

**Town of Ramapo Strategic Plan**

**Project Steering Committee Meeting #1**

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**Meeting Date:** November 28, 2018

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Location:** Town of Ramapo, Town Hall

**Attendees:**

Michael Specht, Supervisor  
Mona Montal –*Chief of Operations*  
Nicole T. Allen, AICP, Planning Services Manager – *Laberge Group*  
Jason King, AICP, Principal – *Dover Kohl & Partners*  
Sandy Kohl  
Dr. Wortham- *Superintendent East Ramapo Central School District*  
Ephraim Tauber- *Spring Hill EMS*  
Raphael Ziegler  
Harry Grossman- *East Ramapo School District*  
John Cavanaugh  
Paul Nagin- *Skyview Homes*  
Wetzer Jeannot-*Gracepoint Church*

The Steering Committee meeting opened on November 28, 2018 at 7:30 PM.

**I. Introductions**

Supervisor Specht opened the meeting with a thank you to all the committee members for participating in this planning process for the Town of Ramapo. Both Laberge Group and Dover Kohl representatives introduced themselves and the overall project.

**II. Project Scope of Work**

It was identified this is a project to complete a Townwide Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) which shall include the development of a Strategic Plan for the Northeast Ramapo. As opposed to a comprehensive plan which has a broad scope, this will address both broad objectives and the specific needs of the Northeast, including land use, infrastructure, transportation, recreation and housing. The plan will be designed to guide future development and provide a firm foundation for policies and legislation to foster a more certain future. The Plan will provide a framework and context within which to make decisions relating to future land use and development.

Dover Kohl provided an overview of the charrette workshop, its attendees and the preliminary results. Additional meetings were noted to be continuing the next day, Thursday with another public workshop in the evening.

**III. Committee Member Perspectives**

Committee members were asked to share their perspective and their interest in participating in the process. The following are key discussion points:

1. Performs Fire inspection; use to operate a bus/transportation business for 16 years  
Code Enforcement background, running for Justice Court  
Concerns:
  - Monsey developing without infrastructure in place
  - How do we protect people when we continue congestion?
  - Fire call/response has increased in the Northeast, it use to be 4 minutes now it is 17 minutes
  - Area historically has relied on cars
  - We need to drastically take cars off the street, but the bus system is awful
  
2. From the Pomona area, on other side of Route 202  
Concerns:
  - Ambulance Corp. challenged to timely respond; can't find volunteers and takes them long to get there
  - Palisades is not built for high volumes
  - Can't get to hospital in 20 minutes
  
3. Moved from Brooklyn for peace and quiet 2 ½ years ago, real estate agent by profession  
Concerns:
  - People want peace, quiet and convenience... Can we have both?
  - Taxes keep going up; unaffordable for many
  - Don't want over development but need to help keep costs down, need tax ratables
  - Can create a nice place through walkways and amenities
  - Need balance
  
4. East Ramapo Central School District  
Concerns:
  - Public Transportation not the answer; culturally people think car
  - School district – North/South roads are congested, can't go North or South
  - Rt. 306 done wrong, houses too close to road and the buses stop every 3 houses for kids
  - Transporting 36,000 kids and this increases almost 1,800 kids per year
  - When no public transportation and nonpublic schools are open kids are car pooled. Car pooling days are awful; 1 Bus = 30 cars!
  - Kids run across the road and getting worse
  - Can a staggered schedule for buses? Restrict car pooling? Require buses be provided?
  
5. East Ramapo Central School District  
Concerns:
  - No one will move here w/o good schools
  - Test Scores were in the Red and all below the state averages; Now all Green
  - “Strong Public Schools” – visionary
  
6. Passion for green preservation, maintaining streams, trees, biking and hiking  
Concerns:
  - Promote Green
  - Do not want hideous development
  - Stadium was not wanted; voted down 3-1; it is a fiscal sore

- Want to see “Eco-Dev.”
- Lives in the Northeast in a small comm. with a mission to preserve the nature with land trusts
- Property 2 acre zoning

7. Concerns:

- As an active member of the Gracepoint Church many express that the community feels housing is unaffordable; Need denser housing for affordability; Need senior housing
- Taxes are high
- School Enrollment highest enrollment ever
- Full day kindergartens doubled #'s
- People leaving private and coming back
- Robotics for free during summer camp attracted families
- Walking school bus share with bus to collect kids to reduce time

8. Concerns:

- Preserve space is important; but unrealistic to stop development
- Current housing is old and dilapidated; need to improve
- Need senior housing, multifamily – where will it work?
- Do not want to be overdeveloped but rather serve the public and their needs
- Rt. 59, 45, 306 need to be improved. Widened
- Need more playgrounds; create a ratio of houses: playground
- Viola to Rt. 59 traffic is heavy
- Create a bus only road from a certain hour to hour in a day?

#### **IV. Next Steps**

A public workshop is scheduled for Thursday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the Stadium. The planning team is available all day for followup and questions at the Stadium. A Work-In-Progress (WIP) Public Meeting is scheduled for December 19, 2018 at 6pm (Note: This meeting was subsequently postponed). Another Steering Committee Meeting will be schedule before the WIP Meeting.

The Steering Committee meeting was closed at 9:00 PM.