

Minutes
Town of Richford Special Board Meeting September 14, 2015

The special Town of Richford Board Meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Supervisor Wilcox. Councilwoman Herrick, Councilman Miller, Councilwoman Holcomb, Supervisor Wilcox, and the Comprehensive Plan Committee members: Charles Davis, Victoria Nuzzo, John Schwartz, William Stell, Doris Caskey, and Charles Merrill were present.

Special meeting was called by Supervisor Wilcox to discuss the Comprehensive Plan.

As a group the Comprehensive Plan was reviewed and wording changes were made and agreed to by the group. The edits that were made and approved by the group are included as an attachment to this document.

Included here are the comments made by the board and committee related to some of the changes:

- Page 2: Keeping the peaceful, quiet rural landscape language in the plan was discussed and it was decided to keep the language.
- Page 2: Keeping the wording in the plan consistent was discussed and the words small industry was added.
- Page 3: Goal 1 – Councilman Miller requested that etc. be included when listing activities.
- Page 3: Goal 1 – Councilwoman Holcomb wanted to ensure that if a multi-family apartment building was built outside the hamlet that it would be in line with the comprehensive plan. The Comprehensive Planning Committee and the Town Board agreed that an apartment building outside hamlet would be acceptable. The plan supports multi-family housing and cluster development.
- Page 4: Smart Growth bullet –Councilman Miller and Councilwoman Holcomb had some discussion regarding the language used in this section. Councilwoman Holcomb made the comment that economic base in Richford is residential, those that pay a majority of the taxes.
- Page 4: Goal 2 – Last bullet – A discussion was held about what information the code enforcer provides to people interested in building in a flood area. Victoria Nuzzo will contact Kevin McMahon to obtain an answer on what he tells townspeople. If he adequately informs the public the language will be left as is; if he does not then the wording will be adjusted. Town Board is in agreement with this plan.

- Page 5: Goal 3 – The board and committee discussed the wording in this section and made some changes to keep it consistent.
- Page 6: Goal 3 – Councilwoman Holcomb suggested bullet 3.7 Encourage natural gas development. Councilwoman Holcomb believes that natural gas should be listed in the plan because Richford is a potential location for gas extraction. Councilwoman Holcomb believes that this would benefit the community and its economic base.
 - Victoria shared that the survey results indicated that 62% of the responses did not want to see Natural gas extraction. In the survey the High volume drilling question received the following votes: 29% would like to see, 57% would not like to see, 5% did not matter to them and 9% no answers.
 - Councilwoman Holcomb told the board and committee that her survey was rejected when she gave it to the Comprehensive Planning Committee because it was late.
 - Victoria Nuzzo suggested that this issue maybe better addressed in a referendum.
 - Supervisor Wilcox commented that Councilwoman Holcomb’s suggestion is very specific and the plan is meant to be general in nature. Supervisor Wilcox doesn’t want to make it an issue in the plan.
 - Charles Davis commented that the Plan is intended to be general and this addition would be specific. He would not like the plan to encourage or discourage this issue. The issue of allowing natural gas drilling would be addressed at the time someone approached the board to begin drilling.
 - Councilwoman Herrick stated that if we agree with the plan, as written, then drilling that doesn’t impact the water quality especially and natural resources of the town in general would be allowed and drilling that does impact those things wouldn’t be, so if we all agree to the rest of the plan, the point is moot.
 - Councilman Miller agreed to leave this topic out of the plan.
 - At the end of the discussion the board will leave the topic out of the plan. Supervisor Wilcox, Councilwoman Herrick, and Councilman Miller would approve the plan as is and Councilwoman Holcomb will approve but include her comments.
- Page 7: Goal 4 – The Town Board members discussed the wording in this section. They came to an agreement as to the minor wording changes.
- Other comments – Councilwoman Holcomb made the comment that she was offended by a comment made by someone regarding only a few people would get rich if natural gas drilling occurred. She indicated that the plan states that there are 687 parcels of land in Richford of which 228 are owned by Richford residents and anyone could choose to drill for natural gas.

As the board and committee went through each goal an agreement was made that the wording was acceptable.

Councilwoman Holcomb, seconded by Councilwoman Herrick, made the motion that the Richford Town Board approve version 8 of the Comprehensive Plan, as developed at the joint meeting on September 14, 2015 Special Town Board Meeting, and to continue the approval process. 4 ayes the motion is passed.

Vouchers:

Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilwoman Holcomb, made the motion to pay three additional vouchers for September and add them to the abstract. 4 ayes the motion is passed and the board signed the vouchers.

Councilwoman Herrick, seconded by Councilman Miller, made a motion to adjourn. Motion approved.

The special board meeting was adjourned at 9:17p.m.

Velvet Lyke
Town Clerk



TOWN OF RICHFORD

Comprehensive Plan Update 2015

9/03/2015

Prepared by the Richford Comprehensive Plan Committee on behalf of the Town of

TOWN OF RICHFORD

- Comprehensive Plan Update 2015

-

- Town of Richford
- Tioga County
- New York State
- United States of America

-

- For comments, questions, or additional information concerning this document please contact the Town of Richford Planning Board:

-

- Email: planboard@richfordny.com

- Website: www.richfordny.com

-

-



-

PEACEFUL, RURAL, NATURAL BEAUTY

Introduction

This comprehensive plan update states the residents' vision for the community. It updates the Town of Richford's original 2002 plan, and is a master plan for the current and future operation and protection of the Town of Richford. The plan was prepared by a committee of volunteers from the community, some of whom hold positions within various levels of the Town governing body. Community input was of great importance in determining relevant issues and shared values. This information was collected through the distribution of a written survey sent to residents and landowners within the Town, and two public hearings. The complete survey and analysis of responses can be found within the appendix at the end of this document.

Most importantly, this comprehensive plan establishes guidelines for land use regulation that promote and protect the town's public health, safety, and general welfare, as well as having many other uses:

- Provides a framework for public collaboration on Town improvements.
- Establishes a vision for the future shared by the entire community.
- Provides strategies for achieving community goals.
- Provides an opportunity for municipal changes based on community input.
- State statutes require that all land use regulations conform to the comprehensive plan.

The statutes define a comprehensive plan as any descriptive or graphic materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices, and instruments for the protection, enhancement, growth, and development of the municipality. Although municipalities are not required by law to adopt a comprehensive plan, doing so provides a legal basis in the absence of zoning laws. Specifically, every law and regulation adopted by the Town must fundamentally uphold and comply with the core principles of the Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, where a comprehensive plan has been adopted, all municipal, county, state, and federal agencies must adhere to the goals and objectives of the plan when undertaking a capital improvement project.

The Town will reexamine this document from time to time as needed.

Community Description and Demographics

The Town of Richford is a rural community in northern Tioga County, NY. Richford has a dispersed population of around 1170 and a population density of 30.65 per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), both of which have remained constant since 2000, and just slightly increased since 1990. While population has remained constant, the number of housing units has increased more than 11% every decade, from just 452 in 1990, to 502 in 2000 and 563 in 2010. This trend is anticipated to continue for the near future (based on number of new housing units since 2010). Most residents are working age; 67% are between 19 and 65 years old, 22% are 18 or younger, and 11% are over 65. In 2013 (the most recent data available) the median household income was \$44,417, and 20% of residents had incomes below the poverty line. For comparison, the median income of Tioga County itself was \$55,726 (Data Source – U. S. Census Bureau 2009-2013 American Community Survey). Approximately one-third of the land parcels (228 of the 687 land parcels, as of May 2014) are owned by non-residents who use their property for recreational activities, vacation land, future home sites and investment.

The Town has a single hamlet located in the center of the Town at the intersection of NYS Highways 38 and 79. The hamlet is the community center of Richford, and has a gas station, diner, seasonal ice cream store, auto repair garage, bait shop and other small businesses, church and health center, as well as the Town Hall, Town Highway Garage, Fire House and Post Office. Richford hosts an annual potato festival commemorating the importance of potato farming a half century ago, and is known as the birthplace of John D. Rockefeller. Richford encompasses 38.2 square miles, of which 9.2 square miles are owned by the State of New York in six state forests. State land ownership constitutes 24% of the land area. Richford is rich in natural features with steep forested hillsides, narrow stream valleys, trout streams, natural springs, abundant wildlife and plant diversity, and abundant surface- and ground-water. The steep topography limits economic development, and the majority of residents highly value and want to preserve the natural resources and rural character of the Town.

The Town is bordered by Broome County to the east, Cortland County to the north, Tompkins County to the west, and the Town of Berkshire to the south. Residents travel in all directions for work and shopping, with an average 30 minute commute. Richford benefits from nearby academic centers, all within a 30-40 minutes drive, including Cornell University, Ithaca College, Binghamton University, SUNY Cortland, Broome Community College and Tompkins Cortland Community College.

Town Vision

The Town Vision is to: Value, protect and preserve the natural beauty, water quality and quantity, natural resources, and peaceful, quiet rural landscape of the Town of Richford; Encourage economic development geared towards recreation, tourism, small and home-based businesses, and small industry; Support and encourage local business and agriculture; Improve the overall appearance of the Town; Preserve historic elements; and Enhance quality of life for Town residents.

Goal 1 - Preserve and promote natural beauty and rural character

Elements that contribute to the rural character of the Town include the natural beauty, open fields, forested lands, agricultural land use, and low-density residential development. The small town and rural character adds to the quality of community life. The following objectives support the protection of the quality of life and rural character of the Town:

1.1 Protect the natural beauty of the Town and preserve it for future generations.

- Identify unique natural areas.
- Identify areas, landscapes and buildings that are important to preserve for aesthetic, environmental, or historical reasons.
- Determine ways to preserve and protect these features.
- Develop land-use recommendations that help preserve the forested landscape interspersed with open land.

1.2 Promote sustainable land use practices.

- Support and encourage agricultural activities, including organic farms.
- Support and encourage recreational activities that utilize Richford's natural resources, including fishing, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobile riding, etc.

1.3 Conserve the small-town identity of the community.

- Encourage preservation, rehabilitation, and/or repurposing of farm houses and farm buildings to maintain the rural agricultural aspect of the Town.
- Ensure that new development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and is compatible with adjacent land uses. In general, encourage new business development close to the hamlet to promote a walkable town center and increased connectivity, preferably in a non-linear pattern along Highways 38 and 79. Support low-density residential development outside the hamlet and higher density residential development within and near the hamlet.
- Encourage housing development in a variety of types throughout the Town.
- Direct new development in a manner that preserves viable farmland, and water quality and quantity.
- Encourage cluster development that fosters efficient use of land and transportation facilities, and preserves open space. Typically, residential cluster development sets aside 50 to 70% of the land as dedicated undeveloped open space and groups homes on the remaining developed land on smaller individual lots.

1.4 Protect the peaceful rural aspect of the town.

- Support activities that maintain the peaceful atmosphere of the Town.

Goal 2 – Protect and preserve natural resources of the Town

Richford is located in an EPA designated Sole Source Aquifer Area, and the aquifers are the only source of drinking water for the Town and surrounding County. The East and West branches of the Owego Creek originate just outside Richford's borders and form the uppermost reaches of the Chesapeake watershed. Twenty-four percent, or 5,882 acres, of the land area in Richford is owned by NYS creating a critical need for cooperation amongst agencies. Most of the land is located within six large state forests and serves to protect soils, water quality and quantity, and air quality. State lands also provide opportunity for recreational activities such as hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, snowmobile riding, cross-country skiing, etc.

2.1 Protect and preserve the water resources of the Town.

- Conduct an aquifer and watershed survey to determine specifics of water source(s), replenishment rates, and protection needs. Integrate results into water quality and quantity protection plans. Integrate results into all proposed development plans to protect water quality and quantity, and existing wells.
- Participate in watershed protection programs that affect the resources in the Town.
- Protect and preserve water quality and quantity for existing residences.
 - Protect water quality and quantity of existing wells from contamination and flow reduction due to new water use, especially new development.
 - Work with County, State and Regional agencies to protect the quality and quantity of groundwater and the groundwater aquifer(s) to ensure continued viability of private wells.
 - Prioritize residential water use over business and industrial water use.
- Protect and preserve surface and subsurface water quality and quantity.
 - Work with County, State and Regional agencies to protect quality and quantity of water in the East and West branches of Owego Creek.
 - Work with appropriate agencies to protect groundwater and surface water resources from contamination from failing septic systems and other sources of pollution.
 - Investigate options to replace individual septic systems in the hamlet with a community system.
- Promote the protection of floodplains and environmentally significant areas, and limit development in these areas.
- Promote the protection of natural drainages, stream corridors and watersheds.
- Explore ways to identify and mitigate existing contamination that threatens water and soil quality.
- Encourage growth that protects the natural resources of the Town.

2.2 Protect natural resources.

- Work with NYS to manage use and maintenance of State-owned lands.
 - Focus on protecting and enhancing water quality and quantity, limiting soil erosion, and maintaining air quality in the Town.
 - Encourage a policy that all actions on State-owned lands are compatible with the Comprehensive Plan.

- Protect and promote the preservation of farmland soils in the community while promoting farming methods that reduce impact on natural habitats and environmental resources.
- Work with State, County, and adjacent Towns to minimize soil erosion during construction, timber harvest, and other activities.
- Protect air quality, especially in the hamlet where winter smoke accumulates.
 - Minimize smoke and airborne contaminants throughout the Town.
 - Encourage enforcement of open-burning laws.
- Encourage increased recycling of all materials – plastics, batteries, building waste, electronic waste, etc.
- Consider scenic resources as an important natural element and minimize the negative visual impacts of development so as to preserve these resources.
- Encourage “Smart Growth” to protect the resources that are the economic base of the Town: Smart Growth, as defined, includes a range of development and conservation strategies that promote efficient and sustainable land development, protect health and natural environment, encourage land to be left available for agriculture, open space, natural systems and rural lifestyles, and help communities be more attractive, economically stronger, and more socially diverse.
- Establish a procedure for the Code Enforcement Officer and Town officials to inform all individuals planning on building within FEMA’s designated Special Flood Hazard Area that they must comply with the Town of Richford’s Flood Damage Prevention Regulations. The Tioga County 2013 Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan identified flooding as the highest priority hazard of concern, and 28% of survey respondents stated flooding was a problem.

Goal 3 - Encourage economic development consistent with the Town Vision

Economic development is needed to improve the tax base, provide services and employment to local residents, and drive an influx of tourism-based income. Economic development should preserve the rural character, natural beauty and water quality and quantity of the town. It should help create a unique sense of community and place; expand the range of transportation, employment, and housing choices; preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources; and promote public health. Economic development should not create a drain on Town financial resources nor result in a higher tax burden for current residents.

3.1 Manage the size and scale of commercial development.

- Protect and support the existing economic base of the Town and viability of existing businesses. Seek out expertise and funding through County and State agencies to attract and support appropriate development.
- Encourage development of new businesses, including home-based businesses, which are compatible with neighboring uses and are not disruptive to the surrounding community.
- Encourage low-impact development such as tourism, family farms, and home-based businesses.
 - Support agro-tourism as a means of enhancing the economic vitality of agriculture.
 - Support sustainable agriculture such as organic farming.

- Encourage growth patterns, land use recommendations and conservation measures that are respectful of agricultural operations and productive farmland.
- Promote economic growth consistent with the Comprehensive Plan including:
 - Businesses centered on tourism (restaurants, B&Bs, etc.)
 - Farmers' market
 - Small businesses such as construction, vehicle repair, etc.
 - Home based and service businesses
 - Elder and child care
 - Organic and conventional agriculture
 - Small scale wind farming
 - Small industry such as stove and furniture manufacturing, etc.
- Avoid development that is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

3.2 Integrate economic development with the Town's natural resources.

- Promote tourist-based businesses such as fishing, hiking, hunting, camping and other outdoor activities that take advantage of the vast state lands and surrounding areas of the Town.
- Build an information center booth, suggested at the intersections of Highways 38 and 79, with trail maps and directions to the State Forests, specialty farms, hiking and snowmobile trails, Rawley Park, Graded School, etc.
- Use electronic media to promote Richford's attractive features.
- Work with County Planning and Tourism Departments to expand advertisement of Richford's attributes.

3.3 Develop NYS land partnership.

- Encourage NYS DEC to help State-owned lands contribute to the local economy.
- Work with NYS DEC and regional organizations such as Finger Lakes Land Trust to create and expand trails linking the state forests, ~~and~~ other protected lands in Richford and adjacent Towns, Rawley Park, etc.
- Work with NYS DEC and DOT and Finger Lakes Land Trust to install directional signs and parking locations for hiking and snowmobile trails, fishing and canoe access, etc.
- Work with NYS DEC to create a campground in one or more of the State Forests in Richford.
- Encourage NYS DEC to promote activities that enhance the attractiveness of state lands to increase their use by residents and tourists.

3.4 Explore renovation of Graded School.

- Consider developing the Graded School as a historical museum to attract tourism.
- Explore possibility for Graded School to be utilized for other Town purposes.
- Explore pros and cons of listing the Graded School on the National Register of Historic Places.

3.5 Promote local employment.

- Promote programs that provide area youth with learning and employment opportunities.
- Engage regional economic development agencies in promoting adequate and stable employment opportunities.
- Support programs that help home-based businesses, small businesses, and small industry flourish.

3.6 Encourage commuter service, tourist trains and other rail-based services that benefit the community.

Goal 4 – Improve Town government, services and infrastructure

The Richford Town government consists of an elected 5-member Town Board and several appointed volunteer boards including the Planning Board and Board of Assessment Review. The Town Highway Department is a 5-member crew including an elected Superintendent who reports to the Town Board. The Richford community is served by its local volunteer fire department, which is governed by its own board.

The 2014 community survey indicated that Richford residents want more pro-active government while working to maximize value and lower taxes. This creates a challenge to maintain and improve services in a very cost efficient manner. Planning, forecasting and ongoing review will be critical to reach this objective.

4.1 Develop proactive and cost-efficient Town government.

- Develop annual and multi-year budgets that are appropriate, reasonable and predictable.
- Outline five- and ten-year plans to determine needs, examine priorities, review costs and seek out new funding sources.
- Designate an administrator who will manage the Town's access to New York State grant opportunities.
- Upgrade computer systems and keep equipment and software updated.
- Establish internet access in Town buildings.
- Work to streamline and make electronic all records and ensure protection of existing physical records.
- Locate additional resources, both financial (grants and tax income) and conceptual (outside advisors) to improve Town government.
- Investigate potential consolidated and shared services, equipment and personnel with neighboring communities to cut costs and maintain high levels of service.
- Evaluate and implement ways to reduce costs within the community including energy, delivery of services, etc.
- Consider hiring rather than electing Highway Superintendent.
- Work with the Town Assessor to make the assessment process transparent and equitable.
- Consider the need for land use regulation to establish a logical and efficient use of Richford's physical and aesthetic resources without excessive infringement on the property owner's right to enjoy their property and to maintain the value of their property and freedom of action.

4.2 Increase transparency in local government.

- Develop a transparent and understandable budget process using best accounting practices and software.
- Produce accurate and timely public reports of operations and financial actions. Have reports easily available in a timely manner, for example on the Town website, in a monthly report, and as public statements.
- Ensure all elected and appointed Town officials and staff have and use Town email accounts per the state guidelines to separate official and personal business.
- Encourage all elected and appointed Town officials to have sufficient and annual training to properly perform the functions of their offices.
- Develop a handbook that outlines duties, responsibilities, and obligations of all Town elected and appointed officials and Town employees. Handbook should designate a 'chain of command'.

- Develop methodology to ensure prompt and timely actions of all Town business by elected and appointed officials.
- Ensure high standards of integrity and ethics at all levels for all elected and appointed Town officials and employees. Have all elected and appointed officials and employees annually confirm receipt of the Code of Ethics.

4.3 Improve Town-owned infrastructure

Town-owned infrastructure includes the Town Hall, Town Garage, Rawley Park, the Graded School, town roads, and street lights. The Fire Hall is owned and governed by the Richford Fire District. The existing Town-owned buildings and Fire Hall are old, energy inefficient, functionally inadequate and in some cases not in compliance with current law.

- Develop long-term capital improvement plan (10 year +) to identify, prioritize and locate funding to improve, repair and/or replace Town owned buildings (Town Hall, Town Garage, Graded School building) and the Fire Hall.
- Create an official Town Road Map.
- Upgrade energy efficiency of existing Town buildings.
- Ensure all facilities are compliant with ADA, local and state codes.
- Explore repurposing buildings, consolidating or sharing services with other towns.
- Explore potential uses and determine optimal use for Graded School building and lot. Repair and maintain building if appropriate.
- Maintain and enhance Rawley Park.
 - Expand the size of the park by mowing and clearing brush from the adjacent Town-owned property.
 - Enhance the beauty, appeal, and utility of the park by creating visual and physical access to the creek.
 - Construct an accessible biking and walking trail in and adjacent to the park and consider linking with future or existing bike lanes and trails in the surrounding areas.
 - Install additional recreational and picnic facilities, such as benches, playground equipment and surfaces, a second pavilion, bathroom facilities, and fitness equipment.
 - Provide additional parking space.
 - Increase and improve signage.
 - Improve walkable access through the installation of a paved sidewalk between the hamlet and the park.
- Plan for and perform maintenance of Town roads.
 - Develop a 5- and 10-year capital expenditure plan that addresses road system maintenance and improvement.
 - Maintain an updated record of road structure, ownership and condition to support budgeting of finances and resources.
 - Maintain records of equipment maintenance and repair.
 - Conduct an inventory of roads and assign each to a use class.
 - Determine and record which seasonal roads can be deemed “unimprovable”.
 - Plan to improve roads using methods that reduce long-term maintenance costs; upgrade dirt roads to oil-and-stone.
 - Upgrade seasonal roads to year-round status as more homes are built.
 - Review transfer of those costs in full or in part to land developers.
 - Investigate ways to abandon seasonal roads that are not in use.

- Improve access to Town-maintained services including trash disposal.
 - Provide a safely lit paved surface with all-weather cover by the trash truck.
 - Explore a drive-through option for trash disposal.
- Improve recycling options for Town residents for household batteries, florescent tubes and electronic waste.

4.4 Improve State-owned and utility-owned infrastructure

The State owns the major highways (79 and 38), which cross in the center of the hamlet of Richford. Sidewalks along Highway 38 were replaced by NYDOT in 2015. Utility-owned infrastructure includes pipe lines, power lines, internet, telephone, etc. The street lights along Highway 38 are owned by NYSEG and the electricity to operate them is billed to the Town. Internet and mobile broadband are available in many, but not all, areas of the Town and are of varying quality. Rail-owned infrastructure also cuts through the Town for the purpose of transporting propane. A pipeline carrying petroleum products (including propane, natural gas, gasoline, diesel and kerosene) cuts through the northeast portion of the Town. With various entities involved an atmosphere of partnership and collaboration is necessary.

- Plan to design and fund sidewalks connecting the hamlet with Rawley Park, the post office and other community facilities.
- Work with NYS DOT to improve safety of pedestrians and motorists at major intersections and along Highways 38 and 79.
 - Paint pedestrian crosswalk lines at the intersection of Highways 38 and 79. Consider adding additional crosswalks and other safety measures where Town streets meet or cross Highways 38 and/or 79, especially in the hamlet.
 - Explore options to improve safety for pedestrians, such as those accessing the Congregational Church or mobile food pantry.
 - Install a second “railroad crossing ahead” warning sign on Highway 79 on the hill east of the hamlet.
 - Consider installing a flashing light at all railroad crossings to warn motorists of approaching trains.
- Collaborate with NYSEG/NYS DOT to implement an energy-efficient street lighting solution in the hamlet.
- Work with County, State and Federal agencies and with the rail lines and pipeline company to develop a plan for Town safety in the case of a train or pipeline accident or propane spill. Make residents aware of local emergency response plan.
- Work with State and network providers to meet NYS Goals for broadband: All residents should have access to Broadband at speeds of 100Mbps download/50 Mbps upload and access to affordable mobile broadband.

Goal 5 – Improve Town Image and Appearance

Maintaining and restoring the image of the Town is critical to all aspects of business and life in Richford. Residents value an attractive small town center surrounded by scenic rural

landscapes, that is attractive to small business, tourists, and residential development alike. Richford must address factors that are working against this image including vacant and abandoned homes along the major highways. Addressing these issues will demonstrate a sense of pride and vibrancy to each potential investor and resident who passes through our Town. An improved Town image is reflective of the Town culture that offers a welcoming and supportive environment for individuals of all economic statuses.

5.1 Create an identifying appearance for the hamlet.

Create an attractive, distinctive and unique identifying appearance for the hamlet at the intersections of State Highways 38 and 79, with landscaping, signs, street lights, sidewalks, etc.

5.2 Enforce local laws to address problem areas.

Richford has a Junk Storage Law and Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Law that can be leveraged to address properties that are negatively impacting the Town image. Actively enforce local laws, especially the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, Junk Storage, and Dog Control Laws.

- Enforce the Junk Storage Law to help improve visual attractiveness of Town.
- Enforce the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code law to ensure all residences are safe and meet health standards and building codes. Ensure unsafe structures are removed or properly repaired to meet current health standards and building codes.
- Determine need for, write and adopt additional laws as necessary to meet the Town Vision.
- Work with Code Enforcement Officer to contact landowners of empty lots to remove trash, trailers, etc.
- Write, adopt and enforce a Junk Vehicle Law.

5.3 Encourage residents to maintain and improve properties.

- Explore having annual clean-up days with free or low-cost disposal of all items (furniture, non-hazardous construction materials, carpets, appliances, tires, etc.).
- Work with land owners to clean up empty lots along the central thoroughfares in the hamlet, and convert to beneficial uses such as new businesses, farmers' market and/or public green space.
- Work with land owners to develop ways to repair, renovate or repurpose abandoned buildings, or convert to open space.
- Have annual or biannual tire collection days.
- Develop an approach to have routine house repair and maintenance, such as painting and roof replacement, not assessed as improvements.
- Explore ways to fairly assess developed and undeveloped properties.
- Support the adaptive reuse and redevelopment or demolition of existing vacant buildings.
- Work with outside groups that provide painting, home repair and similar services to elderly and low-income residents.
- Locate and apply for grant money to help with home maintenance and weatherization.

Goal 6 – Preserve and enhance quality of life in the Town

6.1 Maintain and improve EMT services.

- Determine how to improve response time and rate of emergency medical services (ambulance and EMT).
 - Need faster, consistent, and predictable response time.
 - Need better coordination between providers.
- Proactively plan for continuation of EMT service if local service disbands.
- Explore possibility of a paid ambulance service and/or the creation of an Ambulance District.
- Develop a local Emergency Response Team to provide medical assistance while waiting for EMT/ambulance.
- Improve 911 response and emergency dispatch.
 - Encourage 911 operators and local emergency responders to know locations of and directions to all households.
 - Encourage all residents and non-residents to verify with 911 system the correct directions to their residence or property.
 - Encourage all residents to install reflective property identification numbers on their mailboxes or property.

6.2 Maintain fire protection.

- Work with local and area Fire Departments and Fire Districts to maintain reliable fire service with predictable response time.
- Support and encourage local fire department volunteers.
- Proactively plan for continuation of fire protection.

6.3 Enhance quality of life for residents of the Town.

- Enhance social connection and exercise.
 - Promote accessible pedestrian and bicycle paths and safe sidewalks within the hamlet.
 - Promote and create community gatherings, social interaction and areas that bring people together.
 - Increase recreational opportunities for youth and all age groups.
- Support local organizations that seek to improve the quality of life for Richford residents.
- Promote nutritional opportunities for all residents.
 - Work with local and regional agencies to prevent hunger and provide access to fresh produce that is locally produced in season.
 - Establish a farmers' market.
 - Establish a community garden and community garden plots.
- Provide continuing education opportunities in Town
- Recognize the needs of senior citizens to help them remain in the community and in their own homes.
 - Explore ways and encourage activities that help senior citizens 'age in place'.
 - Explore development of assisted-living and senior facilities.
- Maintain and improve local health care.
 - Encourage continued operation of a community health center.
 - Promote expanded health care offerings and facilities.
 - Promote improved access to pharmacy.
 - Promote improved access to dental care.
- Improve security.
 - Work with County Sheriff and State Police to provide routine but non-predictable patrols.

- Work with Emergency Service Responders to develop and utilize an emergency alert system and plan of action.
- Work with Emergency Service Responders to develop emergency “Shelter-in-Place” plans for all residents. Shelter-in-place plans help protect residents when hazardous materials (toxic fumes, debris, etc.) may have been released into the atmosphere. Shelter-in-place means taking immediate shelter wherever you are (school, home, etc.), preferably within a small, interior room, with no or few windows and a supply of food and water, and staying there until outside conditions are safe.
- Explore ways to improve security and reduce vandalism of Town-owned infrastructure.
- Foster a welcoming environment for all current and future Town residents.

6.4 Improve residential energy efficiency.

- Improve energy efficiency of existing construction.
- Work with County, State, and other entities to locate funds to help low-income residents insulate their homes.
- Promote residential and municipal renewable energy sources.

6.5 Work with local and regional agencies to improve public transportation.

- Promote public transportation connecting Richford to adjacent communities on a regular basis.
 - Work with local and regional agencies to establish and/or reinstate bus routes.
 - Work with local and State agencies to develop a year-round ‘park-and-drive’ lot in or near the Town to encourage carpooling and bus use.
 - Explore potential for commuter train service for Richford residents.

Future Land Use

The map on the following page illustrates Richford's vision for the future. The hamlet center (shown in purple) contains a variety of uses, including residential, retail, commercial, and small industry. Surrounding the center is a transition area (shown in blue) between the hamlet and rural mix lands. The dark green indicates State forest land. The remainder of the Town land area (shown in light green) is predominantly agricultural, forest, and open-space in nature, with a mix of scattered residences and other harmonious low-impact uses, including recreational and home-based businesses, throughout.

Town of Richford Comprehensive Plan Update 2015 COMMUNITY VISION

