

Town of Canaan

Public Hearing Presentation

December 2025



Comprehensive Plan Committee

- Brenda Adams, Town Board Liaison
- Kate Childs-Jones
- Ashley Garrett
- Mary Keegan
- Monshin Paul Naamon
- Thomas Platten
- Carrie Whiteman

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 - Rick Lederer-Barnes
 - Michael Shannon
 - Ellen Pemrick

The Three Critical Planning Questions Answered in this Planning Process



What are current conditions in the Town?



What does the Town hope to be like in the future? What is its vision and goals?



What strategies and actions can take place to help the Town attain that vision?

Planning Process

Public Input

- Regular meetings with Committee
- Town-wide Survey
- Joint Meeting with elected and appointed officials
- Public Open House
- Canaan Day



Highlights of Survey Results

388 participants representing all geographic areas of the Town. The Top 10 themes learned from the survey:

- **Preserving Rural Character and Natural Beauty**
- **Housing Affordability and Diversity**
- **Broadband and Cell Service Gaps**
- **Need for Grocery, Café, General Store, Places for Community Gathering**
- **Wants balanced, small-scale development**
- **Concerns about Short-term Rentals**
- **Potholes, dust, safety of roads**
- **Support for Agriculture**
- **Strong desire for more community building events**
- **Desire for communication, broader participation, inclusive decision-making**

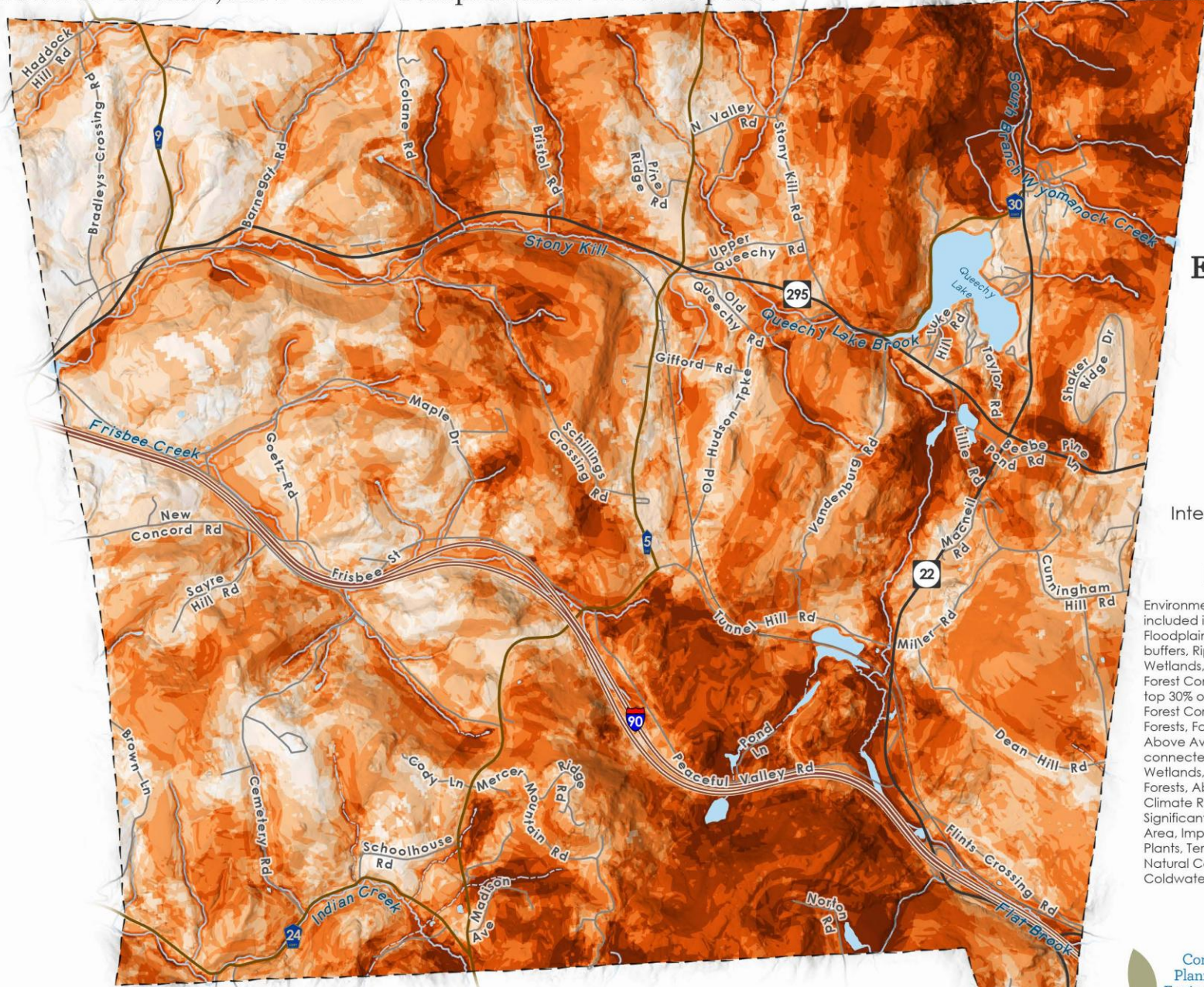
Planning Process

Data and Maps

- **Full Profile and Inventory - description of community & cultural resources, economic conditions, demographics, infrastructure and more.**
- **Used existing NRI maps**
- **Created GIS-based map showing Environmental Sensitivities**
- **Conducted Buildout Analysis and Scenarios**
- **Zoning Audit**

Mapping New Maps Augment Those in Town's NRI

- Floodplains and Water buffers
- Riparian buffers
- Wetlands (DEC informational layer)
- Slopes over 20%
- Forest Condition Index in top 30% (for the Hudson Valley region) or unique patch
- Forest Cores (100 meters from edges of 100+ acre forest blocks)
- Floodplain Forests
- Farmland Soils (Prime and Statewide Important)
- Above Average connectedness of:
 - Wetlands Ridgelines Forests
- Above Average Climate Resiliency (TNC northeast region)
- Significant Biodiversity Area
- Natural Heritage Program Important Areas for:
 - Plants Terrestrial Animals
 - Natural Communities & Coldwater Stream habitat



Environmental Sensitivity Analysis

- Lake/Pond
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- EnvSensitivity

Number of Resources

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Environmental Resources included in the analysis:
 Floodplains and Water buffers, Riparian buffers, Wetlands, Slopes over 20%, Forest Condition Index in top 30% or unique patch, Forest Cores, Floodplain Forests, Farmland Soils, Above Average connectedness of Wetlands, Ridgelines and Forests, Above Average Climate Resiliency, Significant Biodiversity Area, Important Areas for Plants, Terrestrial Animals, Natural Communities and Coldwater Stream habitat.</p> | <p>1 </p> <p>2 </p> <p>3 </p> <p>4 </p> <p>5 </p> <p>6 </p> <p>7 </p> <p>8 - 13 </p> |
|---|--|



August 2025

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Analysis – Buildout to Evaluate Current Zoning and Alternatives

District	Existing # of Units	Buildout With Existing Zoning	Buildout With 2-Acre zoning	Buildout with 3.5-acre zoning	Buildout with 5-acre zoning
C-1	24	75	75	75	75
C-2	43	165	165	165	165
C-3	3	56	56	56	56
RA-1	159	228	414	192	109
RA-2	720	3037	6384	3350	2252
RA-3	12	75	157	84	56
RA-4	21	166	166	166	166
Total	982	3,802	7,417	4,088	2,879

Town of Canaan, New York :: Comprehensive Plan Update



Existing Residential Development

- Surface Water
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Existing Single-Family Home
- Existing Multifamily Units
 - 2-3
 - 4-5
 - 6-11
- Zoning District
 - C-1
 - C-2
 - C-3
 - RA-1
 - RA-2
 - RA-3
 - RA-4

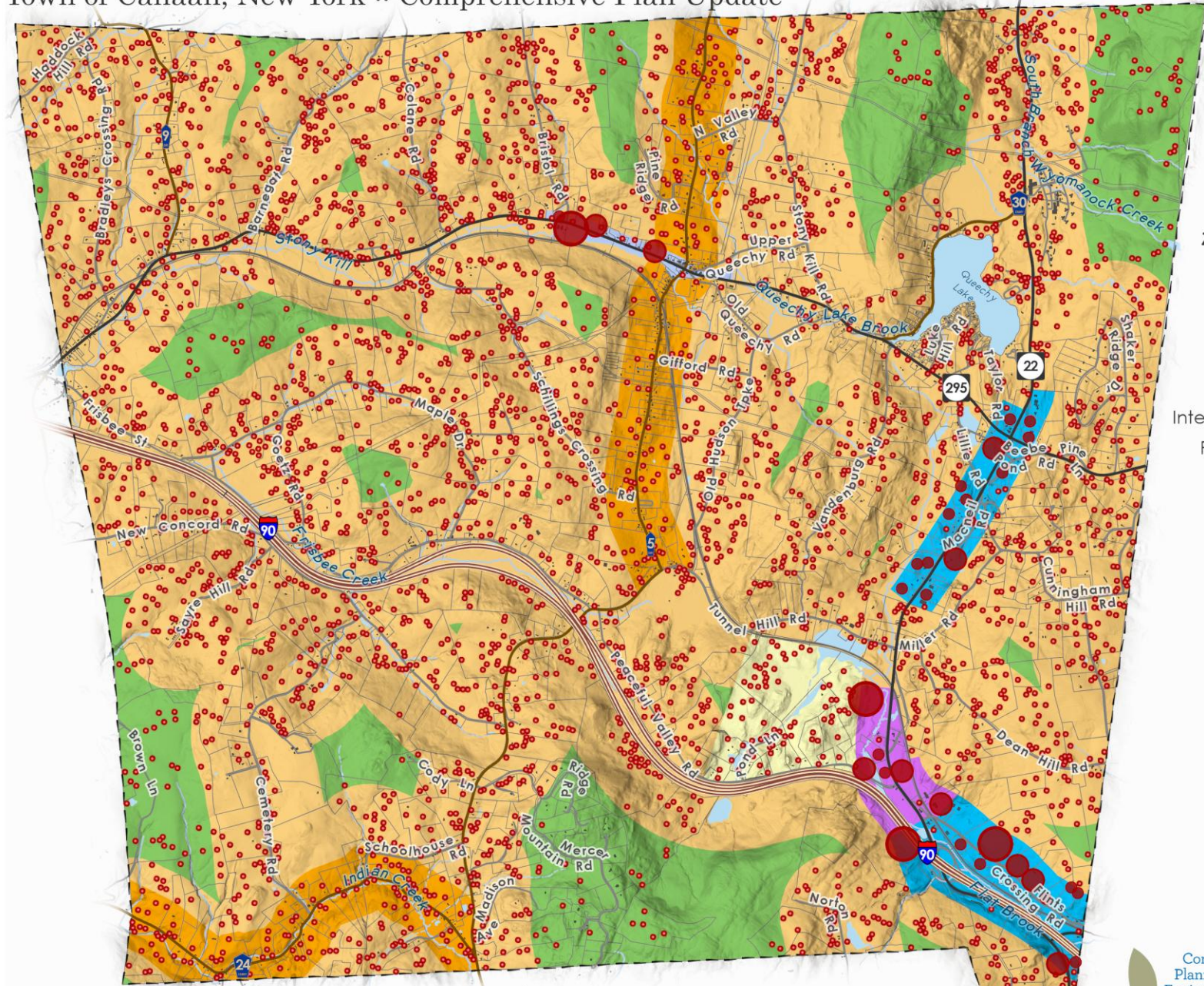


November 2025

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Town of Canaan, New York :: Comprehensive Plan Update



Single- and Multi-family Buildout Potential using existing zoning regulations

- Surface Water
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Potential Single-Family Home

Permitted Units

- 2 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 20

Zoning District

- C-1
- C-2
- C-3
- RA-1
- RA-2
- RA-3
- RA-4

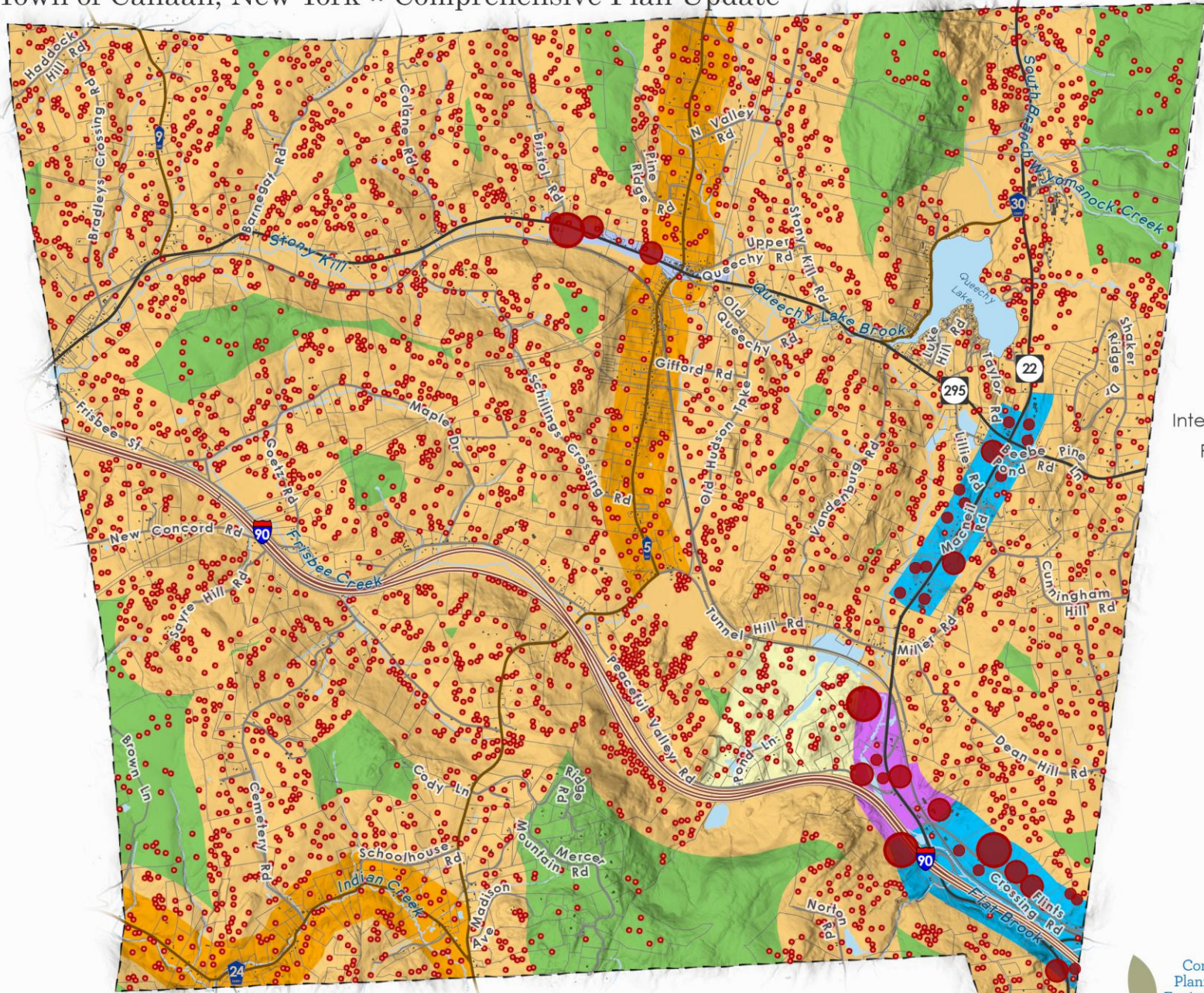


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Town of Canaan, New York :: Comprehensive Plan Update



Single- and Multi-family Buildout Potential
 where RA-1, -2, & -3 have a 3.5-ac min lot size

- Surface Water
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Potential Single-Family Home

- Permitted Units**
- 2 - 5
 - 6 - 10
 - 11 - 20

- Zoning District**
- C-1
 - C-2
 - C-3
 - RA-1
 - RA-2
 - RA-3
 - RA-4



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Town of Canaan, New York :: Comprehensive Plan Update



Single- and Multi-family Buildout Potential
 where RA-1, -2, & -3 have a 5-ac min lot size

- Surface Water
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Potential Single-Family Home

- Permitted Units**
- 2 - 5
 - 6 - 10
 - 11 - 20

- Zoning District**
- C-1
 - C-2
 - C-3
 - RA-1
 - RA-2
 - RA-3
 - RA-4

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

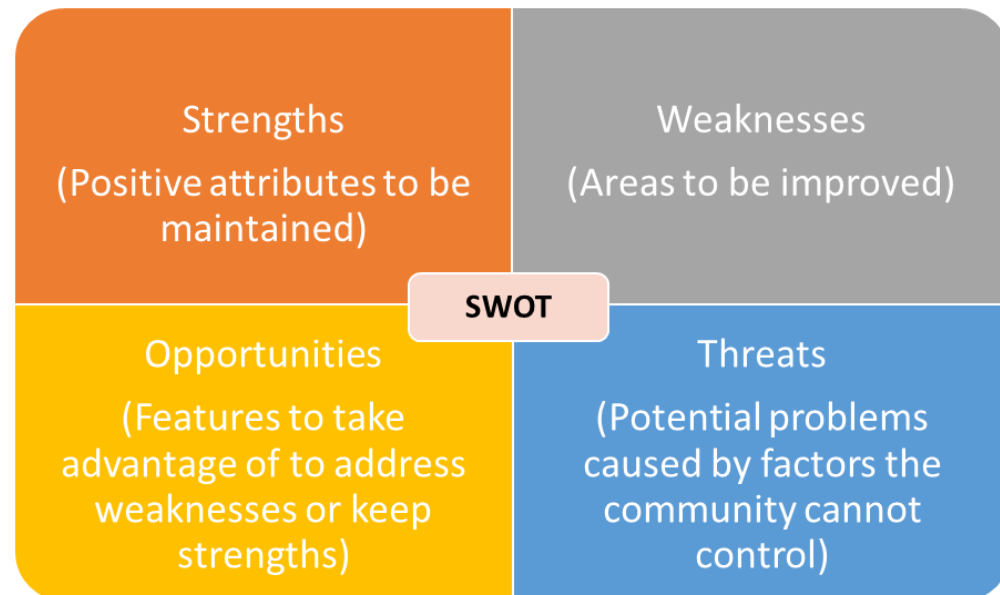
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Analysis

- Analysis of all public input and data, including maps and analysis
- Organized data into SWOT
- Developed vision statement and goals



SWOT



Strengths: Natural beauty, scenic, peaceful, Queechy Lake, town leadership, proximity, rural character, friendly, small-town feel, historic, quaint, civic involvement



Weaknesses: Poor broadband/cell, lack of affordable housing, short-term rentals, lack public gathering spaces, traffic/speeding, road conditions, inadequate protection of environment, aging population, transparency



Opportunities: Improve Stoddard Park, commercial design standards, community center, more affordable/diverse housing, encourage small businesses, support farming, protect Queechy Lake/Beach, Zoning updates



Threats: Declining Town revenues, rising costs, climate change, lack of daycare/youth activities, sustainability of emergency services, travel to medical care, aging population, loss of rural character

Vision

- Preserve Canaan's rural character, natural beauty, and strong sense of community while proactively addressing challenges.
- Maintain a peaceful, welcoming atmosphere where nature, neighborliness, and belonging are valued by people of all ages.
- Promote sustainable growth and balanced development through thoughtful policies that fit a rural community.
- Support local farms, small businesses, and diverse housing choices compatible with the town's scale and identity.
- Ensure high-speed internet and reliable cell service for a connected and safe community.
- Provide programs, gathering spaces, and opportunities that keep residents engaged and rooted in the community.
- Protect forests, farmlands, water resources, and Queechy Lake while guiding development responsibly.
- Evolve in ways that honor the town's past, strengthen its present, and build a vibrant, resilient future.

Goals

- Promote Diverse and Affordable Housing Choices
- Advocate for Expanded Internet/Cell Service
- Preserve Rural Character
- Preserve Natural Resources
- Enhance Traffic Safety/Accessibility
- Help Seniors Age in Place
- Support Local Businesses, Farms
- Foster Broad Participation in Town Govt.
- Enhance Community Spaces and Social Connections

Options - Actions and Strategies (Highlights)

- Modernize zoning and subdivision laws to meet needs:
 - Use conservation subdivision design to preserve open spaces
 - Re-evaluate use of minimum lot sizes to have flexibility in lot size, but maintain low density
 - Rural siting and development standards to maintain character
 - Stream buffers, control steep slope/ridgeline
 - Use of overlays (agriculture and conservation)
 - Make R₄ better aligned with environmental sensitivities
- Expand housing choices: via zoning with adaptive reuse, new hamlet zoning district at Berkshire Farm campus area where infrastructure exists, offer incentives for provision of small-scale affordable units

The Plan provides Canaan with a roadmap that can help keep the town at a rural scale and keep Canaan beautiful, grounded, resilient place for the next generation.

Options - Actions and Strategies (Highlights)

- Promote “Smart Growth” which emphasizes focus-area/hamlet development instead of growth along road corridors and as rural sprawl
- Support Agriculture – use farm-friendly zoning to allow for more types and smaller farms
- Update solar law, address battery storage
- Facilitate formation of local business association
- Strengthen climate resilience
- Invest in needed/desired services and programs
- Expand mission of Recreation Committee

Options - Actions and Strategies (Highlights)

- Improve Stoddard Park
- Maintain public access to Queechey Lake
- Develop a Senior Resource Guide and a New Resident/Family Resource Guide
- Hold Annual Town Meeting
- Create a Communications Committee

Priority Recommended Actions (Highlights)

- Amend zoning and subdivision laws
- Implement Climate Smart Action and Resiliency Plan
- Update solar law/battery storage
- Broaden mission of Recreation Committee
- Maintain public access to Queechey Lake
- Improvements at Stoddard Park
- Appoint necessary committees

Plan Adoption Steps as per NYS Town Law 272-a

- Committee Public Hearing ✓
- Town Board Public Hearing (within 90 days) ✓
- Referral to County (239-m Review with FEAF Part 1) for their 12/16 meeting ✓
 - Must wait till you hear from them or 30 days maximum before moving forward
- SEQR (Type I, FEAF Parts 2-3)*
- Decision by Resolution of the Board
- If approved, filing of Final, Adopted Plan with County and Town Clerk; ENB Notice with DEC

*If Negative Declaration – SEQR is complete, if Positive Declaration – GEIS is prepared

<https://www.imaginecanaan.org/>

<https://canaannewyork.org/comprehensive-plan-meeting-minutes/>