



Village of Homer

Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #3

Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2026

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Zoom

Meeting Summary

I. Review Prior Meeting Notes

The Steering Committee received meeting notes as part of the agenda packet. Members present confirmed that the notes were accurate, and Emma Falkenstein stated that the notes would be posted to the project webpage.

II. Engagement Update

Emma Falkenstein provided an update on the community engagement activities for the Comprehensive Plan. She noted that Public Workshop #1 had approximately 25 attendees and that the summary was included in the meeting packet. Emma noted that the Community Survey launched in June and had 45 responses to date. Emma also indicated that the Project Team has held two focus group meetings with the Homer Business Association and Cortland County Planning and Economic Development Team, as well as hosted a Pop-Up event at Holiday in Homer in July. A summary of what the Project Team is hearing from the community engagement is outlined below:

What people love about the Village of Homer:

- Tight-knit Community
- Family-Friendly Atmosphere
- Historic Character + Architecture
- Community Pride + Events
- Downtown Vibrancy
- Regional Location
- Walkability
- Parks + Recreation
- Arts + Cultural Resources

Things that need improvement:

- Population + Tax Base Stabilization
- Housing Affordability
- Ability to Age in Place
- Waterfront Connectivity + Trails
- Pedestrian + Bike Infrastructure
- Road Safety (Main St + Commercial Corridors_
- 281 Connectivity
- Adaptive Reuse of Underutilized Properties
- Arts, Culture, + Heritage Tourism
- Diversity of Local Businesses
- Year-Round + Indoor Recreation for All Ages
- Infrastructure + Green Infrastructure

The Steering Committee discussed community feedback about the need for affordable homes for families, the availability and accessibility of youth recreation, as well as the need for non-athletic youth activities and programs. Emma encouraged the Steering Committee to continue to promote the Community Survey, which will close at the end of August/beginning of September. She indicated that the Project Team will work on scheduling a couple more focus groups to meet with stakeholders about historic preservation, arts, culture, and heritage tourism, as well as sustainability.

III. Planning Foundations Framework

Emma reviewed the Planning Foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, indicating that it intends to create a decision-making framework. She stated that at the core of the Planning Foundation is the community's vision statement. She emphasized how the Village's vision statement should be authentic yet aspirational for where the Steering Committee hopes Homer will be 20 years from now and that the statement is intentionally written in the present tense. The Steering Committee reviewed the long and short versions of the vision statement, noting words and phrases they liked such as "small-town charm and modern innovation," "distinctive and diverse architecture," and "safeguard our natural resources." Steering Committee members asked to include language to reference Homer as a "regional hub for arts, culture, and heritage," as well as more descriptive language about the village's location in Central NY and proximity to Route 281. Overall, the Steering Committee expressed a preference for the long vision statement.

Emma overviewed the Planning Foundation's core values, noting that the values help to provide clarity around the vision statement and reflect widely shared and deeply held beliefs about the Homer community. The Steering Committee indicated agreement with the core values, noting the need to protect the unique character of Homer and the physical and social needs of the community. Emma overviewed the planning principles, noting that the principles help to translate the core values into practical strategies to guide investment in Homer. Steering Committee members noted that the Village is

already actioning the planning principles in its daily operations. Emma noted that the last piece of the Planning Foundation is the planning priorities, which reflect four key areas to improve quality of life in Homer. The Steering Committee indicated agreement with the priority areas and noted how they align with what they're hearing from the community.

Emma noted that she would make some slight tweaks to the Planning Foundation and send an updated version for the Steering Committee to review. She indicated that she plans to attend the August 25th Village Board meeting to provide a "Confirmation of Direction" on the planning process and gather feedback from the Village Trustees on the Planning Foundation.

IV. Actions Prior to Next Meeting

Emma identified activities/action to be completed prior to the next Steering Committee meeting. Note the responsible party in bold after the action item.

***HP** = Highland Planning. **SC** = Steering Committee*

1. Update the Planning Foundation (**HP**)
2. Review and share feedback on updated Planning Foundation (**SC**)
3. Continue to promote the Community Survey (**SC + HP**)
4. Schedule and hold Focus Group Discussions (**HP**)
5. Prep for the Confirmation of Direction with the Village Board (**HP**)
6. Schedule and prepare for Steering Committee Meeting #4 (**HP**)
7. In preparation for the Steering Committee Meeting #4, review draft materials (**SC**)

V.

VI. Next Meeting

Steering Committee #4 – September 23, 2026

Public Workshop #2 – October 19, 2026

Attendance

Steering Committee	Present
Patrick Clune, Village Mayor	X
Dan Egnor, Village Clerk	
Don Ferris	X
Jane Hall	X
Victoria Hess	
David Lee	X
Ashley Neiderman	
Meg Peroli	
Kai Schrimp	
Donald Walsh	X
Dillion Young	X
Haley Zurell	X
Noah T. Kilmer	X
Consultant Team	Present
Leanne Voit, Highland Planning	X
Emma Falkenstein, Highland Planning	
NYS DOS Representative	Present
Alissa D'Aquanni, NYS DOS Office of Planning, Development, and Community Infrastructure	X