

January 29, 2026 Meeting Minutes Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC)

CPC Chair Chris Foss led this monthly meeting at Caroga Town Hall from 6:05 to 8:00 PM. Members present were: Chris Foss, Rachel Simonds, Anita Long, Jim Hale, Doug Purcell, and Jeremy Manning. Dave Cummings was unable to attend, and Kim Walker has been elected to the Town Board. Also present were EDR Senior Planner/Project Manager Susan Caruvana, EDR Planner Patrick O'Shea, Town Supervisor Jack Glenn, Supervisor Secretary & Assessor Leigh Anne Loucks, and Town Clerk Linda Gilbert.

1. Prior Meeting Minutes

- The Committee voted to approve October, November, and December 2025 meeting minutes. (See <https://carogacomprehensiveplan.wordpress.com/meeting-minutes/>)

2. Grant Updates

- NYS DOS Secretary of State Walter T. Mosley sent a letter to the Caroga Town Supervisor about the Town's EPF Smart Growth Community Planning Program Grant Round 15 CFA (#151664). Pending OSC approval, NYS DOS Office of Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure (OPDCI) will follow-up about the contract terms and conditions (i.e., work plan, MWBE goals, etc.).
- Reply went to OPD@dos.ny.gov for "SGCP Inquiry for CFA #151664" to notify of this 1/29 meeting.
- We await assignment of a **NYS DOS Project Manager (PM)** to revise and finalize a consultant RFP.
- The CPC has seen examples of other Town's consultant RFPs for Smart Growth comprehensive plans.
- Input about the draft RFP have been requested from the Comprehensive Plan Committee, 2025 Town Board, 2026 Town Board, Town Clerk, and Fulton County Planning. Note was made about the draft RFP not being shared publicly or released until it is edited and finalized with DOS.
- The Town of Caroga has been designated a **Pro-Housing Community**. Thank you to Leigh Anne Loucks for coordinating the paperwork to be part of this valuable program (see <https://hcr.ny.gov/phc>).

3. Planning Process Next Steps

- Chair Chris Foss introduced EDR's Susan Caruvana and Patrick O'Shea and invited them to facilitate discussion of Smart Growth planning next steps and 2011 recommendation review.
- They provided tables to guide the group's productive discussions (see tables on the next pages).
- Susan Caruvana emphasized traditional steps in NYS DOS work plans, noting experience with planning in Glens Falls (Warren Co.), Coxsackie (Greene Co), as well as Gloversville and Northville (Fulton Co).
- She reviewed #1-19 itemized steps or DOS "Tasks" (#1-4 Pre-Contract; #5-19 Contract Work Plan).
- She addressed questions about the **Public Participation Plan** (PPP). We aim for wide accessibility, adapted to residents' needs. The draft PPP will be reviewed/revise to align with DOS best practices. For example, events in 2026 will include flyers, interviews, focus groups, and workshops, including "information gathering" and "community visioning" (e.g., with maps, boards, sticky note input, etc.).
- While waiting for the DOS PM, the CPC can do two things. First, for prior **Local/Regional Plan Review**, the CPC can review and revise the list of initiatives and summarize them in relation to the DOS Template Checklist for Smart Growth concept alignment. Second, for the **Profile**, CPC can compile existing and preliminary data that has been collected and summarized to date, so that the consultant can prepare the Community Profile, including maps.

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Phase 2: TOWN OF CAROGA COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS (2026-2027)			
DOS Task	Title	Description	Next Steps
1	Project Initiation Meeting	Project kick-off meeting with DOS Project Manager (PM) to review Work Program.	DOS Project Manager will schedule meeting after contract has been signed.
2	Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC)	Create a CPC.	CPC has been established.
3	Procurement of Consultant (if applicable)	Prepare RFP, establish Selection Committee, designate contractor.	EDR can assist with draft RFP. Edits might need to be made after DOS contract award is made.
4	Subcontract and Compliance with Local Procurement Requirements	Enter into a subcontract with the preferred consultant.	This takes place after DOS contract is signed.
5	CPC Meetings	Establish CPC meeting schedule.	Continue to meet as needed.
6	Community Participation Plan	Prepare a community participation plan that identifies roles, responsibilities, timelines, and logistics for interviews with stakeholders, community tours, public meetings, public hearings, and a webpage with links to announcements, presentations, and documents prepared over the course of the project. Include strategies for engaging hard-to-reach populations.	Review existing Public Participation Plan and, if necessary, revise to meet DOS workplan requirements. This task can be completed after the Town receives the DOS Work Plan.
7	Community Survey and Stakeholder Interviews	Develop a community survey to obtain an understanding of local conditions and issues and provide opportunity for public input. Identify and interview stakeholders to obtain additional relevant information and suggestions to inform the project.	Discuss with DOS PM whether or not the existing survey can be used to fulfill this task.
8	Review Local and Regional Planning Efforts and Ongoing Initiatives	Review of relevant local and regional planning efforts.	CPC could compile a list of past and current initiatives before the DOS contract is awarded.
9	Community Profile	Finalize community profile, complete with relevant maps, data, and analyses.	Compile existing community profile data that has been collected. The Community Profile, including maps, will be prepared by your consultant.
10	Community Workshops	Conduct two public workshops.	This task will be completed after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.

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11	Draft Comprehensive Plan	Compile a draft plan that includes strategies for Hamlet Infrastructure, Outdoor Recreation, & Economic Development.	This task will be completed after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
12	Review by Caroga Town Board, Comprehensive Plan Committee, and Planning Board	Submit the draft Comprehensive Plan to the local municipal board for review, comments, and recommendations to be addressed and incorporated into the plan prior to public review and initiation of the State Environmental Quality Review process.	This task will be completed after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
13	State Environmental Quality Review & Public Hearing	Prepare materials necessary for compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).	This task will be completed by your Consultant Team after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
14	Fulton County Planning Board Review & Adirondack Park Agency Review	Submit the draft Plan to the county planning board for review and recommendation pursuant to Section 239-m of New York State General Municipal Law and address all comments received.	This task will be completed by your Consultant Team after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
15	Final Comprehensive Plan	Compile Final Comprehensive Plan and submit to DOS for review.	This task will be completed after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
16	Public Hearing and Local Adoption	Conduct a public hearing on adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, which shall be noticed in a local newspaper and publicized through other means and made available for public review at the office of the town clerk, local public library, and municipal website.	This task will be completed after the Town has entered into a contract with DOS.
17	Final Project Summary Report and Measurable Results	Final project closeout documents must be submitted within 60 days of the project completion date.	This task will be completed after the Town has finished the Plan.
18	MWBE Reporting	Comply with minority and women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) reporting requirements for all payments made to MWBE subcontractors using State funds.	Once the Town has a DOS contract, quarterly MWBE quarterly reports will need to be submitted.
19	Project Status Reports	Submit project status reports every June 30th and December 31st on the form provided, documenting work accomplished, the status of all tasks in the work plan, the schedule of completion for remaining tasks, and any problems encountered.	Once the Town has a DOS contract, biannual Project Status Reports will be required.

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- Jeremy Manning asked to walk through the process of redeveloping a **Draft Comprehensive Plan**. Susan Caruvana elaborated traditional sections of a DOS-funded Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan.
 - (a) **INTRODUCTION:** (#8) Review prior local/regional plans to prepare an introduction about the planning process and Smart Growth policies, etc. (using the DOS formula for “Intro” deliverables).
 - (b) **PROFILE:** (#9) Give a Snapshot / State of the Town. “This is what Caroga looks like now.” (e.g., i. demographics/history, ii. environment/natural resources, iii. infrastructure/housing, iv. economy).
 - (c) **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT** (#6) “These are all the ways we made sure everyone had opportunities to participate in this plan.” (survey, meetings, open house, workshops) + *Key Findings / So what?*
 - (d) **VISION & RECOMMENDATIONS:** “Spell out ‘buckets’ or policy areas and all the goals in them.” This is thematically grouped. Different places do this differently [e.g., community experience, natural environment, built environment, economy]. This section says, ‘Here’s a vision. Here are goals to support the vision. Here are action items or recommendations to make each happen.’”
 - (e) **FUTURE LAND USE MAP:** Most communities anticipate informing zoning (with the next round of grant funding to redevelop the Zoning Ordinance). This is not the Zoning Map itself, but a more general land use guide. Identify “Character Areas” (e.g., commercial, recreation, residential, etc.)
 - (f) **IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX:** This is not a process meant to have paper sitting on a shelf. We have a recommendation matrix that any Town Council Member can have in their notebook at all times. This might follow 2011 *Plan’s* specific Recommendations: i. *History* [“Community Experience”], ii. *Natural Resources* [i.e., “Natural Environment”], *Government/ Housing* [i.e., “Built Environment”], and “*Economy & Recreation*” [i.e., Economy with a “recreation community” growth pattern].
 - (g) **PROJECT PATHWAYS:** (HOST, PARTNER, FUNDING, PRIORITY, TIMELINE) We then identify people and pathways to get things done. i. We flag a contact person or host — not to do all projects from A to Z — but who can advance a goal, grant applications, or just get a ball rolling. ii. In addition, we identify partners. Who will help the Town, Town Board, and Project Host? Is it the Center for Regional Growth (CRG), Chamber of Commerce, Northern Forest Center, Foundation, Local Business Person, Developer, and so on? iii. We also list potential funding sources (e.g., NY Parks, Mohawk Valley REDC, EFC, etc.). iv. Finally, we work with the Committee to explore priorities and timelines for all of the groups or “buckets”. What is High Priority, Medium Priority, Tertiary Priority? What is Short-Term, Medium-Term, Long-Term. What should be done in the first year after adoption? What is in a one-year time frame? Then you have big projects that will take multiple years and levels. To set a realistic expectation, some things might be long-term projects. So, within the vision and thematic areas, how are goals and recommendations going to get done?
- A follow-up question asked, “To what extent do you draft it looking at specific funding opportunities? So, for example, if you have public feedback strongly in favor of specific projects, then you might be tailoring that particular comprehensive plan around certain funding opportunities to get them done. Is that right? Or is it more of a Venn Diagram with themes, to hit as many as possible? Or is it aligning with regional and local priorities?” The response was, “It’s a combination. 2011 recommendations leave questions about funding. So, yes. Funding is a factor, but not the sole factor.” Planning prepares projects to be feasible, deliverable, and fundable. Planning is thematic and strategic, and it aligns the local and regional visions with goals, recommendations, maps, and pathways in workable ways.

- A question asked, “What is a realistic number of goals for projects in a comprehensive plan?” The response was, “It completely depends on the community and its size and scope. Many times, communities want to move quickly to a specific property: one parcel. We ask, ‘Where do you want to be in 10 years? Will that still be a priority? We take a step back and write broader recommendations. So, in 7 years, if you go back for funding, it can still fit by elaborating a goal and checking that box. When you apply for CFA funds, if you cannot check a box or show alignment with your *Town of Caroga Comprehensive Plan*, then do not bother applying, because it will not make it through the process. Grant applications have to tie back to your comprehensive plan, regional plan, or something to show alignment. We try not to get too ‘in the weeds’ with recommendations, and that is difficult for some to grasp at first. The idea is to be specific, but also to have built-in flexibility over time.”
 - Another clarification asked about the buckets and focus to go from the prior 2011 *Plan* to a new *Town of Caroga Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan*. The 2011 Vision focused on “*Town Center*,” and that fits with Smart Growth and “*Downtown Revitalization*.” It’s a focused *economic* driver that balances *building investments* with *community experience* and *environmental integrity*. Smart Growth can drive community reinvestment and reclaim Caroga as a great destination and attractive place to live, by building on the community character, recreational assets, and dense, mixed-use downtown. Town leaders — including our Supervisor — want to position our town for Downtown Revitalization, and the big winner with grants is the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). So, do we want the Comprehensive Plan to be a setup for a DRI, and if so, how do we work to define the downtown area? The response was, “Under economic development, a priority might be Downtown Revitalization as a recommendation, with a goal to apply for a DRI/NY Forward grant to secure funding....as an example, see Ticonderoga.... Go after it. It’s a good program.”
 - The unique project aspect is: “*Strategies for Public Infrastructure, Outdoor Recreation, & Economic Development*.” That’s about DRI setup. The 2011 Plan did not include our community centers and gathering places, most notably the Golf Clubhouse and Sherman’s Park, but also Town Hall and Highway Garage. Those are our “infrastructure projects.” They’re right on the verge of being shovel ready and have CT Male, EDP, TRW engineering plans in place, so we want those engineers to contribute and get that into the Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan. Those and other projects are a unique set of DRI opportunities. It’s a special planning effort, with engineering subcontracts. It’s a separate step in the Work Plan.
 - Can we cast a wide net with downtown? So, can Wheelerville Town Hall and Golf Course can be downtown, along with Sherman’s, Vrooman’s, other businesses, and the recreation projects, instead of only the current “Town Center Zoning District.” We need a larger area within the APA Hamlet area.
 - Susan said, “There is very specific guidance, and the DOS will guide you. It needs to be compact and walkable. There are certain criteria for the boundary with DRI and NY Forward. So, even if you do not currently agree exactly, you will get a lot of help from NYS DOS. If you go through the process and get public feedback with the workshops and so on and also have DOS, that makes a strong plan and CFA.”
 - The group went through the rest of the steps in the DOS work plan, to help everyone see those.
 - The estimated time frame for the project is approximately 16 months after the consultant is in place.
 - As an example, Patrick O’Shea just made live this plan: <https://www.coxsackiecompplan.com> .
- 4. 2011 Comprehensive Plan Recommendations Status Matrix**
- Next, is an exercise to think about 2011 recommendations. If you did it, then great; move on. Some might not be relevant, so they might not go forward. Some are still relevant, but need rewording.

Town of Caroga 2011 Comprehensive Plan Recommendations Status Matrix

Recommendation	Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant	
[CAROGA EXPERIENCE] Historic (page 43) [see https://www.carogamuseum.org].					
A	Develop safe, self-guided trails of the Wheelerville Tannery Site and provide a brochure describing its history. [carogamuseum.org]		P		S
B	Expand the Caroga Museum to include early settlers and industry.		P		S
C	Promote the preservation and use of all areas of historical significance, including Nick Stoner Inn, Sherman's, and the Kane Mountain Fire Tower. [https://carogaarts.org/reimagining-campaign]		P		S
D	Promote the Town's architectural heritage, identify historical buildings and significant "little great camps," and use that heritage to establish a visual image of the Town that can be encouraged in all its buildings. [see https://aarch.org/tour/caroga-lake/]		P		S
E	Encourage volunteers to present workshops on our natural history, including geology, forest, wildlife, flowering plants, etc.		P		S
[BUILT ENVIRONMENT] Town Government (page 50) [2021 EDP Preliminary Engineering Report for a Caroga Lake Wastewater Collection & Treatment System & EFC Septic Replacement Fund for Caroga Lakes					
A	The Town of Caroga should retain the services of a Professional Engineer to prepare a plan to construct and operate a municipal sewer collection and treatment system for Town Center. Upon completion of this plan, the Town Board should seek funding to implement the Plan. The Town should seek available funding opportunities that provide reimbursement for the study and constructing the municipal sewer collection and treatment system.		P		S
B	The Town of Caroga should create a full-time Code Enforcement Officer position to better enforce the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention Code and the Town of Caroga's land use laws and regulations that are important to implementing the Vision contained in this Comprehensive Plan.	I			S
C	The Town of Caroga must strengthen its enforcement of existing codes to keep all properties safe and physically attractive.				S

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Recommendation		Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
D	The Town of Caroga should encourage the development of strategically located towers to improve cell/smart phone service In May 2025, the APA approved the "Certificate for Certain Modifications of Existing Wireless Towers or Base Stations" in the Town of Caroga (see https://apa.ny.gov/files/permits/issued/2025/05/P2025-0103-GPermit-Final.pdf). In 2025, Frontier installed a fiber-optic network in the Town of Caroga, and in 2026 Frontier is joining Verizon. High-speed broadband is now available.		P		S
E	The Town of Caroga should provide an increased law enforcement presence in the Town to make the Town of Caroga a safer place to live and do business.		P		S
Economy (page 57)					
A	The Town should create a Town Center to help create a strong tourism/RECREATION-based economy. " DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION "		P		S
B	The Town of Caroga should promote and strengthen its tourism/RECREATION-based economy by providing the following:		P		S
	• Town of Caroga Public Beach		P		S
	• Public Parking Area(s)		P		S
	• Public Restroom(s)		P		S
	• Overnight Accommodations/Lodging		P		S
	• Cross Country Ski Trails	I			S
[NATURAL ENVIRONMENT] Recreational/Natural Resources					
B. Water Quality (pages 65-66) [https://Caroga.town https://townofcaroga.com/lakes/lmp.pdf]					
1	The Town Board should develop and implement an Annual Water Quality Testing Program. The program should include testing the water quality in the lakes the Town develops Watershed Management Plans for. Parameters to be tested for should, at a minimum, include: temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, turbidity, total suspended solids and fecal coliform bacteria. The annual test results would allow the Town to monitor and track water quality in these lakes and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Watershed Management Plans. https://www.canadalakesconservation.com/water-quality/	I			S

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	Recommendation	Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
2	<p>The Town Board should hire a professional engineer to work with the Town to prepare and adopt Watershed Management Plans for each of the following lakes: https://townofcaroga.com/lakes/lmp.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. Caroga Lake 	I			S
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W. Caroga Lake 	I			S
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Lake System [Canada, Green, West, Lily, Stewarts L.] 		P		S
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Lake (see above) 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pine Lake 		P		S
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. Stoner Lake 		P		S
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W. Stoner Lake 		P		S
3	<p>Each Watershed Management Plan should, at a minimum, include and address the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Define watershed. b. Identify existing development in each watershed. c. Identify sources of nutrient, sedimentation and pollution. d. Calculate current amounts of nutrients, pollutants, sedimentation flowing into each lake. e. Calculate maximum amounts each lake should be receiving. f. Develop plan for managing future flows into each lake. g. Other. 		P		S
4	<p>The Town Board should put into place a mechanism that provides the Town Code Enforcement Officer with the authority to review and approve all proposed conversions of seasonal dwelling units into permanent units. https://townofcaroga.com/ordinances/zoning.htm</p>	I			S
5	<p>Given the importance of the Town's lakes and shorelines, the Town's Land Use Regulations should be revised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define docks and boathouses. • Limit the size and number of shoreline structures. • Identify landscaping and grading requirements for shoreline structures. • Identify requirements for maintenance of shoreline vegetation. 	I			S

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Recommendation		Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
[ECONOMY ...with a "recreation community growth pattern" (see 1978 Caroga Land Use Plan)]					
D. Recreation (pages 66-67)					
1	Recreational Advisory Committee:				
	a. The Town Board should establish a Recreational Advisory Committee consisting of Town Board members and the public.		P		S
	b. The Recreation Committee should meet on a regular basis to review and discuss recreational issues, needs and opportunities and provide recommendations and policy guidance to the Town Board regarding recreational resources in the Town of Caroga.		P		S
2	Develop the following new recreational facilities:				
	a. Town of Caroga Visitor Center located in Town Center. Planned Golf Clubhouse & Sherman's Park are "Community Centers"		P		S
	b. Town of Caroga Multi-Purpose Recreational Area located in Town Center. The Multi-Purpose Recreational Area should include: [No Town Center RV Park, Dump Station, Sport Fields]			N	
	• Park. {Sherman's Park?-Yes}		P		S
	• Soccer Field				
	• Baseball Field				
	• Tennis Court				
	• Basketball Court				
	• Skateboard Park				
	• Ice Skating Rink (Sherman's Park in 2026)		P		S
	• Picnic Area. (Sherman's Park recently)		P		S
	c. Town of Caroga Boat Launch on West Caroga Lake in Town Center. (East Caroga Lake Marina at a different location)			N	
	d. Town of Caroga Public Beach. (DEC Campground & Pine Lake)		P		S
	e. Kayaking/Canoeing/Paddle Boating on Mead Creek.			N	
	f. Recreational trails on Town-owned properties surrounding the Nick Stoner Golf Course. https://www.wheelervilletrails.com		P		S

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Recommendation		Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
3	Promote the Town's existing recreational/natural resources to attract permanent residents and tourists by: https://northernforest.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Attracting_New_Residents_to_the_Adirondacks.pdf				
	a. Annually publish a brochure describing the Town's Recreational/Natural Resources including the many opportunities for fishing in its lakes.		P		S
	b. Annually publish a Special Events brochure identifying the number and type of special events that will be held in the Town during a year. https://www.44lakes.com		P		S
	c. Continue to promote and support the Glenn H. Harris Park and Pavilion.		P		S
	d. Work with the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) Unit Management Planning (UMP) to develop snowmobile trails that avoid roads and open water.		P		S
	e. Work with DEC's UMP to create new hiking and cross-country ski trails.		P		S
	f. Work with DEC's UMP to designate biking trails.		P		S
	g. Work with DEC to promote the stocking of fish in the Town's lakes.	I			S
	h. The Town of Caroga should designate certain Town roads as bike trails. Connect NY-10 as a route on Hamilton Co. Maps				S
	i. The Town of Caroga should undertake a project to dredge, deepen and maintain a deep enough channel between East and West Caroga Lakes to provide safe boat access between both Lakes.				S
[BUILT ENVIRONMENT]					
Housing (page 74)					
A	The Town should encourage the development of housing in the Town Center to support the growth and development of the Town Center. https://northernforest.org/our-work/strengthening-communities/investing-in-place/		P		S
B	The Town should promote and encourage the development of diverse housing to meet the diverse needs of existing residents and to encourage others to move to the Town.		P		S

Additional Items

	Recommendations	Implemented	Partly Realized	Not Relevant	Still Relevant
Strategies for Public Infrastructure, Outdoor Recreation, & Economic Development					
1A	Sherman’s Park Community Center p.2 Town Center “near and around ... Sherman’s...Park”		P		S
2A	Road Reconfiguration (“Complete Streets”) p.5 abandon S. Shore Rd at Sherman’s & reconfigure Bath Ave.		P		S
3A	Streetscapes (“Complete Streets”) p.6 widen NY-10/29A for sidewalks, bike lanes, landscape, etc.				S
4A	Bike Trails & Connections (Wheelerville Trails) p.7 build bike paths & infrastructure, including designated lanes/paths to downtown (e.g., DEC Campground, etc)		P		S
5A	Municipal Community Facilities (Clubhouse / Highway Garage / Town Hall) p.26-27, p. 40 “engineering evaluations” & needs to be addressed		P		S
6A	Fire Protection: Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company p. 44 “contracts with the Town” (Fire District)		P		S
7A	Downtown Revitalization p.57 “Town Center to create a strong...economy”		P		S

5. Action Items

- **Consultant RFP.** Comments are welcome. Please send input and edits to CPC Secretary. DOS will edit.
- **Local/Regional Plan Review.** CPC members will review & revise the list of relevant local and regional plans, and Susan Caruvana will share the DOS Template Checklist for Smart Growth Alignment.
- **Town Profile.** CPC members will pull together basic information and data available to date.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be 6:00 PM Thursday, February 26, 2026 at Caroga Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita McMartin Long

CPC Member and Secretary

ComprehensivePlan@TownOfCaroga.com