

TOWN OF CLINTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting Held on March 4, 2026

In Attendance: Katherin Mustello (KMU), Chairwoman
 Eliot Werner (EW), Co-Chair
 Charlie Canham (CC)
 Roger Hof (RH)
 Michael Hurd (MH)
 Katarina Maxianova (KMa)
 Mike Palumbo (MP)
 CJ Wyant (CW)

 Adriana Beltrani (AB)

Chairwoman Mustello opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

Jim M opened with an overview of the Clinton Climate Smart Community (CSC) Committee's planning meeting focused on developing a town-wide survey. The survey aimed to fill a crucial data gap regarding vulnerable populations in Clinton, which is essential for enhancing community resilience and emergency response planning. The CSC Committee identified the lack of data on vulnerable populations in Clinton as a critical issue. Given the town's aging, geographically isolated population and limited infrastructure such as no public transportation and roads impassable in bad weather, the committee seeks to integrate vulnerability-related questions in an upcoming survey. The goal is to identify at-risk residents—such as those without generators, unable to drive in snow, or facing food insecurity—to guide community-led emergency support and resilience strategies. Below are the highlights of the meeting on the comprehensive plan.

Survey Development and Focus Areas

The survey is designed to cover several key domains:

- **Demographics:** Including age, length of residency (with categories like "lifelong resident" or "5-10 years"), street address, and school district to map neighborhood distribution.
- **Community Priorities:** Exploring what residents value about the town's rural character (scenic views, farmlands, narrow roads), desired services (grocery stores, senior services), and support for development like tourism or small-scale lodging.

- **Resource Allocation:** Adrianna is tasked with leading the survey drafting process, incorporating feedback from committee members who will review and suggest edits collaboratively through Google Drive using “suggesting mode” before the next meeting.

Execution Plan and Milestones

The committee outlined a timeline for the survey process:

- **Immediate (Next 2 Weeks):** Finalize survey questions based on committee feedback.
- **Short-Term:** Launch the survey via Survey Monkey, distributing it through QR codes, the town website, and outreach via trusted local institutions such as churches, libraries, and emergency services to reach vulnerable groups effectively.
- **Long-Term:** Analyze the data collected to inform the town’s comprehensive plan and resilience strategies.

Outreach and Risk Mitigation Strategies

Recognizing the challenge of low response rates from vulnerable populations, the committee plans to leverage trusted community networks like churches with senior programs and emergency medical services to distribute the survey. This approach aims to improve participation from those most at risk. Additionally, the survey will combine open-ended questions (e.g., “What does rural character mean to you?”) with structured multiple-choice questions to facilitate data interpretation.

Discussion Highlights and Survey Content Considerations

The meeting included extensive discussions on survey question content and structure:

- The importance of capturing detailed location data was emphasized, with suggestions to ask for street addresses and school districts to accurately map residents, rather than relying solely on hamlet names or general areas.
- Demographic questions were refined to include age, length of residency with categories such as lifelong resident, and the nature of respondents’ relationship to the town (resident, property owner, business owner, etc.).
- The committee debated the balance between open-ended and multiple-choice questions, aiming to keep the survey concise yet informative.
- Questions about the town’s rural character were designed to include both open-ended responses and checklists of attributes such as scenic views, farmlands, narrow roads, stone walls, and wildlife presence to capture varied perceptions.

- The survey will also address community priorities for facilities, including recreational amenities, senior and youth services, and public transportation options.
- Tax allocation questions will ask residents to prioritize spending across categories like roads, land conservation, emergency services, and town personnel, using ranking or budget allocation formats to identify trade-offs.
- Growth and development questions will differentiate between residential and commercial growth, including agricultural and tourism uses, with options for respondents to express support or opposition to various types of development such as grocery stores, bed and breakfasts, and retreat centers.
- Housing-related questions will explore preferences for housing types and affordability, including single-family homes, multifamily units, and senior housing, aiming to inform zoning and development policies.
- The survey will revisit the 2012 comprehensive plan goals to assess their current relevance, using a format that allows respondents to indicate if goals remain important, are no longer relevant, or are neutral.

Technical and Logistical Details

The committee discussed the use of Survey Monkey for deployment and the integration of QR codes and web links for easy access. There was deliberation on whether the QR codes should link directly to the survey or to a landing page on the committee's website, which may also host meeting minutes and updates. The importance of publicizing the survey and keeping it open for an adequate period with reminders was noted. The committee also plans to maintain transparency by posting minutes and encouraging public participation in meetings, which are open and listed on the town calendar.