

TOWN OF MARBLETOWN

2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

The seventh paragraph on page 14 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Natural Resource Protection,” which begins with: “In order to preserve the rural character of the Town and the natural resource base upon which our community depends...” is hereby replaced in its entirety with the following new paragraph:

Marbletown prepared a Community Preservation Plan (CPP) and, with voter approval, established a Community Preservation Fund (CPF) in 2023. In order to preserve the rural character of the Town and the natural resource base upon which our community depends, the Town should continue this effective program for protecting natural and cultural resources, update it as new information on such resources is identified, and continue to conserve natural and cultural resources using the CPF. Land conservation and stewardship are goals an overwhelming majority of Town residents support. Maintaining an updated inventory of priorities for natural resource preservation, that includes areas of steep slopes, erodible soils, karst topography, agricultural and poor soils, unfragmented woodlands and forest, wetlands, aquifers, streams and floodplains, open fields, wildlife habitats, and other biotic, scenic, and outdoor recreational natural resources is one of the best ways to protect Marbletown’s rural character. The CPP must be updated every five years under the Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act and when it is, the CPP should also update important information on surface and groundwater resources identified in the 2005 Aquifer Protection Study and newer sources.

The paragraph on page 15 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity,” which begins with: “Local ordinances, government initiatives, education programs and other measures which encourage the protection and enhancement of the health and biodiversity of our natural resource base will be developed and promulgated.” is hereby revised through the addition of the following sentences after the above stated sentence. Following the new sentences, a new paragraph will begin with the next sentence in the second full paragraph beginning with: “The use of native plants in landscaping, development and land use should be encouraged...”

Marbletown’s Community Preservation Fund (CPF), established in 2022, is an example of a successful government initiative that can and should be used concertedly to protect biodiversity resources in the Town. Purchasing biodiverse lands in fee or through conservation easements is a well established and permanent means to ensure that wildlife habitats and biodiversity will be preserved for the foreseeable future.

Residents have consistently expressed their support for a program such as the CPF in the Town.

The third full paragraph on page 18 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Promote Conservation Design,” which begins with: “Many of the objectives set forth above can be accomplished...” is hereby revised through replacement of the entire paragraph as follows:

Many of the objectives set forth above can be accomplished by refining the Town’s conservation design process found in the Zoning Law and Subdivision Regulations, which arranges development on each parcel as it is being planned to preserve and protect sensitive natural and cultural features and environmental resources. This process, known as “conservation design,” provides a density-neutral method of preserving streams and wetlands, natural habitats, flood plains, steep slopes, prime agricultural lands, historic sites, scenic viewsheds, and so on in permanently protected open space while allowing development of the least sensitive lands. This process also allows creation of a linked system of open spaces and conservation lands to be preserved in the Town. The process should be updated by modifying the voluntary guidelines in Appendix B of the Zoning Law so they become standards to be applied in the Planning Board’s review processes, supplemented with illustrations of the design process so compliance is easier for applicants to obtain, requiring a greater percentage of open space where possible, and considering the use of the conservation design process for certain uses subject to Site Plan Review and Approval.

The first paragraph on page 19 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Hamlets,” which begins with: “Hamlet growth should be limited to prevent creeping expansion along Route 209 and Route 213” is hereby revised through the addition of the following sentence at the end of the paragraph:

Marbletown’s hamlets are appropriate locations to support residents’ want and need for a variety of housing choices in the Town. The hamlets developed long before there were cars and are already the most walkable neighborhoods in the community. This characteristic should be encouraged to address both affordability and climate change. Choice involves supporting existing housing including allowing limited conversions and encouraging different housing types and styles that were abundant before cars became ubiquitous. These housing types have come to be known as “missing middle” housing that are best defined as house-scale buildings with either single-family detached or small-scale multiple units in walkable neighborhoods. This includes single-family, two-family, small multi-family structures of three to four dwelling units per building, and appropriately scaled cottage style dwellings in cottage courts of six to eight dwelling

units. This does not include townhouses, condominiums, apartment buildings, slot homes, or multiple, full-sized single-family detached dwellings on one lot.

The second paragraph on page 19 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Hamlets,” which begins with: “Mixed uses combining residential and commercial development are quite acceptable...” is hereby revised through the addition of the following new sentence at the end of the paragraph:

The Town should also consider amending the Zoning to reinforce the existing scale of the hamlets by encouraging mixed-use buildings that accommodate small scale residential and compatible small scale non-residential uses, allowing adaptive reuse of both existing residential and commercial buildings for creating a more diverse mix of dwelling units in the Town, identify sites where such mixed-uses are most appropriate and where such mixed uses can be sensitively sited with small changes that appeal to Town residents and support the local workforce including those who provide services to the community like emergency services providers, farm laborers, teachers, and Town employees as well as young families, senior citizens and others on limited incomes.

A new paragraph is hereby added on page 21 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Agricultural Lands, Forest Lands and other Open Space” which ends with “Areas so designated by the state or the town will receive greater protection at State or Town levels.” through the addition of the following new paragraph:

The Town of Marbletown Community Preservation Plan, adopted in 2022, should continue to be used in a concerted manner to protect all of the above noted environmental resources and updated every five years. Additional tools available to protect community character when CPF revenues are not available, such as strengthening the Zoning Law’s conservation design technique and considering state-of-the-art overlay zoning districts to protect specific environmental resources, should receive serious consideration for biodiversity protection, scenic viewshed protection, water resources protection, and conservation of other sensitive environmental features.

The first paragraph on page 22 of the Marbletown New York Town Plan under the heading entitled “Strategies” for Housing goals is hereby revised by replacing the entire paragraph with the following new paragraph as follows:

Single family houses are the predominant housing type within the present development pattern. Where adequate utilities are available, single family homes should be clustered on small lots to preserve green space and important natural features. Guidelines and

standards for environmentally sensitive, visually appealing, and appropriately scaled missing middle housing types discussed above under “Hamlets” should be allowed to accommodate future population in a compatible manner, and provide for affordable housing opportunities and socio-economic equity in our community.