

Town of Riverhead 9/29/21 Community Meeting (Downtown, Riverhead Hamlet, and Route 58) - Summary of Comments

Hamlet(s) of Concern	Topic Area	Subcategory	Summary of Comment
Calverton	Other	Zoning	The Town should decide what it wants for Edwards Avenue and Route 25/Middle Country Road in terms of whether it should be built out with industrial and solar uses or not.
Calverton	Route 58 and Economic Development	EPCAL	The Town should not assume that the EPCAL sale is final.
Calverton	Route 58 and Economic Development	EPCAL	The Town needs a long-term vision for EPCAL.
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Flooding	The Town needs to address how flooding from severe storms will be managed at the new Town Square.
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Historic architecture	Historic preservation is important. New buildings should be tied with the historic architecture of the neighborhood.
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Noise	There is noise on Second Street from businesses/music; what is the noise regulation for this area?
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Recycling	Recycling containers are needed Downtown.
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Water/sewer infrastructure	The Riverhead sewage treatment plant has more than enough capacity for 500 apartments.
Downtown	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Water/sewer infrastructure	The sewer infrastructure is overloaded from multiple household rentals (overcrowded, dense)
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Apartment Cap	The Town should eliminate the apartment cap in the DC-1 Zoning Use District. This will help to address public safety.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Apartment Cap	It is important to raise the apartment cap in the DC-1 Zoning Use District. About half of the number of allowable apartments have been built and the Downtown is not yet halfway revitalized.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Apartment Cap	The apartment cap is problematic because you need to have a residential population downtown to keep eyes on the street and take care of the neighborhood.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Building heights	5-story buildings have no character. The Town needs housing but it doesn't have to be 5 stories.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	The Town needs housing options other than single-family homes which can be cost prohibitive.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	The DC-3 Zoning Use District does not allow apartments; it allows townhomes. More flexibility to build a variety of housing types is desired.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	Residential buildings downtown help to bring people to the area and put eyes on the street 24/7.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	Housing is needed Downtown to support downtown revitalization. However, other uses are need as well.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Safety	There is loitering Downtown; people sleeping on benches; no enforcement.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Schools	The schools are at capacity.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Short-term rentals	The Town needs short-term rentals or to reduce the minimum stay allowed (to 14 days or less). This would help to support the businesses/restaurants Downtown. For example, the old Victorian homes on Second Street could be used for short-term rentals which will help with downtown revitalization.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Signage/Safety	The Town needs to change the perception that downtown is unsafe.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	Signage/Safety	Putting cameras downtown will help to reduce crime.
Downtown	Housing and Community Facilities	TOD Redevelopment	What are the three proposed projects that were submitted in response to the Railroad Street TOD Redevelopment RFQ? If apartments, will they be built in accordance with the Pattern Book?
Downtown	Other	Zoning	The 5-story buildings downtown do not reflect the historic character of the neighborhood. The Town must zone to direct future development.
Downtown	Other	Zoning	The Town should allow the sale of recreational cannabis downtown. Approximately 60-70% of 1,400 survey respondents want the sale of cannabis to be legal and want cafes on Main Street. The Town should limit the sale/café to one storefront each on Main Street with a sunset clause in 3 years to draw people in. The Town would benefit from the revenues that could be put toward police, schools, etc. This use would also draw customers to other Main Street businesses.
Downtown	Other	Zoning	Can the Town describe the TOD Overlay District?
Downtown	Route 58 and Economic Development	Business	The Town needs an overall strategy to strengthen Downtown businesses. The Town should consider its unique assets and how to best utilize the waterfront and its historic character.

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Calverton	Other	Zoning	The Town should decide what it wants for Edwards Avenue and Route 25/Middle Country Road in terms of whether it should be built out with industrial and solar uses or not.
Downtown	Route 58 and Economic Development	Retail/Retail reuse	The Town should consider a specialty grocery store Downtown. Developers have said that the Town doesn't have the necessary population base, but it would draw customers from the North and South Forks as well as from the Town of Riverhead.
Downtown	Transportation	Parking	If we want to bring people downtown, does it make sense to redevelop the parking lot?
Downtown	Transportation	Pedestrians/bikes	Downtown is changing from being parking-oriented to more pedestrian-oriented.
Downtown	Transportation	Traffic	There is more traffic Downtown post-pandemic, with less people travelling on LIRR. The LIE traffic starts from Exit 68 (pre-pandemic traffic started on Exit 62). The transportation presentation should be updated for post-pandemic conditions.
Downtown; Riverhead	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	Pulaski St. and Osborne Ave. in Polish Town is the location of a successful apartment project.
Downtown; Riverhead	Housing and Community Facilities	Town of Southampton	How is ongoing development in Riverside, Town of Southampton being considered in the plan update?
Downtown; Riverhead	Other	Signage/Safety	Restrictions on signage is problem for real and perceived safety Downtown and elsewhere in the Town. A dark sky also poses traffic and pedestrian safety issues. Signs should be illuminated with old-fashioned lighting.
Downtown; Riverhead	Other	Zoning	Peconic Bay Medical Center was rezoned to Hospital in 2015 from residential. They bought Mercy High School and have plans to use that property; they would like to see it rezoned to Hospital.
Downtown; Riverhead	Other	Zoning	There is a destination retail zone on Route 58 that requires a large store; with online shopping this type of store is obsolete/no longer needed in the Town. The Town should consider absorbing that zone into the Business CR zoning district.
Downtown; Riverhead	Other	Zoning	The CRC Zoning Use District was mean to support residential development but it hasn't been realized.
Downtown; Riverhead	Route 58 and Economic Development	Retail/Retail reuse	Boutique stores compete with Tanger Outlets. People tend to shop on Route 58, not Downtown. The Town needs to build on the Town Square concept to formulate an economic development strategy for Downtown. Family-oriented activities and recreational cannabis sales should be considered.
Downtown; Riverhead	Route 58 and Economic Development	Retail/Retail reuse	The comprehensive plan needs to consider future trends in retail. The vacant retail buildings on Route 58 can be reused for a variety of purposes and needs.
Downtown; Riverhead	Route 58 and Economic Development	Vacant buildings	An inventory of the Town's commercial properties is needed to identify vacant area.
Downtown; Riverhead	Transportation	Traffic/Route 58	Can we alleviate traffic on Route 58? Middle Road has become a bypass and can't handle the traffic.
Manorville	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Water/sewer infrastructure	Town is pursuing grants for expanding water district to areas south and east of EPCAL where contamination has been identified.
Riverhead	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Open Space	The Town should consider rezoning industrial areas to protect open space.
Riverhead	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Water/sewer infrastructure	There needs to be discussion of providing sewers at Roanoke Landing.
Riverhead	Route 58 and Economic Development	Retail/Retail reuse	Reuse of vacant stores should be prioritized over clearing land for new buildings.
Riverhead	Route 58 and Economic Development	Retail/Retail reuse	Big and bold stores are more appropriate on Route 58, without cutting down trees, compared to Downtown.
Riverhead	Transportation	Pedestrians/bikes	A portion of grant money for projects around the train station will incorporate paths from the train station to the new development.
Townwide	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Climate change; renewable energy	The Town should consider net zero retrofits. The Town should work with NYSDEC on the Climate Smart Communities program. The Town needs to secure grants to address climate change and renewable energy and achieve bronze level certification.
Townwide	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Open Space	Development should not come at the expense of cutting down trees.
Townwide	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Scenic/historic corridors	The Town should consider the designation of scenic/historic roads that limit their use.
Townwide	Environmental Protection and Sustainability	Water/sewer infrastructure	Will the comprehensive plan update project water/sewer demands based on current conditions or past trends?

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Townwide	Housing and Community Facilities	Apartment Cap	Is the Town thinking of implementing another cap on the number of additional units allowed in areas outside of the DC-1 Zoning Use District?
Townwide	Housing and Community Facilities	Housing	Will the housing elements of the three proposed projects be compliant with the Pattern Book?
Townwide	Housing and Community Facilities	Short-term rentals	The Town needs to ensure that the existing housing stock does not become short-term rentals.
Townwide	Housing and Community Facilities	Signage/Safety	Will safety be considered in the comprehensive plan update? Safety needs to keep pace with development.
Townwide	Other	2003 Comprehensive Plan	The Town should revisit the 2003 Comprehensive Plan goals to see which may have been completed and which are no longer or still needed.
Townwide	Other	Outreach/Survey	Are the stakeholder interviews posted on the project website?
Townwide	Other	Outreach/Survey	250 responses to the comprehensive plan update survey is not a good response rate.
Townwide	Other	Outreach/Survey	The comprehensive plan update survey has achieved a 1 percent response rate and the survey is still open.
Townwide	Other	Zoning	The only way to fill vacant space on Route 58 is to stop allowing development on virgin land elsewhere.
Townwide	Other	Zoning	The Town should consider a streamlined building approval process to expedite projects that conform to the code.
Townwide	Other	Zoning	Only a few projects have been built in the HC Zoning Use District.
Townwide	Other	Zoning	The Town should not be overly restrictive in terms of uses allowed by zoning. For example, look at the McDonald's that closed in Wading River because it didn't have a drive thru.
Townwide	Other	Zoning	The Town should consider requiring retrofitting (e.g., green roofs, solar, geothermal, floodproofing).
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Planning	Will the comprehensive plan update include changes that have taken in place in the Town through today?
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Planning	Will the 1990 study be used to make decisions?
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Population	Will the Town identify a population goal? Some residents may not want population growth.
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Population	Will the Town look at the current rate of saturation growth or prior trends?
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Roadways	Are there secondary roadways that can be built off of Route 58 to encourage commercial development to locate within the existing commercial corridor rather than spreading east and west?
Townwide	Route 58 and Economic Development	Social migration	Will the comprehensive plan update consider social migration?
Townwide	Transportation	Light rail/transit	The Town needs light rail to make it more integrated and to result in less carbon emissions into the region. The light rail could operate between hamlets; trains can stop at Roanoke Avenue and Greenport.
Townwide	Transportation	Light rail/transit	Is the Town participating in the County's Reimagine Transit initiative?
Townwide	Transportation	Traffic	Were the traffic growth projections from the presentation for specific roadways or townwide?

Comments by Rank

Hamlet	Number of Comments by Hamlet	%
Downtown	38	46.9%
Riverhead	14	17.3%
Townwide	25	30.9%
Other	4	4.9%
	81	100.0%

Topic	Number of Comments by Major Topic Area	%
Housing/Community Facilities	20	27.4%
Other	17	23.3%
Route 58/Economic Development	15	20.5%
Environmental Protection/Sustainability	13	17.8%
Transportation	8	11.0%
TDR/Farmland Preservation	0	0.0%
	73	100.0%

Subtopic	Number of Comments by Subtopic	%
Zoning	12	16.4%
Housing	6	8.2%
Retail/Retail reuse	5	6.8%
Signage/Safety	5	6.8%
Water/sewer infrastructure	5	6.8%
Apartment Cap	4	5.5%
Outreach/Survey	3	4.1%
Traffic/Route 58	3	4.1%
EPCAL	2	2.7%
Short-term rentals	2	2.7%
Open Space	2	2.7%
Planning	2	2.7%
Population	2	2.7%
Light rail/transit	2	2.7%
Pedestrians/bikes	2	2.7%
Flooding	1	1.4%
Historic architecture	1	1.4%
Noise	1	1.4%
Building heights	1	1.4%
TOD Redevelopment	1	1.4%
Business	1	1.4%
Parking	1	1.4%
Town of Southampton	1	1.4%
Vacant buildings	1	1.4%
Climate change; renewable energy	1	1.4%
Scenic/historic corridors	1	1.4%
2003 Comprehensive Plan	1	1.4%
Roadways	1	1.4%
Social migration	1	1.4%
Schools	1	1.4%
Recycling	1	1.4%
	73	100.0%

