

## The Comprehensive Plan

### Why we are here and what does it all mean?

In 2010 the Town of Veteran realized that their zoning law, last updated in 2000, was in need of an update. The Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Town Board and Code Enforcement Officer all felt that the current zoning was not fully meeting the needs of the citizens of Veteran. When it was recognized that an updated law would be needed, it was also recognized that to adequately write that law the Town would need to write a Comprehensive Plan. This plan would engage the citizens and Town officials so that they would have direction when updating the Zoning law. The first step in writing a Comprehensive Plan is to reach out to residents of the Town and ask for input.

The Town of Veteran completed a survey of its residents in 2010. The Comprehensive Plan Committee reviewed the results of the survey and used those results as guidance for the creation of the new Comprehensive Plan. After full review of the survey responses, the newly appointed Comprehensive Plan Committee identified nine key assumptions that guided the direction of the plan and recommendations made. The assumptions that guided the Comprehensive Plan process were:

1. Residents like the rural feel of Veteran and want to maintain that feel.
2. Residents would like to increase development, in order to increase tax base.
3. Residents are more opposed to large scale industrial, commercial and manufacturing than small scale agri-business, commercial.
4. Residents are in favor of gas drilling, but would like to proceed with caution.
5. Residents want better roads.
6. Residents are worried about traffic and increase in traffic.
7. Residents are not opposed to zoning.
8. Residents want protection for farmers and farmland.
9. Residents want to explore shared service opportunities.

*A complete list of arrogated survey results can be found in the appendix.*

Based on the survey results the Comprehensive Plan Committee created a vision for the Town and the plan as follows:

***Veteran's vision is to maintain a peaceful, rural way of life while fostering a healthy, diverse economy and a government that is responsive to all its residents. Veteran strives to attentively manage all of its resources to sustain and maintain the serene and rewarding community that is Veteran today and will be Veteran tomorrow.***

## **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

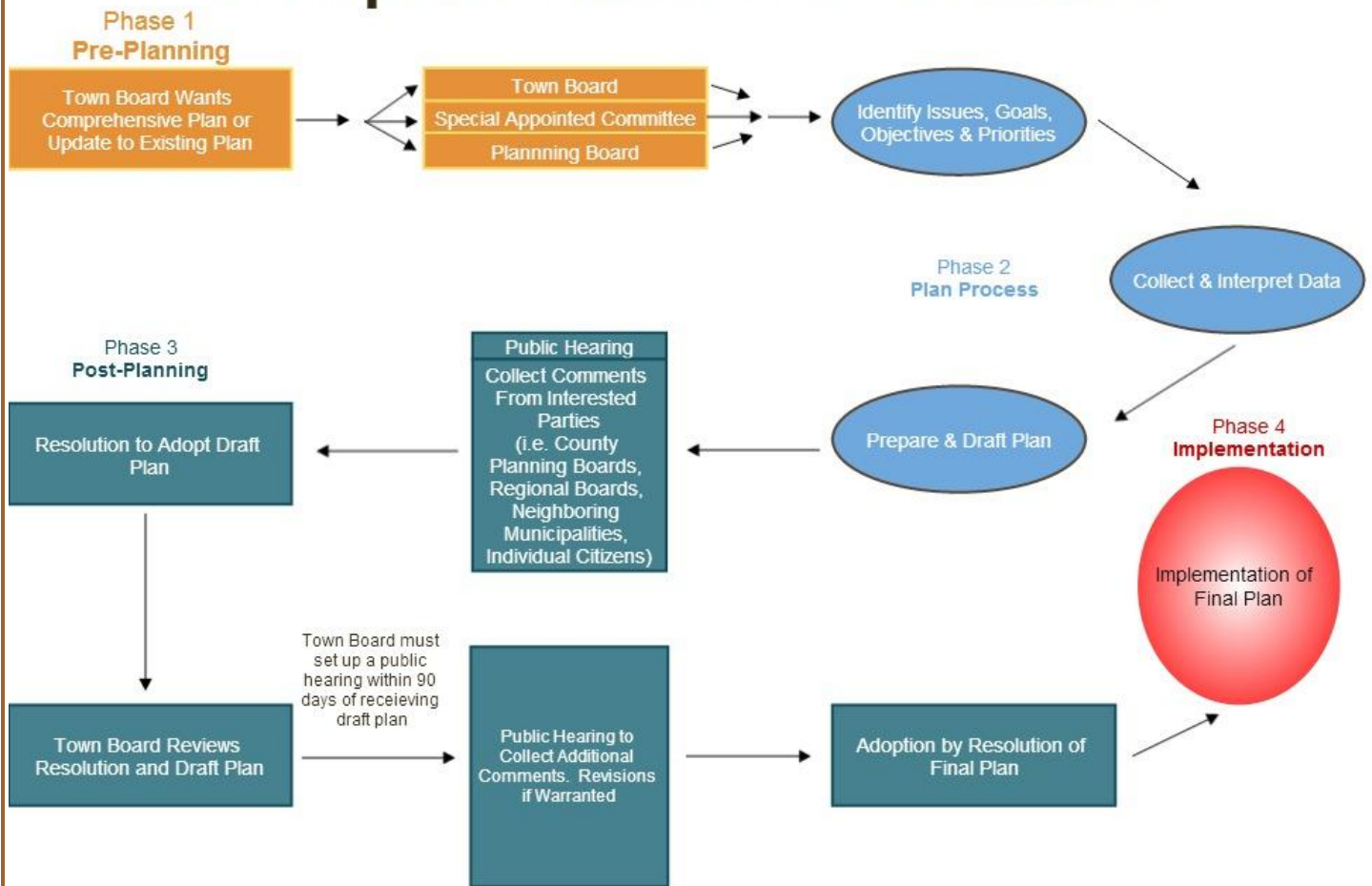
A Comprehensive Plan is a document that describes the character and goals of the community, as expressed in town-wide surveys and meetings, with all interested parties participating. The plan describes the community as it is, and expresses a vision for its future. It is an official public document adopted by the Town Board at a Town meeting. It provides guidance and recommendations for the development of the Town based on the wishes of its people. It is not an ordinance, and does not enact any regulations or restrictions, but it is a legal basis for local ordinances. It does not contain or enact any zoning ordinances. Any proposed new ordinances must be voted on separately by the Town Board of the Town of Veteran. The last time the Town of Veteran's Zoning ordinances were revised was in 1983, with amendments in 2000. A comprehensive plan can and should be revised periodically as the Town grows and changes. Veteran's current comprehensive plan was adopted at a Town meeting in 2004.

A Comprehensive Plan is meant to be not only adopted but used. After adoption of this plan by the Town of Veteran Town Board, it will be necessary to sift through the recommendations and begin implementation. It is advised that the Town Board appoint a committee or existing board to take this task on. Often the planning board is an appropriate party for this, but if the planning board's monthly schedule is too heavy to handle these additional tasks, it is recommended that the Town Board appoint a special committee with Town Board, Planning Board, ZBA officials and the Town Code Enforcement Officer for implementation.

While there are many recommendations throughout this plan that may require studies and grant writing or funding, the revisions to the zoning law should take first priority. These revisions will be extensive and take some time for a committee to work through. It is recommended that the Town Attorney and the Town Code Enforcement Officer be integral in revising the zoning law to ensure that it is enforceable. Once the committee assigned with this task has drafted a new zoning law, the draft will go before the Town Board for a public hearing and eventual adoption.

Implementing the Comprehensive Plan will take years. This is a long process that the Town can expect to work on for 10-15 years. Over that time, situations may change and the environment in the Town may change and a new Comprehensive Plan with new recommendations may be warranted. The Town Board and Planning Board of the Town of Veteran should recognize this and look to update the plan when the plan no longer meets the needs of the town.

# Comprehensive Plan Process



## The Process

The Town of Veteran recognized their need for a revised comprehensive plan in 2009. In 2010 the Town wrote and distributed a survey to its residents to assess current conditions, feelings and perception of the Town. In January of 2012, the Town of Veteran hired Southern Tier Central Regional Planning and Development Board (STC) to work with an appointed Committee and revise the comprehensive plan based on survey results. The Comprehensive Plan Committee included citizens, representatives from the Zoning Board of Appeals, representatives from the Planning Board and representatives from the Town Board. From March 2012 to November 2013, the committee met bi-monthly discussing key issues, analyzing data and reviewing draft of documents produced by the planning consultant. Committee members held public meetings that were advertised in the local paper and maintained a website at [www.veterancomprehensiveplan.org](http://www.veterancomprehensiveplan.org) to post draft documents for public review.

A first draft was presented on September 16, 2013 to a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Town Board and comments were received and incorporated at that time. A final draft was completed in February 2014.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee held a public hearing on April 28, 2014 and June 19, 2014 and adopted the plan as final on October 16, 2014. All Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting minutes can be found in the appendix.

## The Timeline

2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive Plan Committee established.</li> <li>Comprehensive Plan Committee distributed a town-wide survey</li> </ul>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive Plan Committee analyzes survey results</li> </ul>
2012	<p>January 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town hired consultant</li> </ul>
	<p>March 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive Plan Committee's first meeting</li> <li>Organized, went over process and discussed survey</li> </ul>
	<p>April 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Energy chapter and Water Resource chapter</li> </ul>
	<p>June 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Mineral Extraction and Water Resource chapters</li> </ul>
	<p>August 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Agriculture chapter and Renewable Resources chapter</li> </ul>
	<p>November 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Socio – Economic and Economic Development chapters</li> </ul>
2013	<p>January 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Infrastructure and Natural Resource chapters</li> </ul>
	<p>March 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Land Use and zoning chapter</li> </ul>
	<p>May 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed draft recommendations on Land Use and mapping</li> </ul>
	<p>July 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed full draft plan</li> </ul>
	<p>September 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed full draft plan with revisions</li> <li>Presented first draft to join Planning Board and Town Board</li> </ul>
2014	<p>February 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passed final draft on to Town Board for their review</li> </ul>
	<p>April 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public hearing held by Comprehensive Plan Committee</li> </ul>
	<p>October 16, 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Board adopts plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>PLAN IMPLEMENTATION BEGINS</b></p>	

## Town History

### Town of Veteran History

The Town of Veteran is named after the first settler, Mr. Green Bently, a veteran. Mr. Bently had served in the French and Indian War, enlisted in 1775 in the revolutionary struggle, and served throughout the Revolutionary War. But it is also said that Veteran received its name for the Town's swift response to the call for soldiers during the Civil War; responding much quicker than the rest of Chemung County. Interesting enough, the Town of Veteran's population to this day has a disproportionate number of citizens that are veterans. The Town's patriotism has carried throughout the years.

The Town has a great history that began with early woolen manufacturing and lumbering then later attracted businesses such as distilleries, saw mills, grist mills, creameries, carriage shops, cattle farming and blacksmith shops. In the late 1800's Veteran encompassed two bustling villages of Pine Valley and Millport (originally Millvale) that rivaled Elmira. These two areas included a railroad, many stores, churches, secret societies, a couple of schoolhouses, two post offices and were quite the areas of business activity. The opening of the Chemung Canal in 1833 truly spurred and supported much of the business activity in Veteran. The canal extending along the valley of Catharine Creek allowed for timber and other goods to be sent and sold at markets in Utica, Albany and New York.

Like many other towns in the region, Veteran also suffered through a scarlet fever epidemic in 1841 which killed a large number of children. One year later Veteran suffered from another disease called erysipelatoid that also killed many. In 1849 during the building of the Northern Central Railroad, many out-of-towners were working on construction when cholera broke out and spread to citizens in the Millport area. It is known that at least 375 individuals died from this fatal disease in a very short period of time. Lastly, a catastrophe in 1857 due to excessive rains had Catharine Creek flooded and carried away many homes, businesses, bridges and dams as well as suspending all navigation on the canal for some time. It took some time for the Village to return to normal.

It is this rich history in the Town of Veteran that has also lead to a history of planning for the future. Evidence of Town planning can be traced back to the 1970's with the Town's first zoning ordinance. Planning as a field has evolved quickly and today's standards require that a comprehensive plan be completed to map out the future of a Town and involve the public in that process before ordinances be adopted to dictate the future.