

**Town of Lake Holcombe
Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2023, 7:00 p.m. @ Lake Holcombe Town Hall**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. Meeting Called to Order by Vice Chairperson Dave Staudacher at 7:00pm
- b. Roll Call - Supervisor Dave Staudacher, Bill Kochevar, Randy Crank, and Mark Cigan were present (Chairperson Tom Rocque and Darrell Hornick were absent)
- c. Others in attendance: Susan Badtke (WCWRPC), Diane (Town resident), and Duane Schulze (sanitary district plant operator)

2. Recited Pledge of Allegiance

3. Review and approve minutes from July 24, 2023, meeting.

Minutes were discussed and a motion by Bill Kochevar and seconded by Mark Cigan. All approved

Susan Badtke reviewed agenda items 4-9 via a PowerPoint presentation. This will be provided to the planning committee for future reference.

4. Recap from Meeting 2

Susan provided an overview of the materials presented and items discussed at the July 24th meeting. There were no comments or questions from meeting 2.

5. Review and Discuss Draft Vision Statement

Susan presented information on visioning. A vision statement is a general expression of how the community should look and function 20 years from now. The statement serves as an overall policy for the local government as well as the foundation for a variety of goals and objectives.

Some example vision statements were read, and the Committee reviewed and discussed the draft vision statement for the Town of Lake Holcombe.

Draft 2044 Vision Statement¹

In 2044, the Town of Lake Holcombe will continue to be a rural community that offers a friendly, small-town atmosphere for residents and visitors and offers amenities that provide for a high quality of life. As we plan for the future, the Town of Lake Holcombe is committed to seeking opportunities for mindful growth with a balanced mix of economic opportunities that work to enhance the Town’s strengths and characteristics, protect its abundant natural and environmental resources, embrace the Town’s recreational opportunities, and be a welcoming, small-town for residents, businesses, workers, and visitors.

¹ *Vision Statement: A community’s expression of the future it wants.*

Overall, the Committee was satisfied with the statement as drafted by Ms. Badtke. The committee requested that the following additions be made to the statement:

- Specifically reference the Holcombe Flowage
- Reference recreation as being multi-season – desire more winter recreation opportunities.
- Tourism & vacation community

The Committee was in general agreement that the Town will continue to be recreational, and tourism driven. Cigan commented that the only way for businesses to flourish in the Town is to get people in on the weekends.

Susan will update the vision statement and bring it back to the Committee for review at the September meeting.

6. Review and Discuss Draft Population & Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies & Recommendations

Susan presented draft population & housing goals, objectives, policies & recommendations to the committee for feedback and comment (the committee had received a handout with the draft information by e-mail for review prior to the meeting).

Committee comments/edits are identified in **red text**.

Draft Population & Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies & Strategies*

**Subject to continued refinement and changes by Plan Committee as the Comprehensive Plan is developed.*

Draft Goal 1:

The Town of Lake Holcombe will be a welcoming community with a quality of life that is desirable for residents of all ages and all household types.

Draft Objectives:

- Enhance quality of life amenities (workforce, housing opportunities, broadband, recreational opportunities) within the community that retains and attracts retirees and families alike.
- Provide balanced growth that allows the growth in services and the economy while also ensuring the small-town rural atmosphere desired by residents is maintained.
- Minimize conflicts/impacts between year-round residents and seasonal residents.

Draft Policies:

- The Town, by undertaking many of the recommendations throughout this plan, will enhance quality of life amenities.

Draft Goal 2:

The Town of Lake Holcombe encourages and supports a variety of quality, well-maintained housing types, arrangements, locations, and costs which are designed and maintained in a manner consistent with the rural nature and character of the community.

Draft Objectives:

- Housing in the Town of Lake Holcombe should provide safe, quality living environments for residents and families of various social and economic circumstances.
- Allow for a wide range of safe housing choices which are sited, designed, and constructed in a manner consistent with our rural character and the goals of this plan.
- Housing units and properties in the Town of Lake Holcombe should be maintained in a manner which ensures the health, safety, and general welfare of all community members are protected.
- Future residential development shall be sensitive to natural features.
- As new residential developments occur within agricultural areas, the property owner shall be aware that all farming activities will continue regardless of odor, dust, noise, etc.
- Increase the availability of quality, moderate-cost homes within the Town that are targeted towards families and the workforce.
- Improve public education on available funding or assistance sources that will allow low- and-moderate income residents and elderly residents to make accessibility or other improvements to their homes for special needs.
- ~~Increase the utilization of building codes for new construction and rehabilitation.~~
(Committee noted that building permits are handled through Chippewa County – Susan will research this a little more to better understand the process.)
- ~~Ensure~~ Encourage an adequate supply of land ~~is~~ planned for residential development.
- Encourage energy efficient construction that takes into account the placement of the home in relation to its surrounding environment (i.e., orientation to the sun).

Draft policies:

- Housing should be sited in a manner which is consistent with the intent of the land use goals, objectives, and strategies of this plan, while avoiding potential use conflicts.
- Any land use regulations and administration (e.g., fees) shall consider the impact on housing affordability.
- Provide a broad range of housing choices to meet the changing needs of the community.

Draft strategies:

- Support efforts of private and non-profit organizations to address the needs of all income levels, age groups, and persons with special needs in the development of housing within the Town.
- Support developers who want to develop other forms of housing, such as duplexes or small townhome condominiums, as long as they are consistent with the Town’s overall vision and needs for the future.
- Encourage “low impact” development that strives to retain natural vegetation that can help reduce storm water runoff and flooding.
- Multi-family housing should be compatible with adjacent uses. Adequate supportive services must be available.

- Encourage landscaping and screening between building sites.
- Provide information at the Town Hall and on the Town Hall’s website on available public and non-profit home ownership and rehabilitation programs.
- ~~Continue to work with the Town Building Inspector to enforce the Town’s Building Ordinance to ensure a sufficient permit review and inspection process which will maintain safe, quality housing and protect the interests of the community. (Not applicable as permitting and inspections are handled by the County.)~~
- ~~Develop and maintain a fee schedule for building permits and other Town permitting which is reviewed and adopted annually by resolution. (Not applicable as permitting is handled by the County.)~~

Short-term rental discussion: The Committee also discussed short-term rentals as 64% of survey respondents believe that the Town of Lake Holcombe should enact safety regulations and a Room Tax for VRBO/Airbnb tourist rental homes. Susan commented that while DATCP requires a tourist rooming license, which Chippewa County Department of Public Health administers on behalf of DATCP for Chippewa County, there is no County of local ordinance in place that sets requirements and standards for short-term rentals. An example ordinance from the Town of Lafayette was shared, noting that the comprehensive plan would not include adoption of such an ordinance rather it could direct the Town to consider adoption of an ordinance.

Randy Crank commented that he was not in support of adding additional regulations on how people can use their property and that there are enough rules. Bill Kochevar and Mark Cigan agreed that some regulations should be put in place, or they will continue to be conflicts.

Dave Staudacher commented that the plan should include reference to having the Town consider a short-term rental ordinance, with any action and details to be left to the Town Board.

Susan will update the housing goals to include a goal of “Control short term rentals to ensure the public health, safety, general welfare is maintained within the Town”. Objectives would include having the town consider a short-term rental and room tax ordinance.

Land Division discussion: The Committee also discussed that 60% of survey respondents agreed that the Town should encourage new residential development to be clustered in a manner that preserves open space. Susan noted that subdivisions in the Town are currently regulated under the Chippewa County land division ordinance, Chapter 38. Committee members were in agreement that land division should be left to the County to administer but that the plan should reference that the Town should “encourage new residential development to be clustered and designed to preserve open space”. This will likely be included in the land use element.

7. Discuss Transportation Element

The Committee discussed survey results and potential issues related to transportation facilities within the Town.

- ATV/UTV recreational transportation – allowed on all town roads. While there are some conflicts, education could go a long way in helping to minimize the conflicts.
- Amish – some Amish groups don't use lights of reflective tape which presents safety concerns. Randy Crank stated he wishes the Amish would use reflective tape so that they could be more visible in the dark.
- When discussing truck routes, it was noted that there is an issue with a trucking company not being able to utilize direct route from Town Line/E Fisher Drive to Hwy 27 during road ban limitations in the spring, even when empty. The Committee stated this is an issue that should be brought to the Town Board for consideration.

8. Discuss Utilities & Community Facilities Element

The Committee discussed several items related to utilities and community facilities. The following needs/challenges were identified by the Committee:

- Wi-Fi in the town shop(s)
- Sanitary District will need to comply with phosphorus limits set by DNR. The Plant Operator isn't sure what the limit will be, but it could be challenging to meet.
- Need for expanded hours and access to the yard waste site.
- Parking at boat ramps get filled quickly – one potential idea is to explore the possibility of adding parking across from the wayside – Town would need to secure a lease from Northern States Power.
- While cell service is a challenge during summer months, it was noted that a new cell tower is going up between Holcombe and Ladysmith in the Town of Willard – it's possible this will help improve coverage.
- Electricity is reliable but there is currently no natural gas source – there was talk of bringing it up from Cornell via Hwy 27 or Fisher Drive but not sure of status.
- Day care – School had previously considered adding a space for daycare.

9. Next steps & set September Committee meeting date.

- a. The Committee was asked to review the draft Goals, Objectives, and Policies for Transportation & Utility/Community Facilities that will be e-mailed to members a week in advance of the next meeting.
- b. Next meeting was set for Monday September 18th, at 7:00
 - i. Location is the Lake Holcombe Town Hall
 - ii. Meeting will include review of Transportation & Utilities/Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Strategies and begin discussion on Ag/Natural/Cultural Resources and Economic Development.

10. Adjourn

- i. Motion by Mark Cigan, second by Bil Kochevar, to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. All approved.

Minutes approved by Planning Committee on September 18, 2023.