saltwater interface around Riverhead taking into account future water supply needs.
- Determine safe yield from the aquifer to avoid saltwater intrusion taking into account with sea level rise.
- Develop and distribute public information/fact sheets on groundwater quality.

Goal—Ensure Clean Drinking Water (Manorville)

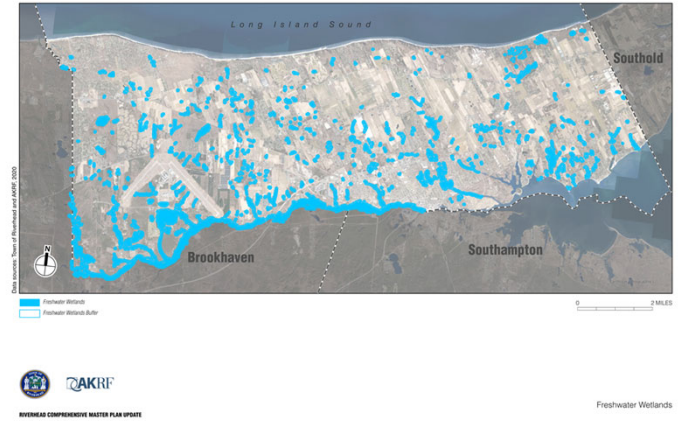
- Pursue funding to develop the infrastructure needed to deliver clean drinking
- Initiate designs for the delivery system
- Implement and construct
- Monitor and maintain

Goal—Expand Surface Water Protections and Watershed Management

- Develop watershed maps to promote public education on watershed/sub watershed management and wetland protection
- Provide primary flow directions and receiving waters to raise public awareness on watershed management.
- Collaborate with Peconic Estuary Partnership on their comprehensive management plan.
- Reduce surface water runoff impacts from streets and properties.
- Pond Management and Ecology. Enhance the Wading River Duck Ponds (e.g., dredging and ecological restoration)

Freshwater Wetlands Protection (New York State Program)

- June 2021 - Senate passed historic reforms to the DEC Freshwater Wetlands Program.
- Legislation, (S.5116-C /A.7850) would allow the State to protect over 1,000,000 additional acres of critically important wetlands.
- January 2022 - Budget proposal includes a \$4 billion environmental bond act — alongside legislation to expand DEC's wetland protection and regulations practices
- Would remove removing jurisdictional barriers that have been contended for years.



Goals—Define and Implement Sustainability Practices

- **Address and define “Sustainability”**
 - One of the actions from the Climate Smart Community Certification Action Checklist is a Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements (3-21 points)
- What does this mean?
 - The comprehensive planning process offers an opportunity for communities to consider how to balance the three “Es” of sustainability: **environment, economy, and equity** (NYS Climate Smart Communities Program)
- Possible definitions:
 - In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as **“meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”**

Goals-Sustainability Policies and Practices for the Town (draft)

- Support alternative transportation systems
- Land planning and smart growth
- Promote energy demands and efficiency
- Solid waste management and recycling
- Protect potable water supplies
- Mitigate stormwater runoff pollutant loads
- Climate adaptation and resilience
- Incorporate sea level rise projections into and site planning and building elevation design. Include sustainability policies in LWRP.
- Identify projects to demonstrate CLCPA compliance and reduce emissions by 50 percent in 5 years (e.g., building retrofits for space heating and cooling systems).

Goal – Update Solid Waste Management and Recycling Practices

- Complete the updates to the Solid Waste Management Plan
- Reduce the waste stream and reliance on the Covanta facility/incineration and the transportation systems that also impact the environment.
- Educate homeowners and work with landscapers to reduce yard waste (i.e., no bagging and sent to community landfill).
- Expand public education on waste stream reduction and recycling.
- Create a program for reducing food waste.
- Develop practices for achieving zero waste.
- Study the potential for a glass repurposing facility.
- Expand recycling practices in public spaces (e.g., parks and Downtown).
- Fully analyze contaminants at the Town's landfill.

Goals – Advance Public Access and Coastal Zone Management

- Protect open space for its scenic and natural values and determine appropriate development in the coastal zone
- Update the CZM line with greater emphasis on habitat protection.
- Complete the LWRP
- Address coastal storm event flooding and erosion along the Long Island Sound, particularly near the bluffs
- Develop a plan for flood protecting Downtown Riverhead and advancing the USACE project

Capital Projects

- Improve the Wading River boat ramp, canal, and parking lot.
- Upgrade Reeves Beach parking which is undersized and institute-controlled access to preclude non-permitted use and abuse (e.g., increase fines and enforcement with citizen monitoring)
- Improve Roanoke Ave beach ramp on Long Island Sound in Baiting Hollow



Source: New York Times

Goals – Enhance Environmental Awareness, Stewardship, and Regional Collaboration

- Prioritize environmental protection and the rehabilitation and stewardship of vacant town lands.
- Update the town's environmental database and maps so people develop their land in a responsible way.
- Expand public education on wetlands protection.
- Increase regional collaboration with a wholistic approach to environmental management.
- Expand consumer education with the assistance of the civic associations (e.g., use of pesticides, solar panels, etc.).
- Determine the Town's "carrying capacity" and monitor progress every 1-5 years.
- Protect clean air by promoting transit/TOD (also carpooling and alternative modes of transportation) and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.
- Review and update noise regulations (e.g., noise from businesses, special events, etc.)
- Develop a tree inventory and promote public education on tree values, preservation and protection techniques.
- Develop a comprehensive tree survey for the purposes of creating an ordinance with a policy/fund valuations for tree replacement/replenishment in connection with land development projects/property transfers.
- Identify environmental justice areas and Opportunity Zones

Discussion Format

- Let us know your vision, goals and recommendations for the future of the environment, sustainability, and renewable energy in the Town.
- Comments on goals presented.
Provide additional goals , recommendations and projects
- Comments and suggestions can also be submitted in writing at www.TownofRiverheadComprehensivePlanUpdate.com

Thank You and Next Steps

- **Summer 2022**
 - Prepare the draft Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU)
 - Present draft CPU to Town Board
- **Fall 2022**
 - Prepare CPU GEIS
 - SEQRA Hearing
- **Winter 2022/2023**
 - Project Completion