

**Town of Willsboro, Essex County, New York
Notice of Completion of Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement
Notice of Combined SEQRA Public Hearing and Town Adoption Public Hearing
Action: Adoption of a Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan**

Type 1 Action: Adoption of a Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan for the Town of Willsboro, Essex County, New York

Location: Town of Willsboro Essex County, New York

Lead Agency and Contact Person:

Town of Willsboro
5 Farrell Road, PO Box 370, Willsboro, NY 12996
Edward P. Hatch, Town Supervisor
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For Questions or Comments Please Contact and Copy:

James Kinley, Code Enforcement Officer, Town of Willsboro
5 Farrell Road, PO Box 370 Willsboro, New York
Phone: 518-963-7411 Email: codes@willex.com

AND

Ann Ruzow Holland, Ph.D. Community Planning Advisor and Project Consultant
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Lead Agency Confirmation Date: March 2, 2012

Date of Joint SEQRA/Town Adoption Public Hearing: May 30, 2012

Date of Resolution to Accept DGEIS: May 9, 2012

Date of this NOTICE: May 14, 2012

Close of Comment Consideration Period: June 25, 2012

Document Availability:

Town of Willsboro Town Offices
On Line:

<http://www.townofwillsboro.com/comprehensive-plan.html>

This notice is issued pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation Law. It is also issued pursuant to NYS Town Law Section 272-a 6.(b) (c).

On January 25, 2012, the Town Board made the determination that the Proposed Action is a "Type I" Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The Town Board further determined that they wish to serve as Lead Agency for the purposes of this Action and Pursuant to 6 NYCRR Part 617.6(b) (3) of the Regulations of Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law of New York State the Town Board of the Town of Willsboro declared its intent to serve as Lead Agency for the above recited Action by Resolution adopted by the Town Board on January 25, 2012. This notice serves to publicly acknowledge the Town of Willsboro as Lead Agency on the Action.

On January 25, 2012, the Town also made a Determination of Significance under SEQRA of a Positive Declaration based upon Town Law, review of the Action, SEQRA regulations and said DGEIS. The logic and rationale for the Positive Declaration is described below.

The Town of Willsboro Town Board, acting as SEQRA Lead Agency for the following action, hereby issues notice that on May 9, 2012, the Town completed and accepted a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) pursuant to Article 8 of the State Environmental Conservation Law for purposes of environmental review of the Action described below.

A combined SEQRA and Town Public Hearing pursuant to NYS Town Law § 272-a 6. (b), (c) will be held on Wednesday, May 30, 2012 at 4:00 PM at the Willsboro Town Hall, 1 Farrell Road, Willsboro, New York for the purposes of receiving public comments on the environmental review and pending Town action to adopt the plan.

The public is also invited to provide written comments to the Town of Willsboro on the Draft GEIS and the Action from May 9, 2012 through June 25, 2012. Substantive comments on the DGEIS and responses thereto will be incorporated in the development of the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement.

Summary of Action:

In 2008, pursuant to Town Law, the Town of Willsboro Town Board appointed the Willsboro Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and directed the members to prepare a comprehensive plan as prescribed by New York State Law. Over the course of the ensuing period, the Town-appointed Steering Committee held periodic public meetings, workshops, and hearings. The Town is moving forward with adoption proceedings according to the procedures prescribed by New York State Law, including the required consultations with the Essex County Planning Board and Farmland Protection Board and a full SEQRA review.

The Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan (also known as the comprehensive plan) is a blueprint for the future. The Plan incorporates a multi-year, intensive citizen-driven process that includes a comprehensive inventory and analysis, civic input and envisioning. The committee, with consultations from citizens, government officials, organizations, and experts thoroughly reviewed historical, existing, and future conditions and trends affecting the Town for a complete array of demographic, infrastructure, governmental, land use, economic, social, environmental, historical, and cultural concerns. Surveys were initiated and existing studies were reviewed. Key informant interviews were conducted, and public meetings held

to gather advice and suggestions. Existing conditions and future trends data were utilized to establish a basis and context for analysis on Willsboro's social, economic, and physical features (See Comprehensive Plan and Chapters 1-4 of the Community Profile and Atlas Bibliographies). From this strong basis of information, stakeholders identified, discussed, and mapped options and alternatives. Each iteration of the plan document considered potential impacts and possible mitigation measures before making draft and final recommendations for action and implementation. (A similar process will be carried out when implementing the zoning amendments and subdivision law implementation.) The Steering Committee framed recommendations for Town action including recommendations for revisions to the zoning, subdivision, and onsite sewage disposal laws. In order to conform the Town's land use laws to the plan, the Town is also in the process of preparing amendments to the zoning ordinance, subdivision law and onsite sewage disposal ordinance that will be based on the comprehensive plan recommendations. It is anticipated that the once the comprehensive plan is finalized, changes to the zoning ordinance, subdivision law and onsite sewage disposal ordinance adopted in conformance with the plan and GEIS, should not require any further environmental review.

The Proposed Action will facilitate the growth of Willsboro into a diverse and vital community of agriculture, commercial/industrial/manufacturing businesses, small businesses, homes, and recreational opportunities located in an appealing setting with great natural beauty, while providing amenities that attract residents, travelers, shoppers, diners, and vacationers. Recommendations include:

- Protection of scenic, ecological, forest, agricultural, and open space resources
Protection groundwater and surface water
- Concentration of development in the hamlet
- Encouragement of farming and other business sectors
- Promotion of affordable housing and provide an array of housing choices at different price levels

The Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan address the following subject areas that are discussed in detail in the plan and its supporting appendices:

- Economic Development
- Recreation
- Community Housing Development
- Natural Resources
- Smart Growth
- Existing and Proposed Land Use
- Community Character
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Public Facilities and Services

Comprehensive Plan recommendations suggest ways to mitigate growth impacts and improve Willsboro's outlook and character in terms of physical, environmental, social, and economic conditions and trends.

The Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement and the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan, together with its appendices that include Chapters 1-4 of the Community Profile and Atlas, are integrated and interrelated documents that together, represent the DGEIS process and product. The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan, together with its appendices that include Chapters 1-4 of the Community Profile and Atlas are incorporated by reference in the DGEIS as if they were set forth in their entirety.

The DGEIS and Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan and all its Appendices can be viewed at <http://www.townofwillsboro.com/comprehensive-plan.html>

Determination of Significance-Positive Declaration:

Pursuant to SEQRA regulations §617.7, the Town has determined the significance of the Action and thus issues a Positive Declaration. The logic and rationale for the Positive Declaration is primarily based Town Law Section 272-a which gives the Town the option to prepare a GEIS. "A Town comprehensive plan may be designed to also serve as, or be accompanied by, a generic environmental impact statement pursuant to the state environmental quality review act statute and regulations. No further compliance with such law is required for subsequent site specific actions that are in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established for such actions in the generic environmental impact statement and its findings." The Town Board, according to SEQRA has the option to prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement in lieu of completing a full Environmental Assessment Form for Type I Actions of this kind. According to Town Law, the Town also elected to prepare a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). The Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) served as the basis of the Town's determination of the environmental significance of this Action.

In order to prepare a GEIS under SEQRA, a Lead Agency must make a Positive Declaration. Another reason to support the Positive Declaration is the Town's intention to utilize the Comprehensive Plan as an integral part of the DGEIS since a GEIS and the Comprehensive Plan overlap substantially in content. In addition, the Town desired to prepare a GEIS in order to provide additional commentary to explicitly discuss the logic and rationale for the Comprehensive Plan, provide additional opportunities for public comment, compare alternative options, discuss environmental mitigation strategies and to provide a procedural review for the presence of an Agricultural District within the Town.

THIS NOTICE SERVES as the Town of Willsboro's Notice of Completion of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement and notice of public hearing to interested and involved agencies pursuant to the SEQRA regulations and NYS Town Law Section 272-a.

Notice to be filed with the New York State Environmental Notice Bulletin

Environmental Notice Bulletin, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-1750 for publication in the ENB. The ENB is accessible on the department's internet web site at

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us>.