Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan

Kick-off Meeting Summary Notes

Date & Time: November 10, 2025 6:00 pm
Location: Margaretville Telephone Company Conference Center, 61 Academy Street, Margaretville, NY 12455
Attendees:

Comprehensive Plan Committee
Luke Beemer – MARK Project
Robin Williams – Middletown Council Member
Gary Kusen – Middletown Resident / Fire Commissioner
Rebecca DeVito – Middletown Business Owner
Annie Pevear – Middletown Resident
Lissa Harris – Margaretville Resident
Steve Finch – Margaretville Resident / MTC Cable
Zach Baldwin-Way – Margaretville Resident
Harold Kuhn – Fleischmanns Business Owner

Barton & Loguidice
Robert Murphy, Jr., AICP Managing Community Planner
Danielle Pottinger, Community Planner

Introduction

This meeting marked the official kickoff of the Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan, and the first project committee meeting since the communities entered into contract with Barton & Loguidice (B&L) on September 1, 2025. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project team and committee members, review the scope and timeline of the planning effort, and begin initial conversations to help shape a shared vision.

The meeting was led by Robert Murphy Jr., AICP, a Community Planner based in Albany and Project Manager for the Comprehensive Plan. He was joined by his colleague Danielle Pottinger, also a community planner. Prior to the meeting, Robert and Danielle toured the Town and the two Villages. The tour included key areas such as the Route 28 commercial corridor and the ‘downtown’ areas of Margaretville and Fleischmanns.

The meeting agenda included the following items:

1. Project Overview: Team, Scope, Schedule
2. What is a Comprehensive Plan?
3. Community Profile: Demographic Trends and Mapping
4. Previous Planning Efforts
5. SWOT Analysis / Discussion
6. Next Steps

Project Overview

Robert presented the project's scope and timeline: The Comprehensive Plan is expected to take approximately one year to complete. He then provided an overview of what a Comprehensive Plan is and how working together on a regional joint plan benefits communities by setting a long-term vision for land use, development, infrastructure, and community character and potential win-win scenarios for participating municipalities.

Community Profile

Danielle then presented the draft Community Profile, which highlighted the following key findings:

- All three communities are undergoing population losses.
- The percentage of vacant houses has increased since 2010.
    - Committee members provided more information on housing in the area, attributing the increase to more vacation homes in the area. Lissa Harris recommended that the B&L team review the Delaware County Housing Opportunity and Needs assessment document for additional details on the issue of housing.
- The population is skewing to an older demographic; there is a noticeable decline in residents 20 - 34, suggesting fewer young professionals are staying in the area.
- The Town's population is aging, with increases in the 55–64 and 65+ age groups.
- With the exception of Margaretville, the median household income is rising at a pace similar to the County and State.
- Unemployment is low, but poverty rates skew higher in Margaretville.
- Industry employment trends in Van Buren mirror those of the County and State, though surprisingly few residents (3%) work in agriculture despite the Town's rural nature.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Please find the SWOT Notes at the end of this document. The SWOT analysis for the three communities highlights the area's identity as a rural community undergoing demographic shifts with convenient access to regional amenities. Strengths include its proximity to State Park lands, the Margaretville Hospital, and New York City, as well as the willingness of localities to cooperate.

However, the town faces several challenges, particularly around the lack of taxable lands, limited transportation options, and a lack of childcare and neonatal care. Housing affordability is a growing concern across the county, likely driven by the prevalence of vacation homes. Despite these weaknesses, the three communities have

opportunities to leverage their natural assets and joint funding efforts to enhance commercial and industrial corridors. Threats include the displacement of the workforce and school-aged family populations, as well as the fragmentation of how news is disseminated throughout the community. These insights will inform strategies that reinforce Middletown, Margaretville, and Fleischmanns' strengths while proactively addressing growth, infrastructure, and quality-of-life considerations.

Next Steps

- Schedule Next Committee Meeting
- Draft Community Profile & Previous Planning Efforts
- Draft Community Participation Plan
- Draft Survey Questions
- Launch Project Website

SWOT Notes

Below are the notes taken, of the SWOT analysis.

Strengths • Natural beauty • Historic/walkable downtown • Development opportunities • Cooperation between communities • State / City Lands • New prospectives, proximity to NYC • Tourism • Art community • Hospital Access • Closest (in Delaware County) to NYC • Waste Water infrastructure	**Weaknesses** • State / City Owned land • Communication/Cultural disconnections between old and new residents • Lack of developable land • Lack of affordable housing • Transportation • Flooding • Cell service • Other Middletown (Orange County) • Childcare • Lack of medical specialty services, including maternity care • Lack of social services
Opportunities • Closest (in Delaware County) to NYC • Shared branding between the three communities • Leveraging funding • State / NYC Lands • Water Districts	**Threats** • Housing Affordability • Political future of localities • Workforce population displacement • School population displacement • Fragmentation of news outlets



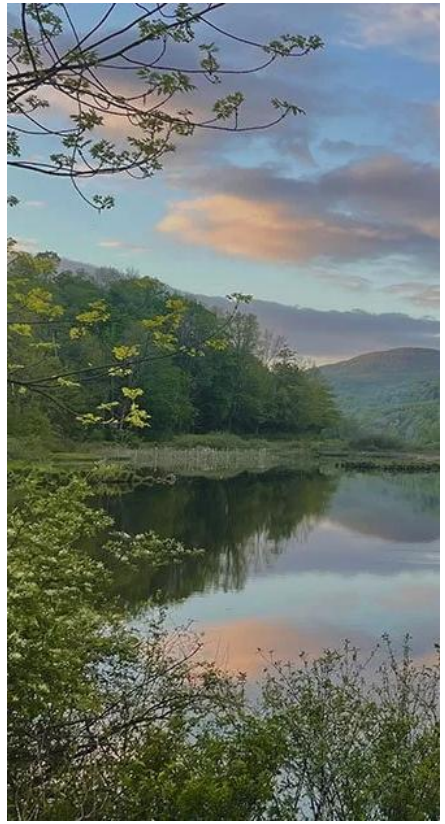
Middletown (T), Margaretville (V), Fleischmanns (V) Joint Comprehensive Plan

Committee Kick-off Meeting

November 10th, 2025

MTC Community Room, Margaretville, NY

B&L





Agenda

1. **Project Overview:** Team, Scope, Schedule
2. **What is a Comprehensive Plan?**
3. **Previous Planning Efforts**
4. **Community Profile:** Demographic Trends and Mapping
5. **SWOT Analysis / Discussion**
6. **Next Steps**

Project Overview

Project Team, Scope, Schedule





Project Team

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Luke Beemer

Robin Williams

Gary Kuser

Rebecca DeVito

Annie Pevear

Lissa Harris

Steve Finch

Zach Baldwin-Way

Harold Kuhn

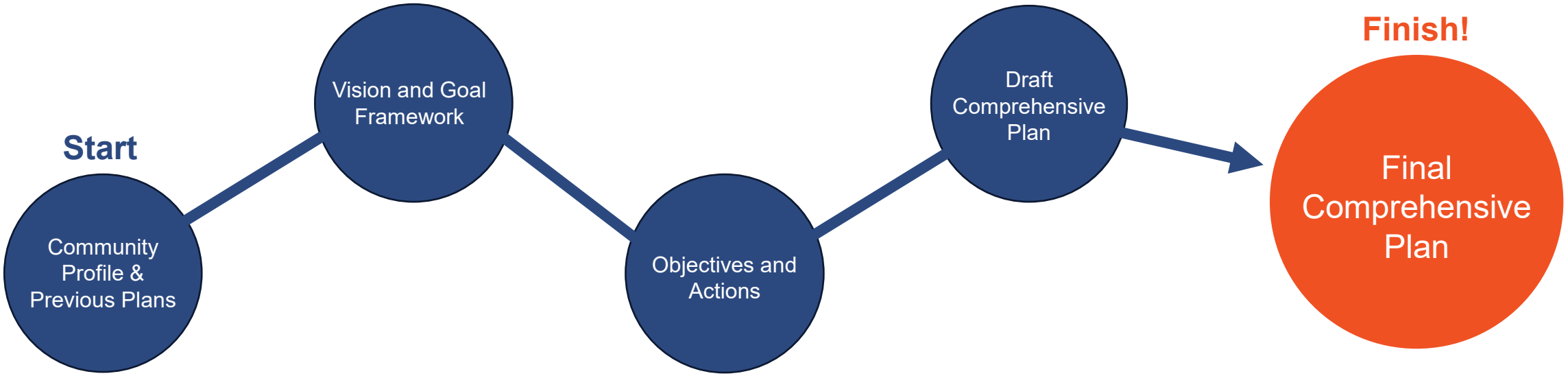
Barton & Loguidice

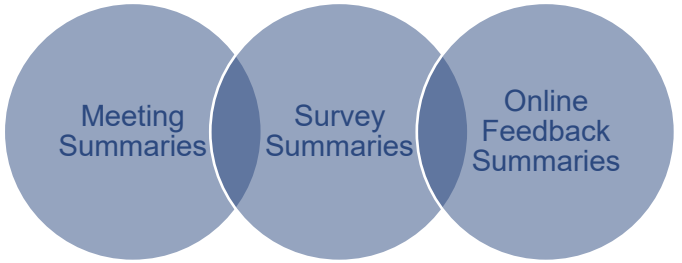
Robert Murphy Jr., AICP	Project Manager
Daniel Theobald, AICP	Project Community Planner
Danielle Pottinger	Community Planner

Behind the Scenes

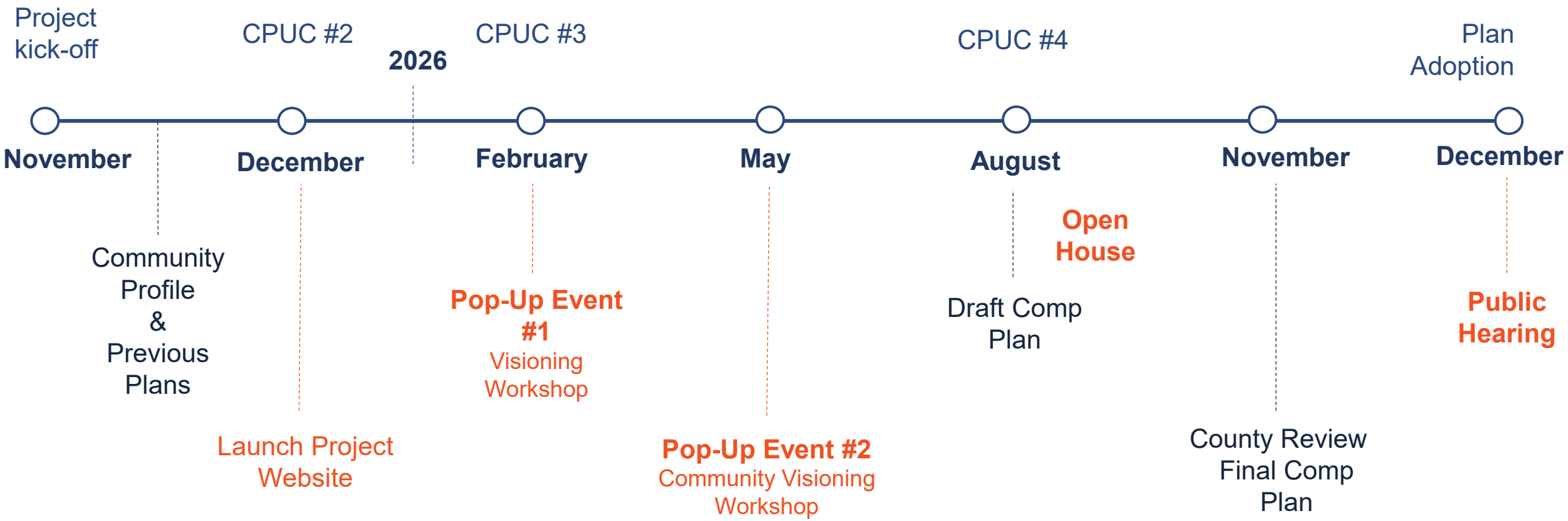
4Ward Planning	Market Analysis

Project Scope





Project Schedule



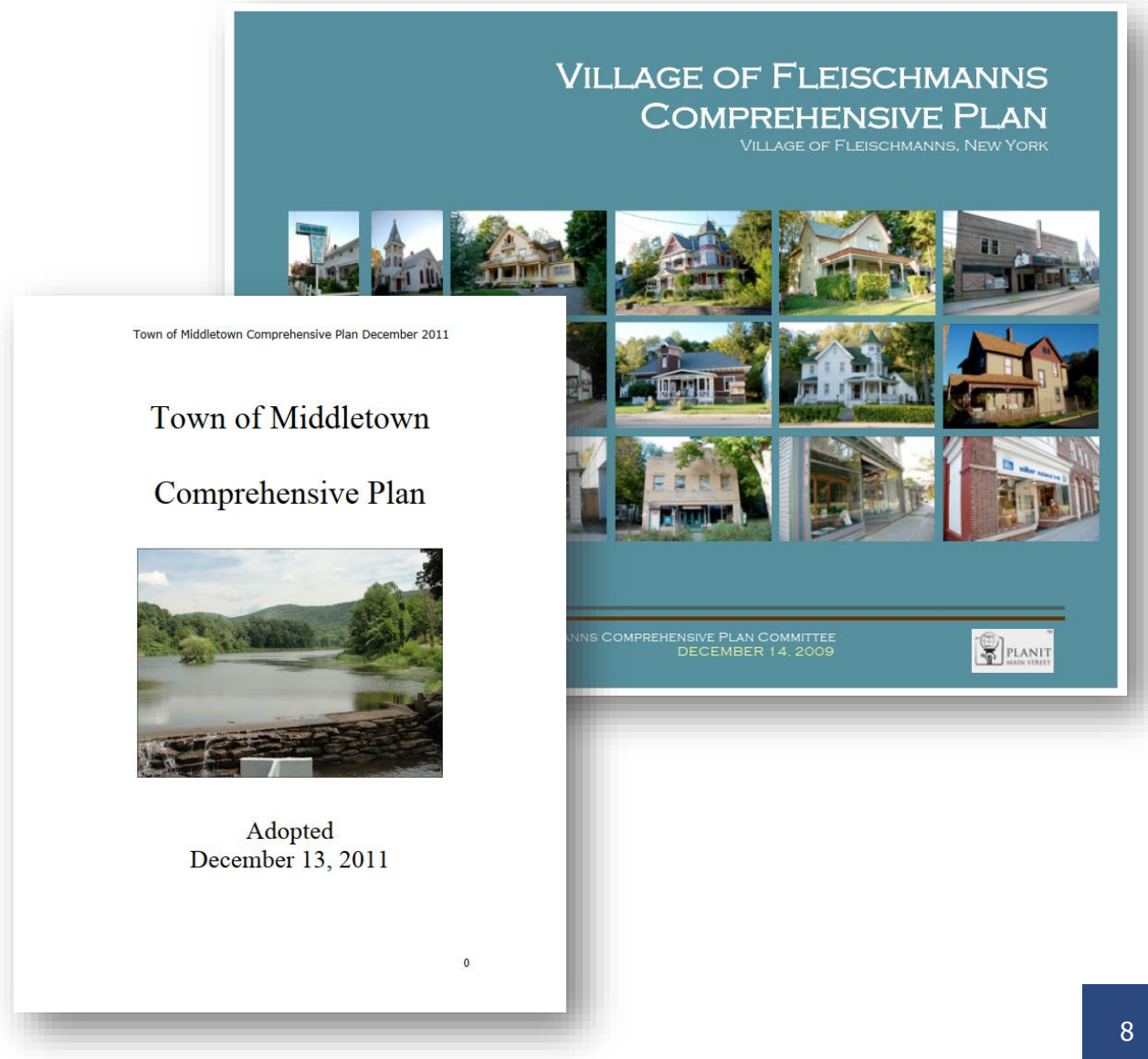
What is a Comprehensive Plan?





What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- It is a **Planning Document**
- Supported by NYS Law
- Promotes the health, safety, and welfare of the public
- Provides background information and policies to assist with decision-making
- Establishes framework for future programs, development and investment



Benefits of a Comprehensive Plan



Joint Comprehensive Plans

- Joint comprehensive plans are a cost-efficient method to pool resources and create regional plans that leverage the unique strengths of each participating community
  - Joint comprehensive plans also improve scoring for certain state grant programs, increasing chances for funding for participating communities.
- Communities participating in joint plans can decide to have a **shared overarching vision** for their communities or **individual visions**.
  - The vision statement provides clear prioritization of community goals and creates a guiding framework for investment and development





Parts of a Comprehensive Plan



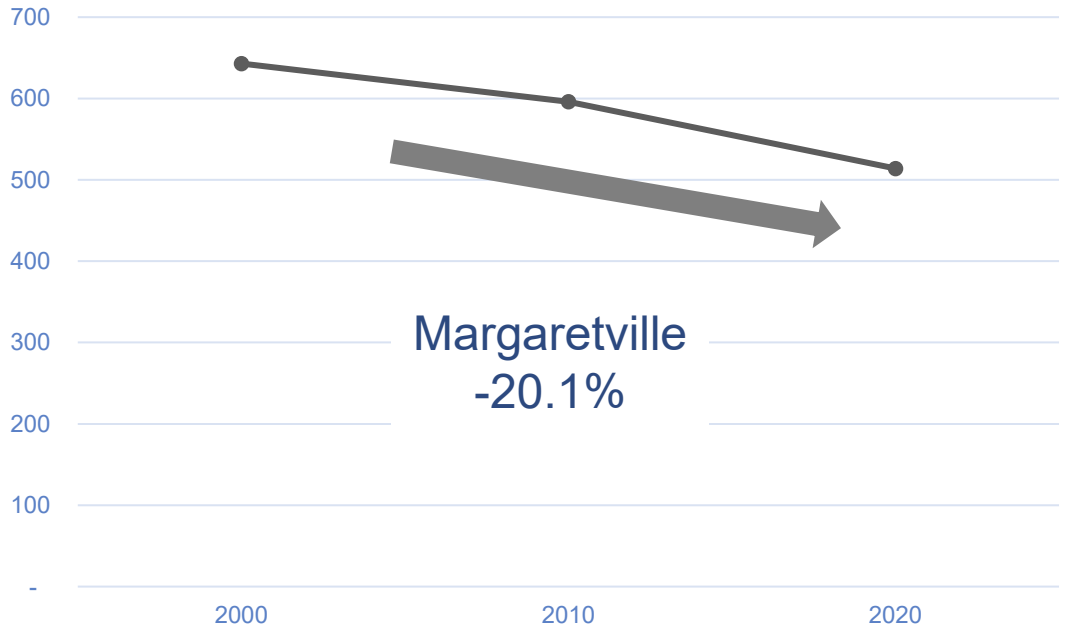
Community Profile

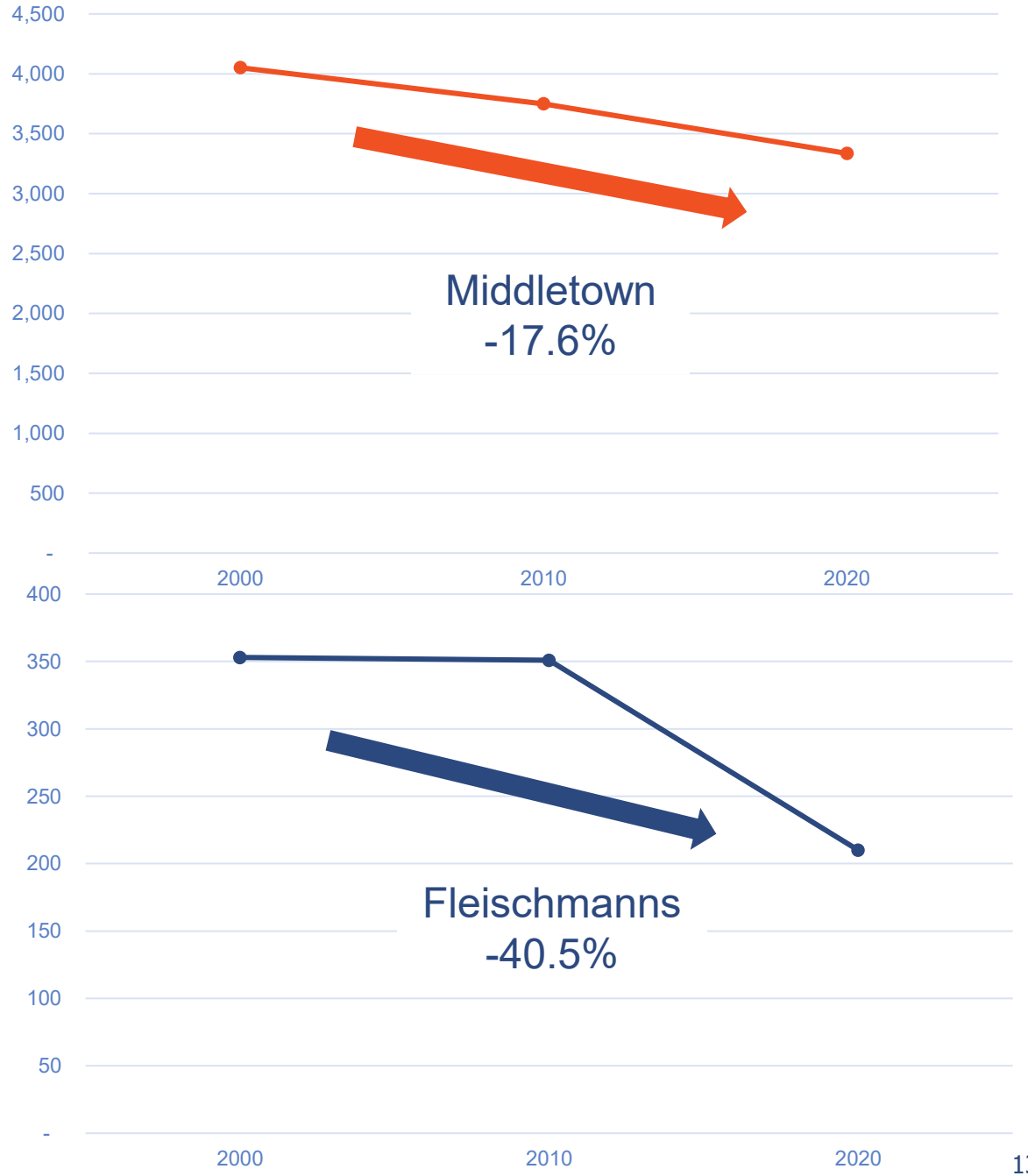
Demographic Trends



Population

2000 - 2020





Housing

Combined Housing Data

	2010	2020	
Total Housing	2,998 units	3,594 units	**+596**
Vacant Housing	1,407 units (46%)	1,893 units (52%)	**+486**
Occupied Housing	1,591 units	1,701 units	**+110**

**Decennial Data*

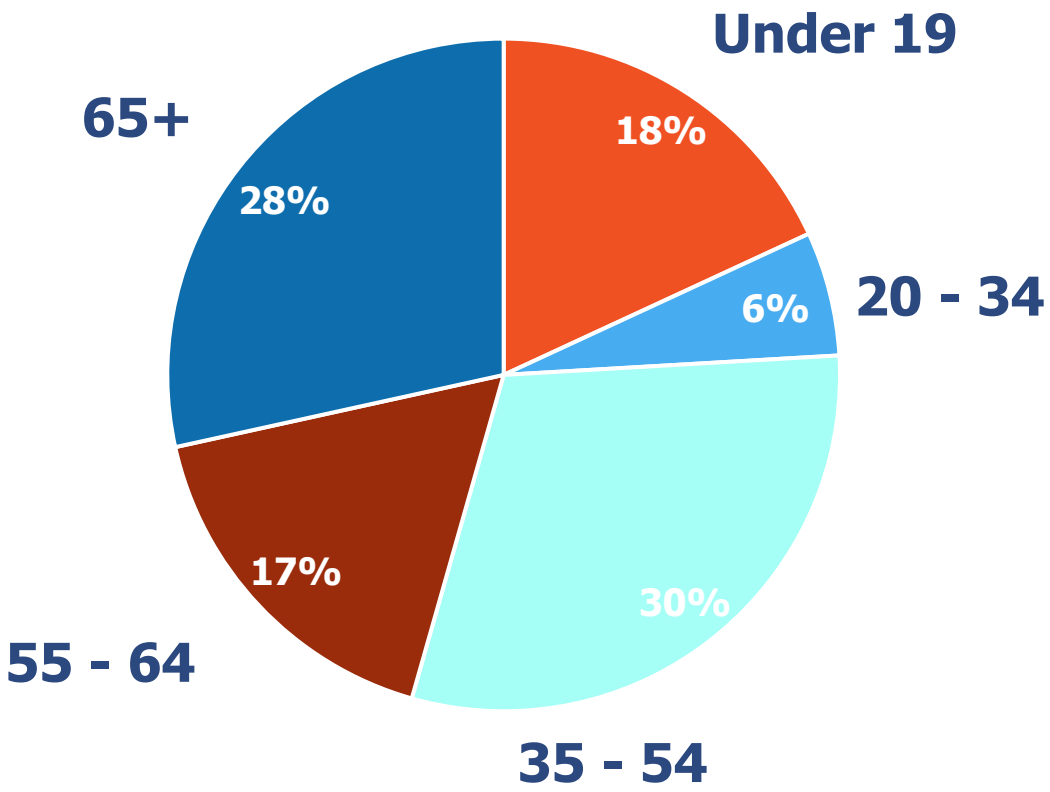
**American Community Survey*

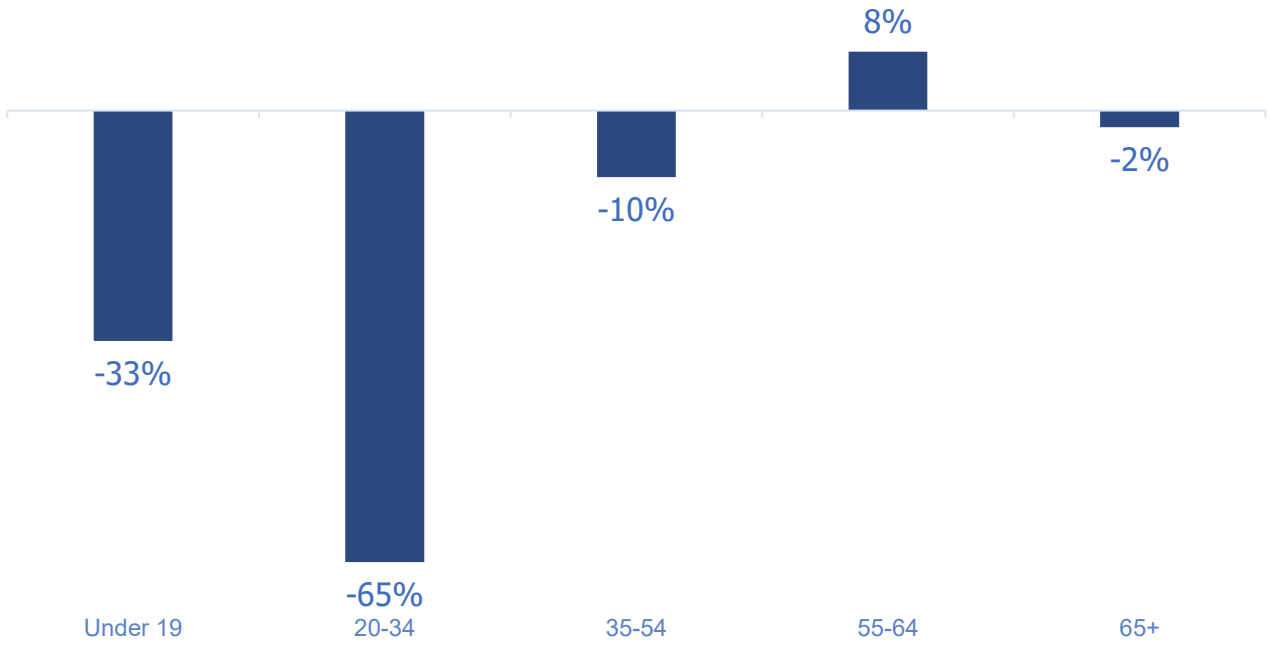
	2010	2023	
Single-family	2,354	2,958	**+604**
Multi-unit	264	388	**+124**
Mobile Homes	380	248	**-132**
			596

Age

*2023 American Community Survey

Combined Age Data





Change in Age Distribution 2010 - 2023

Economic

Median Household Income

	2010	2023	Delta
Middletown	$45,461	$67,295	+48%
Margaretville	$45,625	$36,411	-20%
Fleischmanns	$27,083	$58,250	+115%
Delaware County	$42,967	$60,226	+40%
New York State	$54,148	$82,095	+52%

**2010 / 2023 American Community Survey Median Household Income*

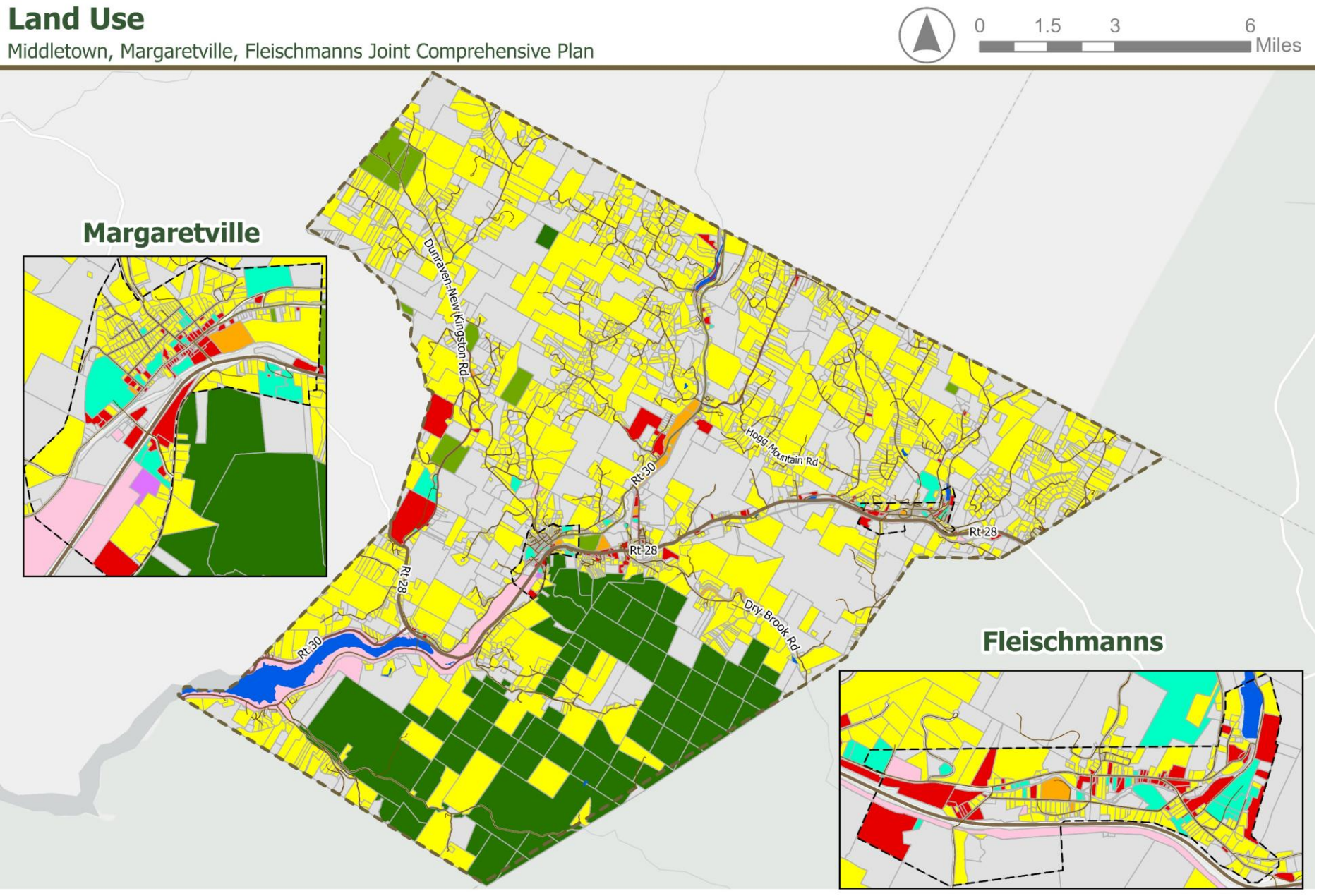
Economic

	Unemployment	2010-2023	Poverty Rate
Middletown	.8%	(-5.5%)	11.8%
Margaretville	2.4%	(-8.8%)	20.8%
Fleischmanns	2.4%	(-13.8%)	-[2]
Delaware County[1]	4.3%	(-3.4%)	14.9%
New York State	3.1%	(-3%)	14.2%

**2023 American Community Survey*
Median Household Income

Land Use

Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan



- Business and industrial uses are concentrated in the two Villages
- Within Middletown, residential and vacant land uses are the most prevalent, which reflects the more rural nature of the area

Property Ownership

Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan

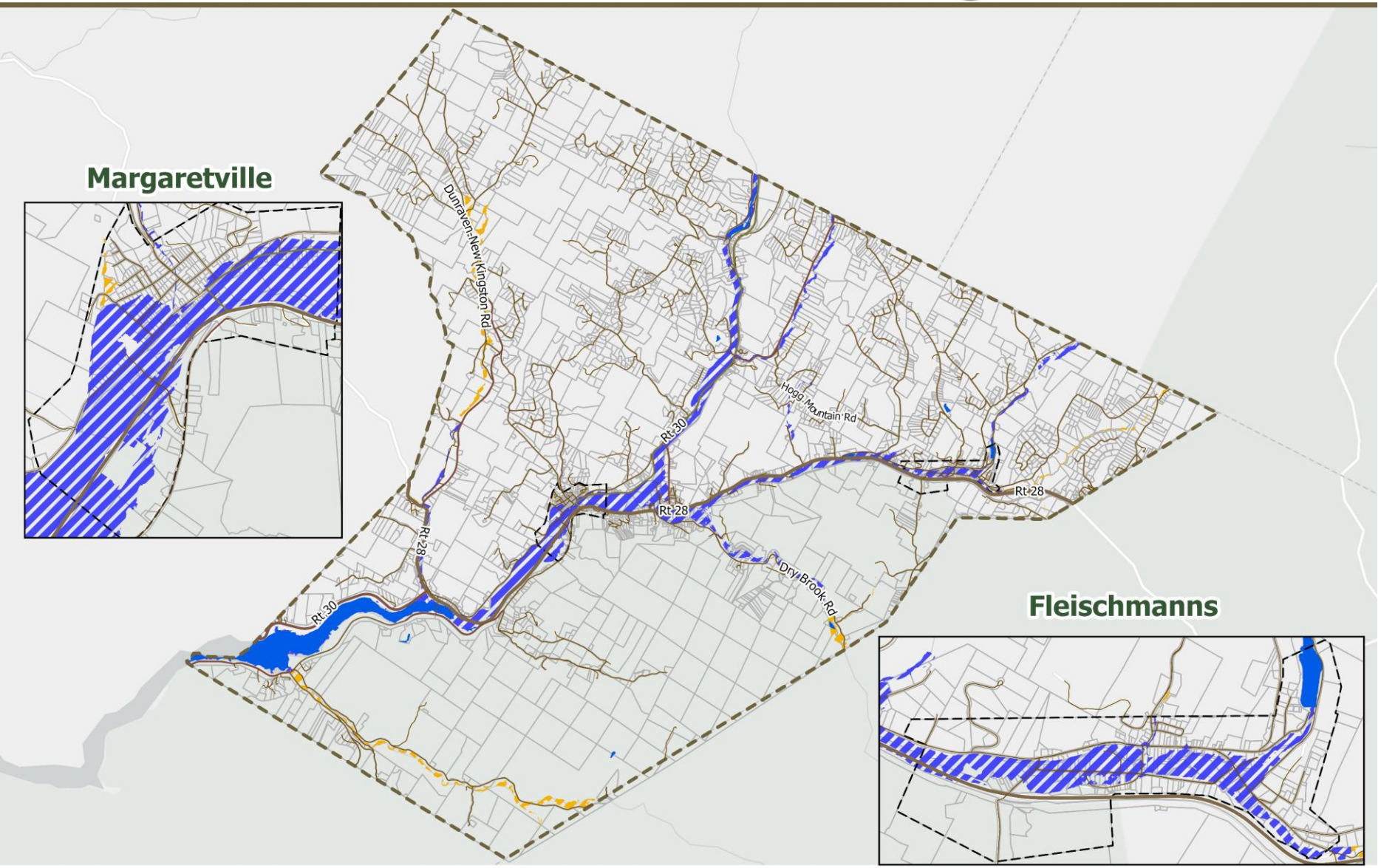


- Public improvements on public property are easier for municipalities to carry out compared to those on private property, as there are fewer barriers to beginning improvement projects
- In Middletown, most of these lands lie in forest preserve lands, which limits the scope of possible projects utilizing the land

Map revised following Kick-off meeting

Flood Hazard

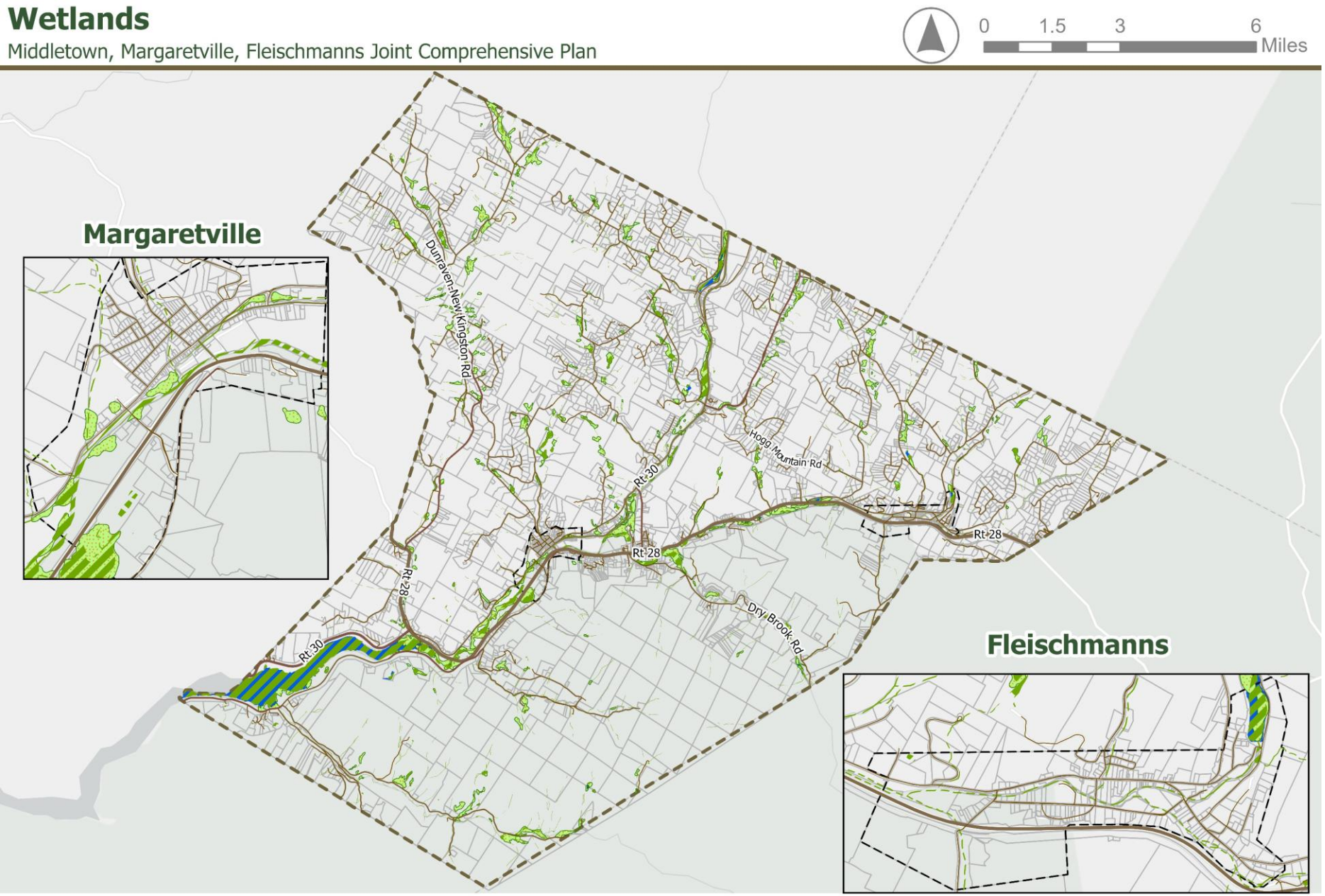
Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan



- According to Delaware County's 2013 Hazard Mitigation Plan, total land area exposure to flood is approximately 4.1% of Middletown, 48.6% of Margaretville, and 19.4% of Fleischmanns
- With the NYS Climate Impact Assessment predicting heavier precipitation events, incorporating efforts to protect the community from the impacts of flooding should be incorporated into the plan

Wetlands

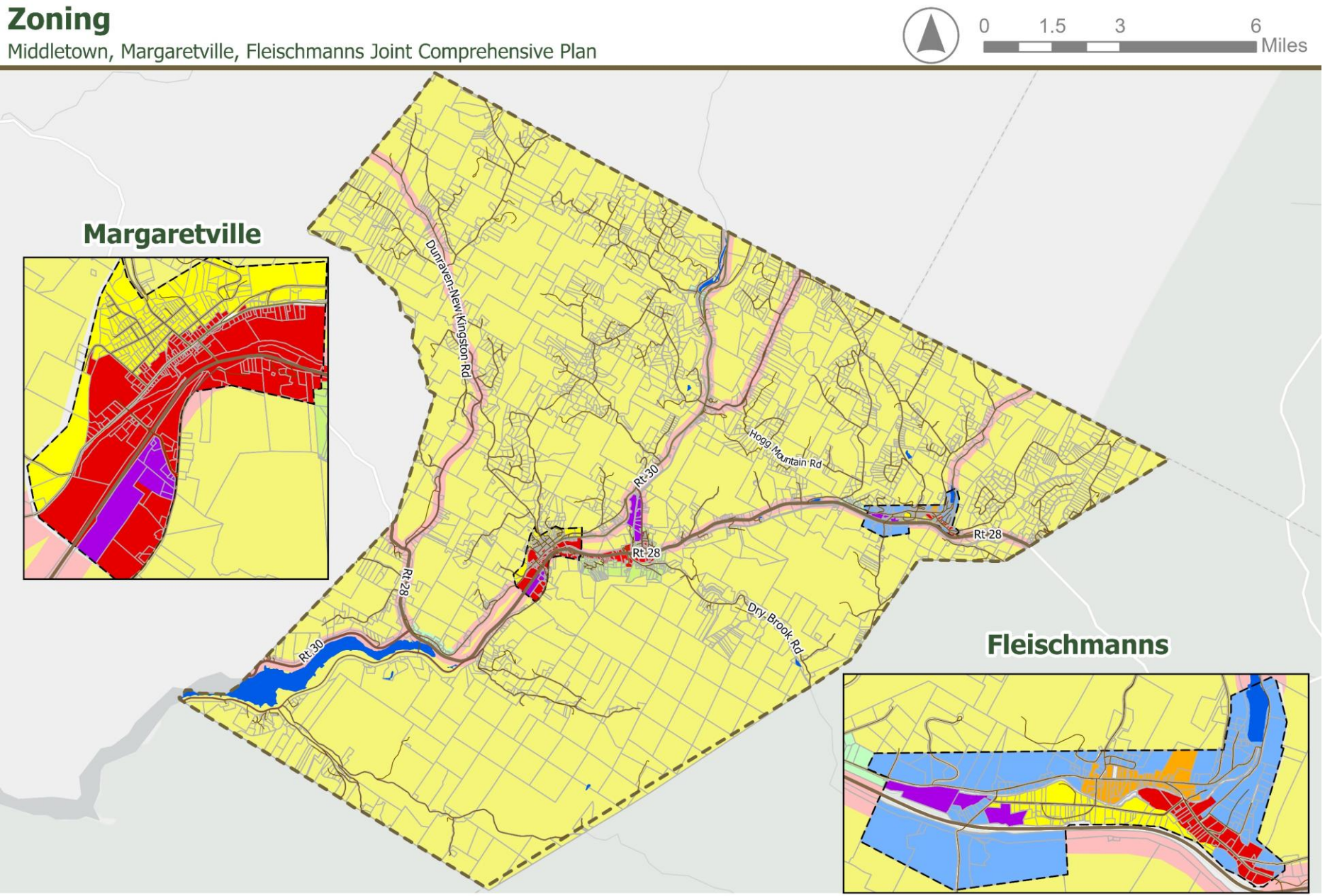
Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan



- Article 24, the NYS Freshwater Wetlands Act, was amended in 2022 with provisions going into effect in 2025 and 2028 that bring some additional freshwater wetlands in the area under the jurisdiction of NYSDEC.
- In 2028, the threshold for state-regulated wetlands will be reduced from 12.4 acres to 7.4 acres, potentially bringing more wetlands under NYSDEC's jurisdiction.

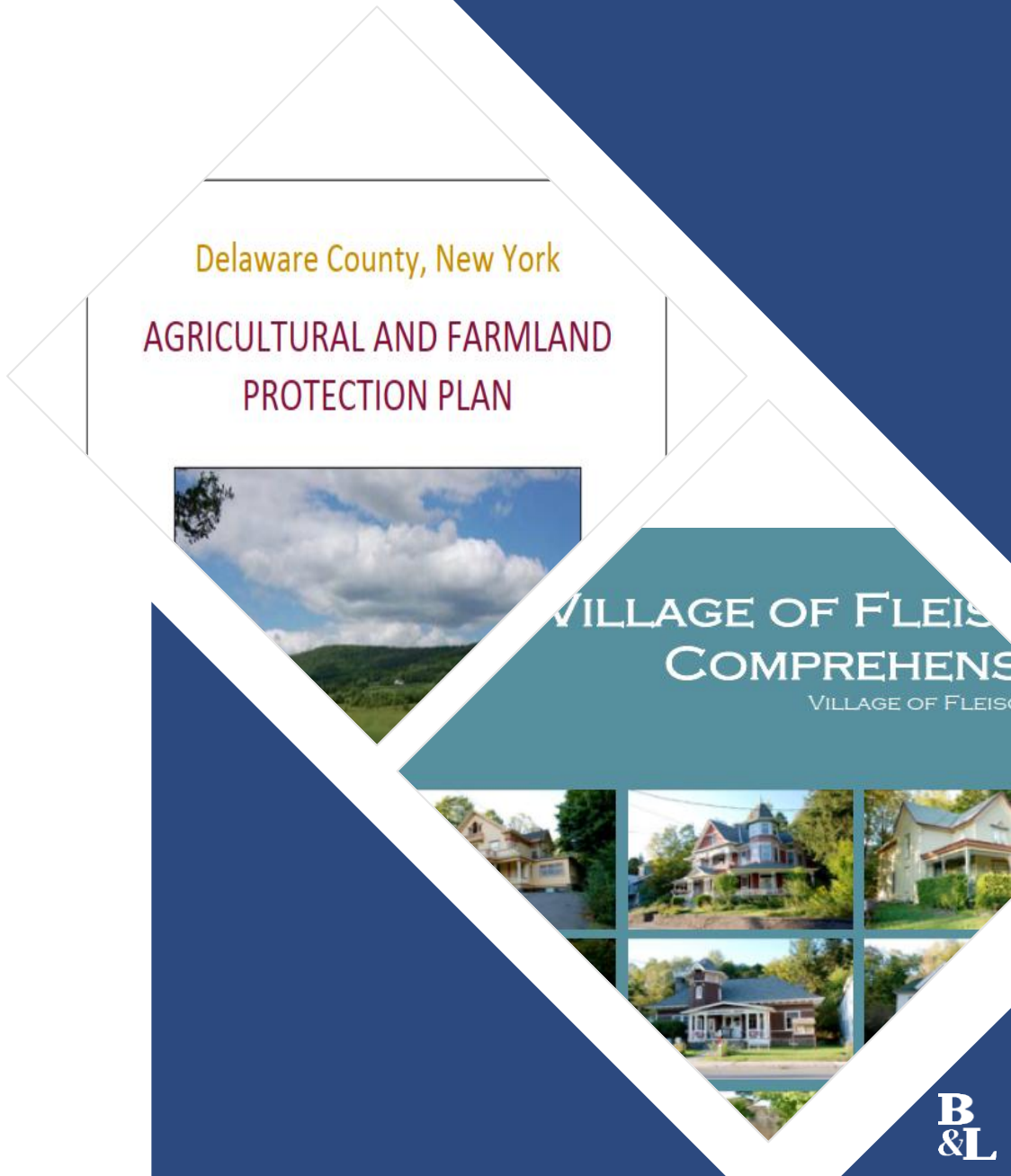
Zoning

Middletown, Margaretville, Fleischmanns Joint Comprehensive Plan



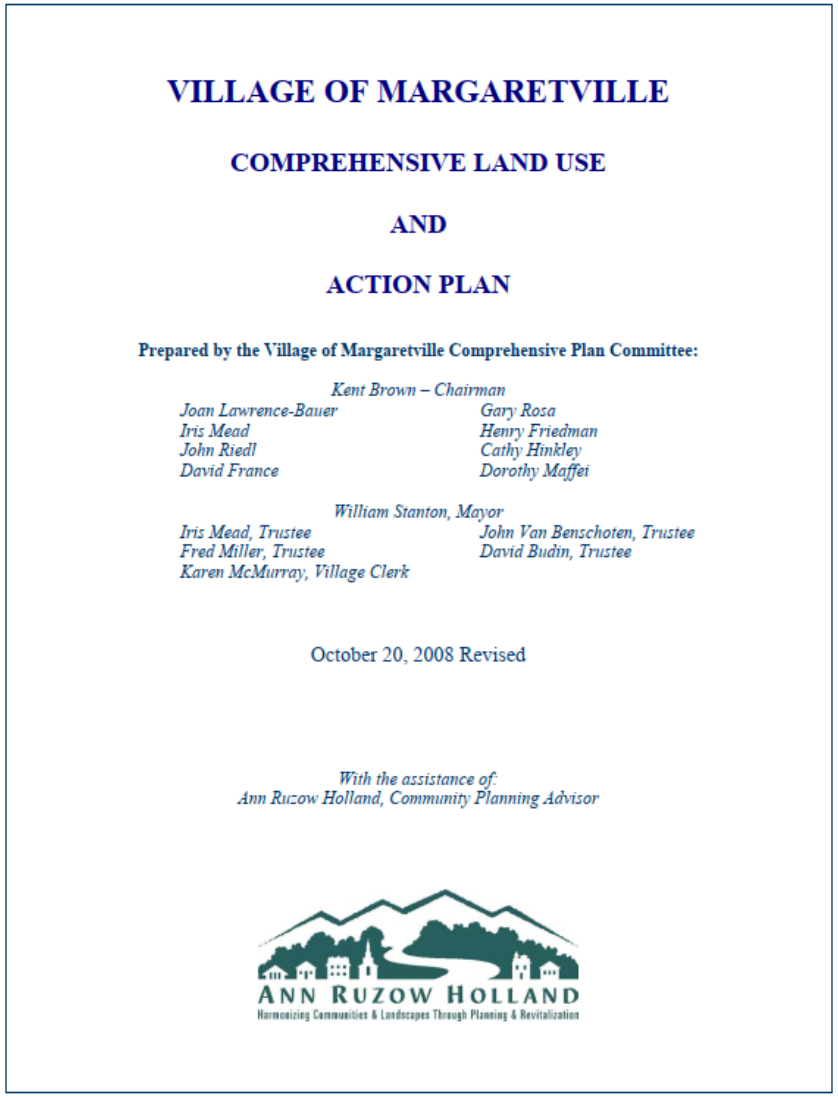
- Current zoning patterns focus commercial and industrial development in the Village Centers and the Hamlet of Arkville

Previous Planning Efforts



2008 Margaretville Comprehensive Plan

- Large focus on economic resurgence in the Village
- Goal Categories:
  - Economic Revitalization
  - Housing
  - Protect Cultural and Historic Resources
  - Promote Recreation
  - Protect Natural Resources
  - Smart Growth
  - Community Character
  - Transportation
  - Utilities



VILLAGE OF MARGARETVILLE

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE

AND

ACTION PLAN

Prepared by the Village of Margaretville Comprehensive Plan Committee:

Kent Brown – Chairman

Joan Lawrence-Bauer
Iris Mead
John Riedl
David France
Gary Rosa
Henry Friedman
Cathy Hinkley
Dorothy Maffei

William Stanton, Mayor

Iris Mead, Trustee
Fred Miller, Trustee
Karen McMurray, Village Clerk
John Van Benschoten, Trustee
David Budin, Trustee

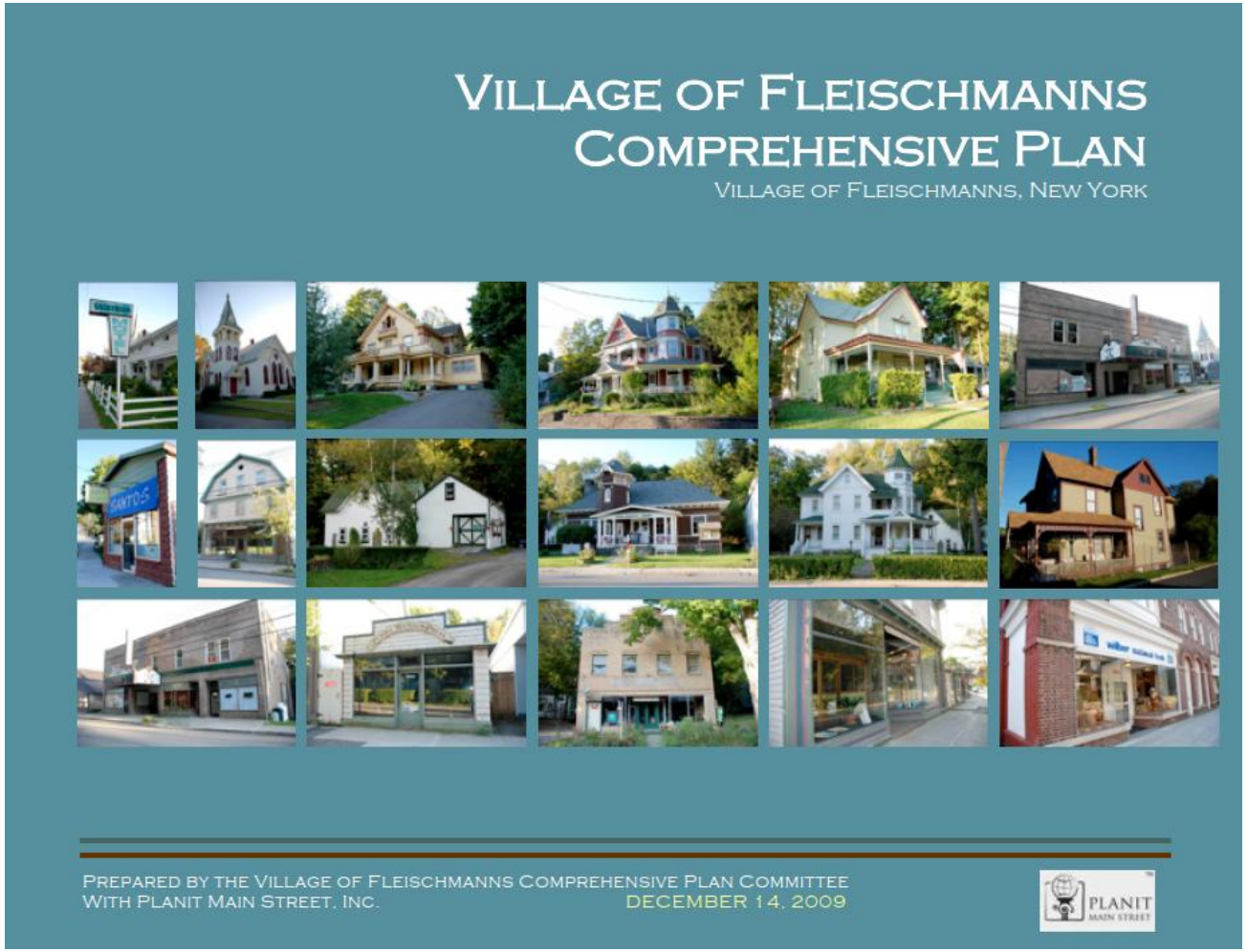
October 20, 2008 Revised

With the assistance of:
Ann Ruzow Holland, Community Planning Advisor

ANN RUZOW HOLLAND
Harmonizing Communities & Landscapes Through Planning & Revitalization

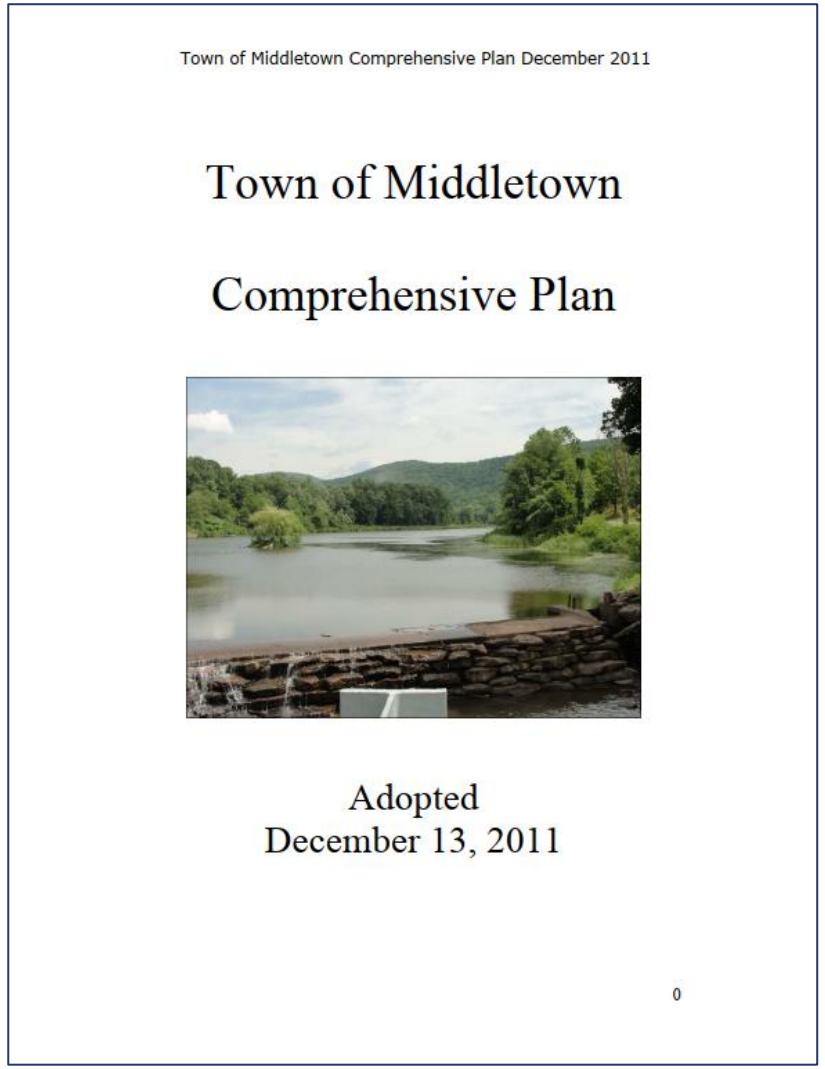
2009 Fleischmanns Comprehensive Plan

- In-depth overview of the Village's existing conditions and challenges
- Good recommendations for challenges, but lacked clear identification of the Village's overarching goals and objectives for future development



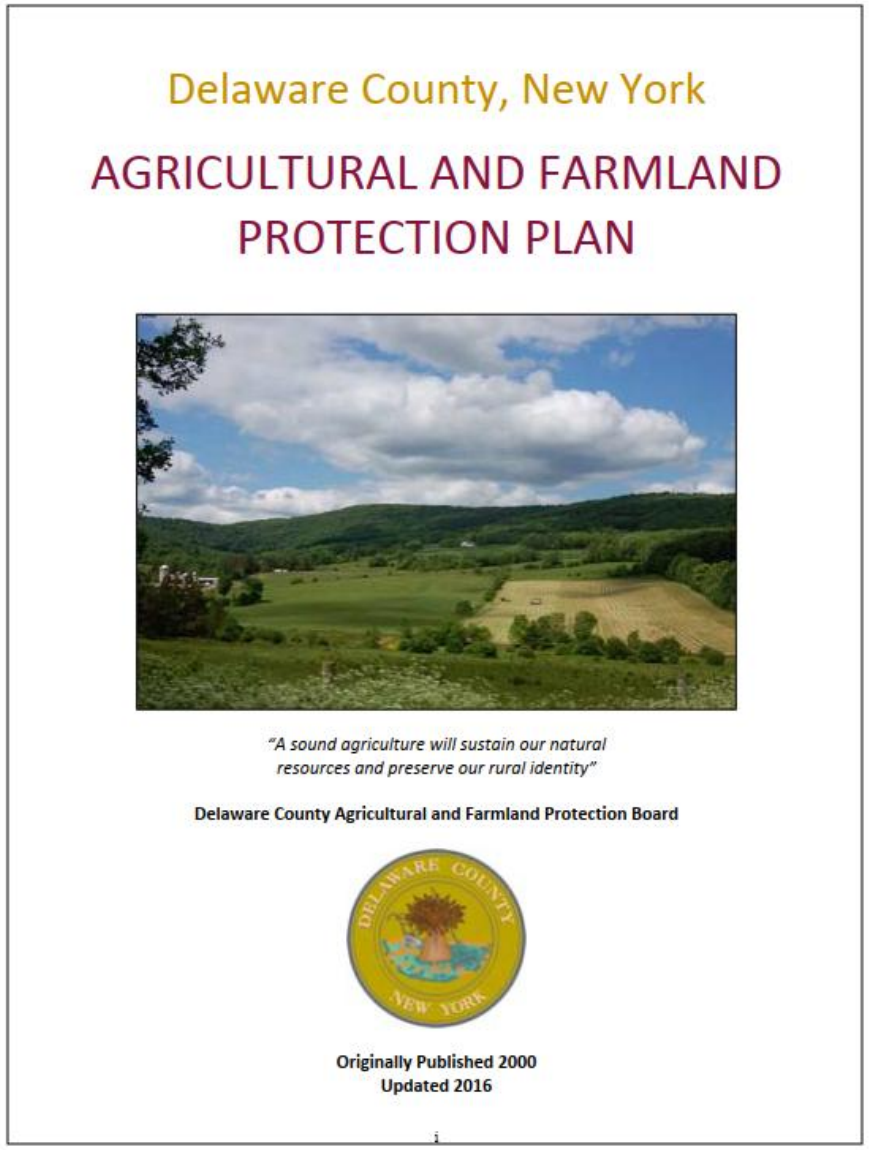
2011 Middletown Comprehensive Plan

- Major Town Goal & General Land Use Goals
- Goal Categories:
  - Quality of Life
  - Environmental Conservation
  - Residential Areas
  - Commercial Areas
  - Water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure
  - Transportation
  - Recreation
  - Aging in Place
  - Hazard Mitigation



2016 Delaware County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan

- Principal focus on protecting and supporting farmers and agricultural land in the County
  - Identifies resources and programs that can be leveraged to ensure farmers maintain a profitable business while protecting natural resources
- Identifies watershed protection issues


Delaware County, New York

AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN

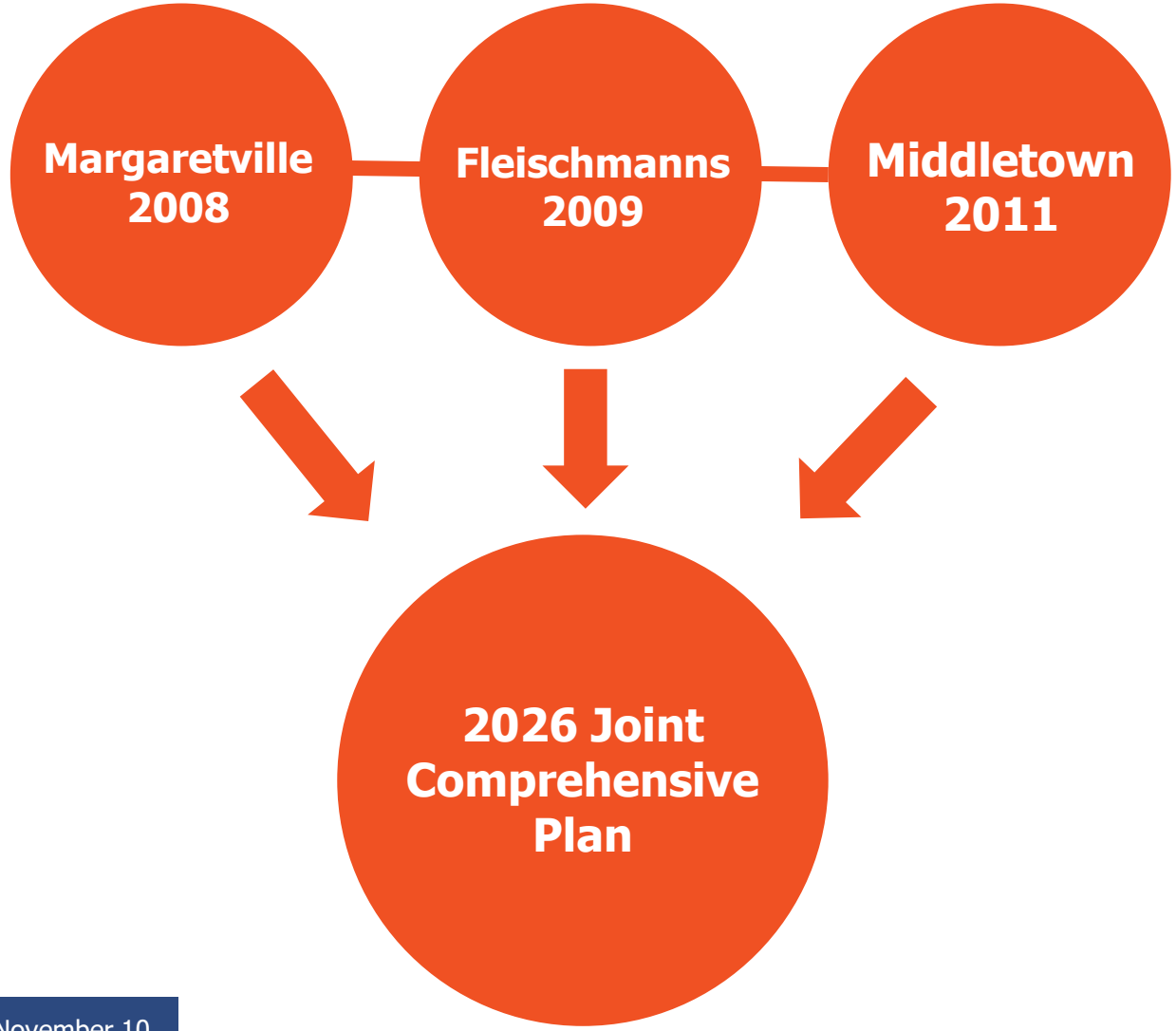
"A sound agriculture will sustain our natural resources and preserve our rural identity"

Delaware County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

Originally Published 2000
Updated 2016

i

Previous Plan Takeaways



- The previous comprehensive plans can serve as launching points for development of a new vision for joint plan
  - They also provide insight into existing shared priority areas (retaining population, housing, job opportunities, recreation, natural resources, etc.);
- We can learn from any unsuccessful objectives and actions
  - Understanding the barriers that prevented full implementation of objectives will be crucial to ensuring the success of the joint plan.

Discussion / SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



Discussion

- **Vision**
  - Should each municipality have its own separate goal, or should they share a single joint goal?
  - "In 2050…Middletown, Margaretville, and Fleischmanns are…"
- **Goal / SWOT Topics**
  - Housing
  - Transportation
  - Economic Development
  - Infrastructure (water, sewer)
  - Agriculture
  - Parks & Recreation
  - Natural Resources
  - Waterfront

Next Steps

B&L Team

- Draft Community Profile & Previous Planning Efforts
- Draft Community Participation Plan
- Draft Survey Questions
- Launch Project Website

Committee

- Review Community Profile
- Review Survey Questions
- Build Stakeholder List

Next Committee Meeting

- CPUC - December 2025
- Public Information Meeting - January 2026