

RESOLUTION # _____ OF 2026: DETERMINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ADOPTING THE ULYSSES 2045 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF ULYSSES FINDS THE FOLLOWING:

1. The intent of the New York State legislature under the Consolidated Laws of New York (CLNY) Chapter 62 Article 16 Section 272-A encourages, but does not require, the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan (Comp Plan) for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens; and
2. The Town of Ulysses completed its last periodic update to the Comp Plan in 2009 but did not conduct any annual update or any other update since its adoption; and
3. The Ulysses Town Board created a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) and charged it with the preparation of a draft Comp Plan and related public engagement with the assistance of a Planning Consultant (Consultant); and
4. The CPSC in coordination with Town Staff directed the development and release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Consultant; and
5. The CPSC conducted interviews for Consultants on April 18, 2024; deliberated on the qualifications and proposals of the applicants during their May 9, 2024 and June 5, 2024 meetings; and indicated a majority preference for MRB Group (MRB) to be the Consultant at the June 5, 2024 meeting; and
6. The Town Board resolved to select MRB as the Consultant during their June 25, 2024 meeting and the Town subsequently entered into a contract with MRB to act as the Consultant to facilitate the development of the draft Comp Plan and to assist in public engagement; and
7. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant led the public review and development of the draft Comp Plan, including 40 meetings and workshops, five public pop-up events, three public open houses, and 12 public hearings; and
8. The Town Board approved a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) on September 24, 2024 developed by the CPSC that identified stakeholders and outlined a broad process to engage members of the public in the development of the Comp Plan; and
9. Early and continuous public participation was encouraged throughout the periodic update process following the PIP; and
10. The Consultant led a series of targeted focus groups to identify strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities related to planned specific elements of the Comp Plan with noted stakeholders identified in the PIP and with members of the public; and

11. The first focus group was held on October 24, 2024 to discuss economic development, housing, and historic preservation and the built environment, and the CPSC reviewed the result of stakeholder input during their November 6, 2024 meeting; and
12. The Consultant conducted a series of interviews with professional staff and elected officials on October 24, 2024 to identify strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities for the town, and the CPSC reviewed the result of that input during their November 6, 2024 meeting; and
13. The second focus group was held on November 15, 2024 to discuss environment and natural resources, and climate change and resilience, and the CPSC reviewed the result of stakeholder input during their December 4, 2024 meeting; and
14. The third focus group was held on December 13, 2024 to discuss capital facilities, community well-being, and transportation, and the CPSC reviewed the result of stakeholder input during their January 8, 2025 meeting; and
15. The fourth focus group was held on March 13, 2025 to discuss agriculture and land use, and the CPSC reviewed the result of stakeholder input during their April 2, 2025 meeting; and
16. The Consultant, under direction of the CPSC, developed a community-wide survey that was released to members of the public on December 7, 2024 and was available for input through March 2025, and the CPSC reviewed the results of the survey during their April 2, 2025 and May 7, 2025 meetings; and
17. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant conducted the first joint session with Town Board members on January 8, 2025 to develop a Vision Statement; reviewed drafts of the vision statement during their February 5, 2025 and March 5, 2025 meetings; conducted a second joint session with Town Board members during their April 2, 2025 meeting; reviewed revised drafts of the vision statement during their May 7, 2025 meeting; and discussed the majority preferred Vision Statement during their June 4, 2025 meeting; and
18. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant conducted the first public open house on March 19, 2025 which presented the preliminary draft Vision Statement and solicited input to identify the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities related to the Economic Development, Housing, Built Environment, Environment & Natural Resources, Climate Change & Resilience, Capital Facilities, Community Well-Being, Transportation, Agriculture and Land Use elements of the Comp Plan, and the CPSC reviewed the result of the open house input during their April 2, 2025 meeting; and
19. Development of the draft elements of the comp plan was conducted in a phased process; the CPSC reviewed initial drafts of the Husing and Built Environment elements during their May 7, 2025 meeting; reviewed initial drafts of the Economic Development, Environment & Natural Resources, and Climate Change & Resilience elements during their June 4, 2025 meeting; reviewed initial drafts of the Transportation and Community

Well-Being elements during their July 2, 2025 meeting; reviewed an initial draft of the Capital Facilities element during their August 6, 2025 meeting; reviewed an initial draft of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) during the September 3, 2025 meeting; and reviewed initial drafts of the Land Use element and Introduction chapter during the September 24, 2025 meeting; and

20. The CPSC directed the release of initial drafts of the Comp Plan elements for public dissemination in a phased process; the Housing, Built Environment, Economic Development, Environment & Natural Resources, and Climate Change & Resilience elements were available to the public after their July 2, 2025 meeting; and the Capital Facilities, Community Well-Being, Transportation, Agriculture and Land Use elements were available to the public on October 6, 2025; and
21. The CPSC was required under CLNY 62.16.272-A.6.b to hold a public hearing on the proposed Comp Plan; and
22. Notice of the public hearing was published in the Ithaca Journal, was posted on the Town's Public Legal Notice Board, was posted on the Town's webpage, and was mailed to over 2,400 known property owners, stakeholders, and interested agencies; and
23. The CPSC conducted public hearings on the first drafts of the Comp Plan in a phased process starting on September 3, 2025 to receive public input on the Housing, Economic Development, and Built Environment elements; continued their public hearing on September 24, 2025 for public input on the Environment & Natural Resources, Climate Change & Resiliency, and Built Environment elements, continued their public hearing on October 8, 2025 for public input on the Community Well-Being and Capital Facilities elements, continued their public hearing on October 22, 2025 on the Transportation and Land Use elements, and continued their public hearings on November 5, 2025, December 10, 2025, January 14, 2026, and January 28, 2026 for public input on the full draft Comp Plan; and
24. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant conducted a second public open house on October 6, 2025 which presented the draft plan and solicited input, and the CPSC reviewed the result of the open house input during their October 8, 2025 meeting; and
25. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant conducted a third public open house on November 19, 2025 to solicit additional public input, and the CPSC reviewed results during their December 10, 2025 meeting; and
26. A revised second draft of the Comp Plan was released February 2, 2026 that incorporated amendments made by the CPSC in response to public input; and
27. The CPSC continued their public hearings on February 11, 2026, February 25, 2026, and March 11, 2026 for additional public input on the draft Comp Plan; and

28. The CPSC in coordination with the Consultant conducted a targeted four-hour workshop on March 7, 2026 to make amendments to the draft FLUM in response to public input; and
29. A revised third draft of the Comp Plan was released on March 18, 2026 that incorporated amendments made by the CPSC in response to public input; and
30. The CPSC conducted their last public hearing on March 25, 2026 where it reviewed the revised draft and received public input; and
31. The CPSC, by resolution at its meeting on March 25, 2026 recommended that the Town Board adopt the Ulysses 2045 Comprehensive Plan as presented in Attachment A to that resolution, as modified at that meeting; and
32. Based upon their experience with conducting similar environmental reviews and the Comp Plan as actually recommended by the CPSC, the Consultant has recommended classification of the Proposed Action as a Type I Action pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law, and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617; and
33. The Town Board declared its intent to be lead agency for purposes of environmental review regarding its adoption of the Comp Plan at its meeting on April 14, 2026, and schedule a public hearing on its adoption for May 12, 2026; and
34. The Town Clerk published notice of the public hearing in the Town's official newspaper on April 20, 2026; and
35. The Consultant circulated to all involved and interested agencies the Town Board's intent to act as lead agency, and no objections to the Town Board so acting were received by the thirtieth day after such circulation; and
36. The Comp Plan was referred, pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 239, to the Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability for review and comment, which comments were received on June 25, 2026; and
37. The Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability provided no comments regarding the environmental significance of its adoption; and
38. All other involved and interested agencies also provided no comments regarding the environmental significance of the Comp Plan's adoption; and
39. The Town Board requested discretionary comments from the Departments of Environmental Conservation and Agriculture and Markets by June 22, 2026 and none were provided; and
40. The Town Board opened the public hearing at its meeting on May 12, 2026, and continued it on May 26, 2026 and June 30, 2026; and

41. During the course of said public hearing and at its regular meetings on June 9 and June 23, 2026, the Town Board discussed and authorized various non-material revisions to the Comp Plan as outlined in memos from the Consultant dated May 26 and June 18, 2026, along with a memo from Councilperson Weatherby dated June 9, 2026 and [REDACTED] and with additional revisions also reflected in the Town Board's meeting minutes; and
42. The Consultant has incorporated all such revisions to the Comp Plan and presented the final draft to the Town on June 26, 2026; and
43. The Consultant has prepared a draft Full Environmental Assessment Form Part 2 concerning adoption of the Comp Plan along with an analysis of its potential environmental impacts, copies of which are attached hereto as Exhibit A; and
44. The Town Board has evaluated the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action as recommended by the Consultant, using the criteria set forth in Part 2 of the FEAF, expressly concurs with and adopts the Consultant's analysis, and determined that each question should be answered no or small impact;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Ulysses, based upon the review and findings above, hereby determines that adoption of the Comp Plan is a Type I Action and will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts, and a Negative Declaration of Environmental Significance is hereby issued in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6 NYCRR Part 617; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Supervisor or their designee is hereby authorized and directed to sign the SEQRA Negative Declaration and to take all steps necessary to file and distribute this determination as required by law; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

Moved:

Seconded:

Olson
Boggs
Manley
Weatherby

Vote:

Date Adopted: