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"From the Supervisor" column  
Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

**From the Supervisor**  
**Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith**

**Comprehensive Plan is a Blueprint for our Future – Public Hearings Sept. 3 & 17**

***Plan Includes Focus on Senior Housing***

After an extensive and exhaustive process, Pittsford's Comprehensive Plan Update is ready for final review by our residents. We've arranged two public hearings, both during regularly scheduled Town Board meetings on September 3 and September 17 at 6:00pm in the public meeting room at Town Hall, 11 South Main Street.

A Comprehensive Plan represents a municipality's fundamental land-use planning document. It represents a vision and roadmap for the community's future. It provides the legal basis for our zoning laws and future changes to them. Land-use planning can touch on broader issues. Zoning and land use can relate to environmental outcomes, to the types of housing to be built, to decisions affecting recreational opportunities, to where you can find a grocery store, to cite just a few examples. So its effects can be wide ranging. Yet as professional planners such as our consultants for the Comprehensive Plan frequently remind us: it's a land-use planning document. Not a catalog of every policy or policy initiative that the planners, Town staff, the Steering Committee or our residents consider necessary or desirable.

The proposed final draft of the Plan is posted online and available for your review. You'll find it at [www.pittsfordplan.com](http://www.pittsfordplan.com). The Town set up this website in 2015 to provide residents with continually updated information. And also to provide a convenient way for residents to share their advice and ideas about the Plan with our consultants and the citizens' Steering Committee who worked on the Plan. We wanted to make sure that residents who couldn't attend the public workshops could make their views known.

In drafting an updated Comprehensive Plan our citizens' Steering Committee, our consultant and Town staff sought to:

- Analyze the existing conditions in the Town
- Define and articulate the Town's goals and vision for our future
- Determine the means to accomplishing these goal and give life to that vision

**Plan Components**

Our Comprehensive Plan Update contains a section on community character, including residential development, mixed-use and commercial development, design standards, streetscapes, scenic corridors and areas in the Town, historic resources, the canal front, agriculture, natural resources and environmentally-conscious infrastructure. It considers open-space management, managing traffic, pedestrian safety, promoting healthy living through recreational opportunities and environmentally-friendly practices. It notes current and future opportunities for collaborative partnerships.

**Housing for the Senior Years**

A central goal of mine, in approaching the process of updating our Comprehensive Plan, has been to address the needs and interests of our entire population – including people in their retirement years or approaching them. To that end, I pushed for a provision in our draft Comprehensive Plan that explicitly states as a goal encouraging housing styles in demand by people who want to retire here, and at a broader price range than is currently available in Pittsford. The idea is to make it easy for residents to

“age-in-place” – right here in Pittsford – in comfort and in housing that suits your way of life. This is among the central priorities for me and my Administration in thinking about future planning. The Town’s draft Comprehensive Plan Update calls for zoning law changes to make it easier, in places where some kind of housing is going to be built, to build housing attractive for retirement living.

As we move forward, as the Town refines its zoning laws on the basis of the Comprehensive Plan, we can explore provisions such as changes to setbacks, lot sizes, building height requirements and other details to help make new patio homes, and other housing styles desired by people in their retirement years, available at a broader price range than what might be available today. Pittsford should be a place where lifelong living is a realistic option for everyone.

Our recent resident survey showed strong public support for this concept. When asked what was most important to making Pittsford even more conducive to living well during retirement years, the largest response (over 27%) was housing cost. Transportation and alternatives to driving (also addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update) was next in importance (16%) and housing options (13%) rounded out the top three answers. While 28% of respondents were unsure, 52% of respondents supported the development and construction of more patio homes, senior-living apartments and assisted-living facilities in Pittsford to increase housing options for residents aged 55 and older.

Post-retirement housing represents just one facet of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update. I urge you to visit our plan website at [www.pittsfordplan.com](http://www.pittsfordplan.com) to fully review the draft plan in its entirety and then let us know your thoughts. If you cannot attend either of the public hearings on September 3 and 17, please feel free to share your views with me. You may stop in to see me at Town Hall or contact me via email at [bsmith@townofpittsford.org](mailto:bsmith@townofpittsford.org) or by phone at 248-6220.

Our efforts to date to engage our residents for this purpose – the dedicated Plan website, news releases, our eNews, a direct mailing to all households for the public comment sessions and workshops, Town social media, the Town website, Supervisor’s columns and more – underscore the importance to the Town of obtaining the views of as broad a representation of Pittsford residents as possible.

The importance of this should be self-evident. It’s important as well because, for a comprehensive plan to be truly comprehensive, we need to hear not just from those with a passionate interest in a single issue, or in a narrow agenda, as valid and important as the subject of either may be, but from our residents who have more general interest in the variety of topics involved in a comprehensive plan.

My thanks to our citizens’ Steering Committee who gave their time so freely to this thorough process. And thanks as well to all of you who have made time to participate in our Comprehensive Planning process, whether by attending a meeting or sending along your comments. We look forward to hearing your further comments and finalizing this plan of such importance to Pittsford’s future.