

LEAD AGENCY'S FINDINGS STATEMENT

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

August 15, 2012 v3
Adopted by the Town Board September 12, 2012

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Town of Willsboro SEQRA Findings Statement 2012: Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan

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Lead Agency Confirmation Date: March 2, 2012

Date of Resolution to Accept DGEIS: May 9, 2012

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

Date of Resolution to Accept FGEIS: August 8, 2012

Date Final GEIS Filed with Town: August 8, 2012

ENB Public Notice: August 22, 2012

Consideration Period ENDS: September 2, 2012

Findings Statement Adoption: September 12, 2012

FGEIS, Comprehensive Plan, and Related Document Availability at Willsboro Town Offices

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

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Findings Statement is to complete the environmental review process for a Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan for the Town of Willsboro, New York, (the "Proposed Action, or Action"). Pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act, Article 8 of the New York Environmental Conservation Law ("SEQRA") and its implementing regulations, 6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617, this Findings Statement: (1) considers the relevant environmental impacts, facts and conclusions disclosed in the Complete GEIS (as hereinafter defined) prepared in connection with the Proposed Action; (2) weighs and balances environmental impacts with social, economic and other considerations; (3) provides a rationale for the Town Board's decision with respect to the Proposed Action; (4) certifies that all SEQRA requirements have been met; and (5) certifies that consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the Proposed Action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse environmental impacts will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable.

Consistent with SEQRA, this Findings Statement: describes the Proposed Action, the environmental review process; summarizes the relevant conclusions of the complete GEIS, the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, and reasonable alternatives identified therein. The Findings Statement weighs and balances the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action with its anticipated benefits and other relevant considerations and provides the explanation for its determination; and provides the certifications mandated by SEQRA.

This Findings Statement, prepared pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.11 for the Action of adoption of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan, is based upon the information in the:

- Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft GEIS) accepted by the Willsboro Town Board on May 9, 2012.
- Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (Final GEIS) accepted by the Town Board on August 8, 2012.
- The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan and the extensive maps, data and other materials developed that serve as appendices.

In preparation of this positive Findings Statement, the Town of Willsboro certifies that the requirements of Part 617 have been met, that the action is approvable after consideration of the final EIS, and that the action chosen is the most appropriate one to avoid or minimize any possible or predictable adverse environmental impacts presented in the Final GEIS. In coming to this conclusion, the Town weighed and balanced: the information collected in preparation of the Draft and Final GEIS, including the comments and suggestions of the agencies and public providing during the SEQRA process. The Town weighed and balanced these alternatives and evaluated options within the social, economic, and other essential contexts impacting the Town and its residents. This Findings Statement also documents what the Town Board considered in order to balance the relevant environmental impacts with "social, economic and other considerations" for their decision on the proposed action pursuant to section 6 NYCRR § 617.11(d).

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This Findings Statement, prepared in conformance with 6 N.Y.C.R.R. Part 617, brings to a conclusion the environmental review process for the Proposed Action.

2. Description of the Action (Type 1)

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.

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 of groundwater and surface water
- Concentration of development in the hamlet
- Encouragement of farming and other business sectors

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- 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 and Final 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 GEIS 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 GEIS as if they were set forth in their entirety.

The FGEIS 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>

3. Plan Development and SEQRA Timeline

In 2008, the Town Board of Willsboro decided to undertake a comprehensive strategic community planning process in order to: provide a framework for future economic development, assess capital needs, and prepare revisions to the Town's land use laws. The 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. An engaged, enthusiastic, and active citizenry participated in the development of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan (referred to as the comprehensive plan). From the onset, the Town encouraged the

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participation of all interested groups in the community and invited them to the table throughout the planning process. The Town also appointed a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, engaged the services of a professional planner.

The Steering Committee collected existing studies and data, inventoried and analyzed existing conditions, surveyed and interviewed the community, evaluated future trends, and ultimately made recommendations that support a plan of action to move the community forward. The community-at-large participated in establishing a vision of the Town, provided continual input, and review of the Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan. Citizens demonstrated commitment to the process and plan by attending public meetings, contributing thoughtful comments and suggestions for over two years.

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 (26 in all) 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 2012, the Town of Willsboro conducted a formal environmental review of the impact of this Action on the Town environs. This review was conducted in compliance with Section 272-a of Town Law and the applicable provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) of New York. In conducting this review, the Town Board of the Town of Willsboro assumed the role of Lead Agency under the auspices of SEQRA on January 25, 2012. On January 25, 2012, the Town also made a determination that the proposed actions were a Type I Action, issued a Positive Declaration, and authorized the preparation of a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement. The DGEIS was accepted by the Town on May 9, 2012, duly noticed in the Environmental Notice Bulletin on May 23, 2012 and a public hearing was held May 30, 2012. The public comment period ended June 25, 2012 the comments described in the FGEIS were provided to the Town before the June 25, 2012 comment deadline. Public review and comment yielded minor suggestions that resulted in modifications to the Comprehensive Plan, which are summarized in the Lead Agency Response Column in Section IIA in the FGEIS. On June 28, 2012, the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan Steering Committee unanimously approved the revised plan that incorporated public comments (Version 26REV) and recommended that the plan be forwarded to the Town Board for adoption. As a consequence of the comments received from the public hearing and public comment period for the DGEIS, the Town made minor revisions to the text of the Comprehensive Plan in response to comments and notified the public accordingly through the FGEIS process. The Town is moving forward with adoption proceedings according to

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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 revised Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan is included as an appendix to the FGEIS and incorporated by reference. The Final 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 Draft and Final GEIS 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 FGEIS as if they were set forth in their entirety. On August 8, 2012, the Town of Willsboro adopted a Resolution accepting the FGEIS and issued a Notice of FGEIS Completion which was distributed to involved and interested agencies on August 9, 2012 and publically noticed in the August 22, 2012 Environmental Notice Bulletin.

4. Plan Overview

The Comprehensive Land Use and Action 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. As a point of consensus in the public process that created the document, the Comprehensive Plan reinforces existing growth patterns and does not recommend reduction in the maximum build-out under APA intensity guidelines. Rather than graphically bounding and prescribing specific treatment to existing zoning districts or parcels, the plan describes in the text the future direction of land use in the Town.

The Plan advocates a Smart Growth approach. Steady, sustainable growth patterns, increased land protection and regulatory review and control to reduce growth impacts are recommended. Much of the plan emphasizes how to develop, maintaining the status quo of “where.” The Plan suggests a package of regulatory reforms and development incentives based on the carrying capacity of the land. It relies upon permit-level environmental review to mitigate individual and cumulative development impacts. Site Plan Review is a new function proposed to mitigate growth impacts on the landscape.

Recommendations concentrate development in existing neighborhoods where public services can support demand—and draws attention to the carrying capacity of the land. The composite suitability analysis (highlighted in the text, with supporting detail in the Community Profile and Atlas), provides a graphic depiction of where constraints exist and development requires a cautious approach. Special landscape features and places were noted as exceptions. Noted items include land slump or landslide locations, noteworthy agricultural soils, and unique natural features.

The 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:

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- Protection of scenic, ecological, forest, agricultural and open space resources.
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- 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
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- Community Character
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- 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 Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan and all its Appendices can be viewed at <http://www.townofwillsboro.com/comprehensive-plan.html>

5. Findings. Facts and Conclusions Relied Upon to Support Decision

Pursuant to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act) of the Environmental Conservation law and 6 NYCRR Part 617, the Town Board, as lead Agency, after consideration of the Draft and Final GEIS, and information derived from other documents and public meetings during the course of this SEQRA review, makes the following findings.

A. Alternatives Considered

The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan recommendations consider the fragile nature of the natural, social, cultural, and economic resource base of the Town and its environs and attempt to balance all interests with the least impact upon the environment. SEQRA requires that alternatives be examined as part of the environmental review process. The planning process and Plan document is an exercise in alternatives. The Town of Willsboro local land use planning program included a public process that allowed Town-appointed committee members,

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representing the community-at-large, to engage in process that considered and balanced the protection and use of natural and artificial assets in a way that enabled the community to consider sustainably growing the Town through its land use program.

SEQRA requires that alternatives be examined as part of the environmental review process. The planning process and Plan document is an exercise in alternatives. The Town of Willsboro local land use planning program included a public process that allowed Town-appointed committee members representing the community-at-large to engage in process that considered and balanced the protection and use of natural and artificial assets in a way that enabled the community to consider sustainably growing the Town through its land use program.

Willsboro is physically constrained in several dimensions and therefore its alternative scenarios are also limited in scale and in scope. The Town is constrained by the mountainous terrain to the west and Lake Champlain on the east. The area of the Town is fixed. Willsboro is also located within the Adirondack Park and density restrictions reduce overall build-out, thus limiting gross expansion and development. Geo-political and economic forces outside the purview of the people of the Town control many of the possible and realistic alternatives available to the Town relative to the protection of natural resources, community character and maintaining the economic viability of the community.

The Town of Willsboro considered the following alternatives when contemplating the master plan central to the local land use planning program:

- a. Taking no action and disbanding its planning work, not adopting the Comprehensive Plan (the “no action” alternative).
- b. Taking nominal and symbolic action only.
- c. Taking meaningful and substantive action to develop and adopt the Comprehensive Plan as proposed, then make modifications in the land use laws.
- d. Taking meaningful and substantive action to develop a Comprehensive Plan, consider changes to the plan based upon the public hearing and environmental review process, adopt the Comprehensive Plan, and then make modifications in the land use laws.

The Town chose not to select the “no action” option since the consequences of inaction might aggravate economic conditions in the Town, erode community morale, injure environmental conditions, and influence visual character. It was time to “take the bull by the horns.” Existing Federal, State and local regulations are not sufficient to protect natural, economic, social, and cultural resources, nor do they provide a blueprint for future direction for the Town. The benefit of the Comprehensive Plan is that it provides a direction for the growth of the Town, enhancing community character and protecting valuable resources. Balance may be achieved through a deliberate and collaborative public comprehensive planning process.

The absence of a periodically updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan and an implementation strategy, including regulatory and non-regulatory activities place Willsboro in a position of reacting to development-- instead of being proactive and ready to receive its benefits. Under this “no action” alternative, the community would not have had the opportunity to rally around a Comprehensive Planning process to share their views on the future of Willsboro and no future land

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use planning concepts would develop for the Town. Without a plan and vision, Willsboro might not compete well compared to other communities or preserve the integrity of its existing natural and community assets. The “no action alternative” would not further Willsboro’s goals. No action would fail to assist the Town in achieving its full vision for the future.

Nominal and symbolic action involved meeting the requirements of the laws of the State of New York, but not requiring further use or action from the Comprehensive Plan or making modifications to the land use laws of the Town. The Town chose not to select this action since the will of the people from the community participation process indicated that there was real interest in preparing and implementing the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and making modifications to the land use laws of the Town.

Adoption of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan without considering any of the changes suggested by the public hearing and environmental review process is an alternative that the Town considered and rejected. On one hand, the Willsboro Comprehensive Plan Committee reviewed and evaluated alternatives to the recommendations listed in the Comprehensive Plan. They devoted more than two years’ time and energy developing a plan that reflects the community’s interests and issues. The Plan represents the results of an extensive public involvement process. To the greatest extent possible, the Plan as proposed provides a balance of resident needs and desires. On the other hand, suggested modifications to the Plan may support the Plan’s goals and objectives. The Town determined that adoption of the current version of Plan without changes that may occur as a result of the SEQRA process is not a reasonable alternative.

The Town chose to take meaningful and substantive action to develop a Comprehensive Plan and to consider changes to the land use laws of the Town that will implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The community considered alternative land use, development options, transportation, main street and economic development issues, natural resource protection and enhancement as they drafted and re-drafted (25 versions of the Comprehensive Plan), and finally refined recommendations in the plan for:

- Economy and Community Amenities
- Land Use and Natural Resources
- Transportation and Public Facilities

One example of the evaluative process that considered action alternatives resulted in a number of recommendations advocating for great oversight and protection for natural resources, historic and scenic resources, and neighborhood character. Unique natural features and habitats, and an Agricultural District exist in the Town. These need recognition and protection from unsuitable development. Accordingly, the Town is considering establishing a Special Use permit (or an appropriate alternative within the Agricultural District for non-agricultural uses) for new uses affecting these designated locations. As a special use, any such use will first require review and approval by the Town using an environmentally based site plan review as part of the review and approval process and pursuant to the zoning law. The Special Use permit procedure might consider the adequacy and appropriateness of the use for each particular site and any other necessary approvals as appropriate, including further compliance with SEQRA.

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The Draft and Final GEIS were developed to evaluate the environmental, social, and economic effects of the adoption and the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. 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. These anticipated amendments should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Draft and Final GEIS, and the Findings Statement in order for the Town's SEQRA obligation to be satisfied. The Town Board will have the responsibility for determining if the zoning and subdivision laws amendments of the Town of Willsboro are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Draft and Final GEIS, and the Findings Statement.

It is anticipated that the once the comprehensive plan is adopted, revisions to the Town's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and on-site sewage disposal law, will be evaluated by an environmental assessment with due consideration to the GEIS and appropriate Determinations of Significance made with respect to the future action(s). Since this GEIS is, by definition, generic and not site-specific, any future development proposal before the Planning Board or Town Board must fully address SEQRA.

The Proposed Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to land. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will not directly result in land impacts because they do not directly authorize specific development projects. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will reduce land development impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. Further, the Plan includes many specific recommendations that can strengthen the Town's land use regulations and administrative oversight so that future land development applications can have less negative environmental impact than under the current land use regulatory system. The implementation and reconciliation of the Plan recommendations with the land use regulations of the Town may result in land development occurring in more environmentally appropriate ways, on parcels with fewer environmental constraints and with reduced impacts associated with land disturbance.

The recommendations embodied in the Comprehensive Plan represent the alternatives preferred by the people of the Town as voiced through the extensive public participation process. The preferred alternatives (i.e. scenarios) take into consideration the realities of physical, political and economic constraints, yet allow for build-out and infill that can be expected in a mature community such as Willsboro. As such, they represent a balance between what is best for the community after weighing the impact on the environment, the economy, the character of place, and the interests of the people.

B. General Impacts

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse environmental or economic impacts to the Town or its environs. If considered, the guidelines and recommendations included in the plan will provide a greater degree of specificity with respect to protection of natural and cultural resources than currently exists within the Town land use regulations. Recommended mitigation strategies and guidelines are enumerated in the Plan document and proposed to be incorporated in the land use regulations. These can reduce project-specific impacts. The implementation of SmartGrowth, Sustainability, and New Urbanism

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principles that are deliberately integrated into the Plan recommendations can enhance conservation of natural and cultural resources. Positive and constructive environmental and community impacts are envisioned after the adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan, including revisions that are called for in the local land use regulations.

No unavoidable adverse impacts were noted during the 3-year study. In order to minimize risk to the environment and to support residents' views on the importance of environmental protection, alternative development scenarios were discussed and in some instances, mapped. Thoughtful analysis of natural resource constraints and opportunities provided a foundation for the Plan.

The Town considered the following primary areas of environmental concern: topography/soils; vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands; surface and groundwater/hydrology and drainage; utilities; transportation; historical and archaeological; municipal services; and land use and zoning. Based on the information available, it is reasonable to conclude that while the impacts of the Action are important to note and consider, they are individually and collectively minor or moderate in scale and scope of impact.

A written document does not directly cause adverse environmental impact, yet, in theory, implementation can. On a case-by-case, basis Town jurisdictional projects will be subject to environmentally based site plan review. The standard of unavoidable adverse impact will be an important component of this review. Periodic updating of the Comprehensive Plan can enable the recommendations within the document to change with conditions in Willsboro and the region, thus addressing changing impacts that may arise in the future.

C. Impact on Land

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to land. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan and its implementing land use regulations will not directly result in land impacts because they do not directly authorize specific development projects. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will reduce land development impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. Further, the Plan includes many specific recommendations that can strengthen the Town's land use regulations and administrative oversight so that future land development applications can have less environmental impact than under the current land use regulatory system. The implementation and reconciliation of the Plan recommendations with the land use regulations of the Town may result in land development occurring in more environmentally appropriate ways, on parcels with fewer environmental constraints and with reduced impacts associated with land disturbance.

The Town of Willsboro Finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to land and supports this decision with evidence from the text of The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan:

- Provide a development density bonus as part of the subdivision regulations when large areas classified as prime agricultural soils or similar classifications (farmland of statewide

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importance, prime agricultural soils if drained) are excluded from development and preserved for agriculture as part of a subdivision process. (pg. 87)

- Prevent the loss of prime agricultural soils and farmland of Statewide Importance by keeping any new building towards hedgerows and roadsides. (pg. 88)
- Avoid development activities on steep slopes, ridgelines, and mountainsides, where environmental damage and/or altered views could result. (pg. 90)

The Plan and its accompanying regulations will mitigate impacts to land throughout the Town by:

- Identification, description, and evaluation of site-specific soil conditions during project review.
- Utilization of appropriate engineering methods to address existing conditions (i.e. excessive wetness, poor drainage, compressibility and instability, shrinkage and swelling, susceptibility to erosion, lack of soil thickness, and/or poor texture).
- Evaluating the suitability of soil and topography for building construction and structural safety.
- Placement of hay or cloth dikes for containment of water and soil, construction of impoundments and drainage ditches, seeding, netting, mulching and covering excavated soils or stockpiling soils.
- Limiting the amount of disturbance to bedrock where it would result in significant bedrock disturbance.
- Requiring “terrain adaptive” housing in areas constrained by bedrock.
- Avoiding any development in areas with slopes in excess of 25 percent.
- Reducing the number of building lots to avoid extremely steep slopes.

These land use, local development policy and growth goals take into consideration how development should occur on the remaining private lands in the Town by evaluating the cumulative impact of each and every land use decision as affecting the best interests of the entire Town and its quality of life. They carefully consider the presence of an active Agricultural District within the Town. Recommending the review, modification, and adoption of appropriate laws and regulations will enable the government of Willsboro to better reflect citizens' desires for evolving stewardship practices.

D. Impact on Water

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to water. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will not directly impact water resources. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and the subsequent changes to the implementing land use regulations can reduce the future impact on these resources when compared to the Town's future development under existing land use regulations.

Water resource protection recommendations (24 in total) are included throughout the Plan document and include improvements to the regulatory and administrative guidelines for the

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protection of stream banks and stream corridors, wetlands, groundwater, storm water, flood zones, source water, as well as improvements to the management of construction activity, sediment and erosion control, landscaping and site plan design. In addition, existing local and State laws will continue to reduce pollution of water resources. The implementation and reconciliation of the Plan recommendations with the land use regulations of the Town can result in land development occurring in more environmentally appropriate ways, on parcels with fewer environmental constraints and with reduced impacts on water resources.

The following goals and recommendations illustrate how the Plan supports the Finding that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to water:

- Encourage and support agricultural practices that reduce soil erosion and water quality impacts, including the use of federal and state programs that compensate farmers for establishing and maintaining vegetative buffers along streams and drainages. (pg. 88)
- Protect, maintain, and improve water quality in Lake Champlain, Long, and Highlands Forge Lake, the Boquet River and their respective watersheds through careful design, compliance, and site planning. (pg. 90)
- Develop a public education program that links wastewater management to water consumption, conservation, storm water, and water quality. (pg.102)
- Manage roads to minimize erosion and impact on water quality. Find alternatives to ditching along highways. (pg. 97)

E. Impact on Air

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to air quality. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will not directly impact air quality. Incremental and cumulative residential and commercial development at the Town scale can create minor adverse impacts to local air quality. The anticipated impacts will not be of a type, magnitude, or scale that will adversely impact human health or the environment at the local or regional level. The implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan is likely to improve air quality by limiting land disturbance. The Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations do not propose any land use policies or propose a significant increase in development that would impair regional air quality.

F. Impact on Plants and Animals

The Town of Willsboro finds, after consideration of the Draft and Final GEIS, and information derived from other documents and public meetings during the course of this SEQRA review, that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to plants and animals. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will not directly impact plants and animals. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro

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Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will reduce land development impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and the subsequent changes to the implementing land use regulations can reduce the future impact on these resources when compared to the Town's future development under existing land use regulations.

Further, the Plan includes many specific recommendations that can strengthen the Town's land use regulations and administrative oversight so that future land development applications can have less environmental impact on biodiversity than under the current land use regulatory system. Recommendations for the protection of plants and animals are included throughout the Plan document and include encouragement for the utilization of native species for landscaping and re-plantings, buffer zones along wildlife and stream corridors, and minimizing removal of existing vegetation. These recommendations apply to both non-regulatory and regulatory actions listed in the Plan. In addition to the Plan recommendations and subsequent land use regulatory amendments that can follow, land development applications before the Planning Board may require information from the New York Natural Heritage Program (of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources) regarding endangered, threatened, and rare species that are known to occupy or are in proximity to the applicant's site. The investigation will occur during project specific SEQRA evaluations and may lead to detailed habitat studies and biodiversity assessments that will be used to properly protect plant and animal species.

The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan includes the following goals and recommendations that support the Finding that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to plants and animals:

- Update land use laws to reflect the high priority residents place on the protection of significant environmental resources (such as water, farm fields, forests, soils, natural scenery, and wildlife) which attract new residents and visitors to Willsboro. (pg. 77)
- Design an administration process that promotes good environmental design, efficient land use, building, and site layout. Guidelines should address, at a minimum, the use of native vegetation, buffers and corridors along waterways and between land uses, protection for wetlands and various habitats used by wildlife for travel, restrictions on tree and shrubbery cutting, encouraging replanting, maximum lot coverage of impervious surfaces, maximum expansion for pre-existing buildings (including height and/or square footage), use of building materials, colors, and architectural design, parking, flood zones, boat ramps, and retaining walls. (pg. 83)
- Protect natural aquatic plant and animal communities, including high quality natural communities. Preserve rare, endangered, and common native aquatic plant and animal species. Preserve terrestrial animal communities and species by protecting key wildlife habitats and breeding sites, such as deer wintering yards, bird nesting areas, and important vegetation transition areas, including corridors. (pg. 92)
- Preserve terrestrial animal communities and species by protecting key wildlife habitats and breeding sites, such as deer wintering yards, bird nesting areas, and important vegetation transition areas, including corridors. (pg. 93)
- Maintain wildlife diversity by maintaining a diverse habitat mix.
 - Preserve rare and endangered terrestrial wildlife species.

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- Locate development and other intensive human activities to protect the location and habitats of terrestrial wildlife species, especially those that are rare and endangered. (pg. 94)
- Revise land use laws to limit modification of critical habitats including the placement of utilities in migratory paths, corridors. These include areas containing endangered or threatened species designated by New York State's Natural Heritage Program, Fish and Wildlife agencies. (pg. 94)
- Conserve high quality and representative examples of the Willsboro's natural communities and preserve habitat for threatened species, species of special concern, and 'species of greatest conservation need' as noted in the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for New York State. (pg. 94)
- Consider rezoning portions of Willsboro Point to mitigate negative environmental impacts to significant natural habitats and communities caused by the increasing and cumulative land development. Using current scientific knowledge and the Willsboro GIS database (see Suitability Land Series Maps), create lower density zoning or overlay districts, especially in areas with NYS Natural Heritage Trust (NYSDEC) designated rare plant, animal and forest habitats (critical habitat and unique natural communities), poor soils for development, prime agricultural soils, wetlands and significant aquifers. In developing new or overlay lower density zoning districts, consider the overall environmental, historic and open space value of the land. (pg. 80)
- Preserve key spawning areas, nursery grounds, food sources, and food source areas.
 - Preserve habitats of rare, endangered, and common native plant and animal species.
 - Maintain adjacent vegetated areas as habitats and buffer zones.
 - Minimize shoreline alterations such as beach construction and the placement of docks, rafts, boat launching facilities, and breakwaters as these destroy plant and animal habitat.
 - Avoid contamination of water bodies with toxic materials and excess nutrients. (pg. 93)
- Protect natural terrestrial plant communities by preserving rare, endangered, and common native terrestrial plant species. Locate development and other intensive human activities in a way that protects the location and habitats of rare and endangered plant species. (pg. 93)

Impacts on wildlife and habitat are required to be considered by the Town of Willsboro in its project review functions. Identified impacts will be mitigated through conditions imposed on the project. During project review, impacts to wildlife and habitat will be mitigated by:

- ✓ Recommending native vegetation when landscaping.
- ✓ Maintaining vegetated buffers along streams and creeks.
- ✓ Establishing corridors between habitat types for wildlife travel.
- ✓ Incorporating open space into each project.
- ✓ Avoiding fragmentation of existing forested areas.
- ✓ Discouraging tree cutting.
- ✓ Encouraging replanting.
- ✓ Avoiding identified migratory paths when proposing development of any kind.
- ✓ Avoiding areas containing endangered or threatened species.
- ✓ Avoiding critical habitat loss and noise.

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The implementation and reconciliation of the Plan recommendations with the land use regulations of the Town may result in land development occurring in more environmentally appropriate ways, on parcels with fewer environmental constraints and with reduced impacts associated with land disturbance, thus improving the opportunities to protect biodiversity in the Town setting.

G. Impact on Agricultural Land Resources

The Town of Willsboro finds that the Action will not result in significant adverse impacts to farmland. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will not directly impact farmland. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and the subsequent changes to the implementing land use regulations can reduce the future impact on these resources when compared to the Town's future development under existing land use regulations. The Plan supports current agricultural activities in the Town through the recognition of the presence of, and compliance with the New York Agricultural District Law and adoption of local planning initiatives to protect and preserve farming and farmland.

As noted in Section 4d of the DGEIS, twenty-three percent of the land acreage in Town (6,396 acres) is in the Agricultural District. Since the agricultural district does not include all possible farmland, the actual agricultural acreage is somewhat higher (See Community Profile Appendix). Willsboro is also included in the Essex County Farmland Protection Plan. The Comprehensive Plan and its land use regulations include recommendations to mitigate growth impacts on agriculture. Highlights include:

- ✓ Avoiding building on prime agricultural soils.
- ✓ Promoting clustering of non-farm uses.
- ✓ Supporting the siting of buildings away from the center of a field or in places that would interfere with equipment or the maximum use of remaining farmland.
- ✓ Providing access through right-of-ways to farm fields.
- ✓ Encouraging active agriculture and agri-business as the ideal way to conserve open space.
- ✓ Encouraging the use of conservation easements to protect agricultural resources.

H. Impact on Aesthetic Resources

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to aesthetic resources. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on aesthetic resources. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will reduce land development impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and the subsequent changes to the implementing land use regulations can reduce the future impact on these resources when compared to the Town's future development under existing land use regulations.

The protection of community character and quality of life in all neighborhoods of the Town is an important goal of the Plan. The Plan includes many specific recommendations that, when

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implemented, can strengthen the Town's land use regulations and administrative oversight so that future land development applications can have less impact on aesthetic resources than under the current land use regulatory system. Regulatory recommendations for the protection of aesthetic resources are included throughout the Plan document and include instituting Site Plan Review regulations. Non-regulatory recommendations for the protection of aesthetic resources include moving forward on community beautification and revitalization projects that have been on the drawing board such as trail development, infill, and redevelopment in the central business district. Protection of scenic corridors and important places in the landscape will also support the protection and enhancing of the natural assets of the Town. The implementation and reconciliation of the Plan recommendations with the land use regulations of the Town may result in land development occurring in more aesthetically appropriate ways, thus improving the opportunities to protect aesthetic resources in the Town setting.

The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan includes the following goals and recommendations that support the Finding that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to aesthetic resources:

- Maintain scenic vistas and conserve open space in order to preserve critical environmental areas, protect Willsboro's natural beauty, enhance quality of life, and promote economic growth. (pg. 95)
- Concentrate development on each parcel, incorporating a reasonable percentage of open space into each project. (pg. 96)
 - Cluster development to avoid fragmenting open parcels of land.
 - Avoid new intensive development in open space areas and intact forests.
 - Minimize development activities that would make a big difference in the open space character of adjoining and nearby land uses.
 - Design and construct development that is located near open spaces to minimize its visual impact in these open space areas. (pg. 96)
- Determine, and consider acting on issues associated with keeping specific view sheds or vistas open, including protection of scenic vistas, minimizing visibility of buildings and site development with vegetative screening, and incorporating open space maintenance as part of site plan review. (pg. 96)

Impacts on aesthetic and visual resources are required to be considered by the Town of Willsboro in its project review functions. Visual impacts found will be mitigated through conditions imposed on the project. During project review, impacts to visual resources will be mitigated by the following:

- ✓ Inventory, assessment, and evaluation of visual resources, including, properties listed on the National, or State Register of Historic Places, publicly owned parks and preserves, state designated trails, scenic byways, and any locally identified visual resources, view sheds, and site specific scenic resources. Utilizing view shed maps and other techniques now

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considered standard in visual assessments, conduct an assessment and evaluation process in accordance in standard practice.

- ✓ Determine the significance of the visual resources impact.
- ✓ Use of careful design and siting, screening, relocation, disguise, low profile, berms and buffers, downsizing, alternate technologies, lighting, and offsets.
- ✓ Locating buildings close to tree lines and edges, following topography for siting buildings and roads, and avoiding ridgelines.

I. Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to historic and archeological resources. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on historic and archeological resources. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will reduce land development impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. As part of its SEQRA evaluation, the Planning Board may require applicants to request information from the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation regarding State and nationally listed historic resources and archeological preservation so that historic and archeological resources can be further considered at the site-specific level during the permitting process. The Plan recognizes the importance of these resources by recommending implementation of the recently completed AARCH cultural and historic resources inventory, protecting, renovating, and preserving historic structures, showcasing local historic resources, and celebrating Willsboro's local history.

Identification of historic and archeological resources is a first step to preservation, protection, and mitigation. To support the finding that there will be no adverse impact on Historic and Archeological Resources in the Town from the Comprehensive Plan, 50 citations are noted in the Comprehensive Plan related to historic and cultural resources. The Plan also cites the recently completed Reconnaissance Level Survey of Historic Resources prepared by Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Keeseville, New York as a basis for the identification of important cultural resources. Individual project review under the Town's land use program will use an assessment process to review and mitigate impacts to historic and archeological resources.

J. Impact on Open Space and Recreation

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to open space and recreation. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on open space and recreation in and around the Town. The protection of open space and recreation is an important goal of the Plan. Recommendations for the protection of open space and recreation include moving forward on community green infrastructure planning, promoting family-friendly indoor and outdoor projects to support active and passive year round recreation opportunities for residents. The Plan promotes public access to trails and water resources located throughout the Town.

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K. Impact on Critical Environmental Areas

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to Critical Environmental Areas. According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, there are no Critical Environmental Areas within the Town of Willsboro. The adoption and future implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan and its implementing regulations will not impact any Critical Environmental Areas due to the fact that none is listed.

L. Impact on Transportation

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to transportation. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on transportation in and around the Town. The improvement of transportation systems, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood streets are important goals of the Plan. Recommendations for the improvement of transportation planning include consideration of “Complete Streets” approaches to transportation systems, road, sidewalk and bridge replacement and repair, traffic calming and off and on-street parking improvements. These recommendations suggest that sustainable environmentally sensitive construction practices be considered. The recommendations do not call for major increases in density within the Town and recognizes the seasonal fluctuations in the economic base because of its resort status. The adoption and implementation of the Plan will not negatively impact transportation systems and may improve transportation planning for the Town.

Traffic is not a major concern in the modest Town of Willsboro. The Comprehensive Plan does not propose the construction of any new roadways, but advocates generally for improved maintenance and specifically for paving improvements on NYS Route 22—Willsboro’s main artery to the north and south. Seasonal fluctuations in road usage occur for approximately 90 days due to the heavy summer inflow of property owners and visitors. During this portion of the year, traffic is expected to continue and increase commensurate with the slow and steady growth in the Town.

The Plan includes the following goals and recommendations that support the Town of Willsboro’s finding that no adverse impact will be sustained from the Plan:

- When roads are improved, a Complete Streets approach, consistent with New York State and Federal policies will be considered in road planning. Pedestrian and non-auto safety, including sidewalks, crosswalks, and paved shoulders for bicycles will be considered. Tree removal will be avoided and discouraged, but limb cutting to reduce safety hazards will be encouraged.
- In reviewing a project, the Town may consider the need to prepare a traffic impact study-- if a proposed land use expects to generate more than fifty trips during a peak hour or there are concerns for congestion, public health, or safety as a result of the project’s development.
- Shared roadways and driveways will be encouraged to reduce and manage access to public roads.

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- Properties will have limited access.
- Commercial buildings will be sited with their parking areas in the rear and with landscaping used to separate parking lots, roads, sidewalks, etc.
- Landscaped parking lots will include islands, curbs, and physical boundaries between roads, sidewalks, buildings, and cars. Adequate pedestrian considerations will be included in the planning.
- All projects will include sidewalks in their planning.

M. Impact on Energy

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts on energy. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and its implementing regulations will not have a significant impact on energy consumption. New and adaptive reuse of commercial and residential properties over time may increase energy usage in an incremental and cumulative and sense, but this might happen regardless of whether the Plan is adopted or not. However, the Plan identifies potential energy conservation initiatives and suggests that efficiency improvements to save energy and money in the Town infrastructure and building systems.

The Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan includes the following goals and recommendations that support the Finding that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse impacts to energy use:

- Provide energy-efficient development standards for sites and buildings. (pg.15 & 97)
- Encourage conservation and green energy building techniques. (pg. 16 & 97)
- Encourage Banks To Make Loans For Structures That Use Alternative Energy Sources. (pg. 57)
- Work with Adirondack Harvest and other agricultural development organizations to capitalize on the popular and lucrative “food security, localvore” and biomass energy movement. (pg. 58)
- Promote renewable energy-based agricultural practices such as switch grass for biomass energy production. (pg. 58)
- Define and determine allowable and accessory use status for facilities that generate electricity, including turbine generators, solar panels and other alternative or renewable energy equipment. (pg. 82)
- Establish energy efficient development standards and guidelines for buildings, roads and utilities that promote low impact development.(pg. 97)
- Use life cycle costing to evaluate capital investments. In this way, ongoing maintenance expenses, energy efficiency, and equipment obsolescence are considered in the design and planning stages of capital projects. (pg. 101)
- To reduce Town energy costs and to darken skies, evaluate the cost/benefit of replacing lighting district and single pole fixtures with synchronized motion-detector, high-energy efficient equipment. (pg. 105)

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N. Noise and Odor Impacts

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will not will not result in increased noise and odor impacts. New construction or adaptive re-use of commercial and residential buildings can result in temporary construction related noise and odors. Recommendations included in the Plan focus Town efforts to improve regulatory review and administrative guidelines. These can mitigate project-related excessive noise and help protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents and business owners in the Town. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan can reduce noise and odor impacts in the future when compared to taking no action. The adoption and implementation of the Plan and the subsequent changes to the implementing land use regulations can reduce the future potential noise and odor impacts from development when compared to the Town's future development under existing land use regulations.

The main source of noise in Willsboro is human habitation—automobiles, mechanized equipment, motorized boats, trains, etc. Willsboro is also located distant from airports with large amounts of air traffic. Other sources of noise tend to be transient and are generally restricted to the immediate vicinity of the noise source. They include such sources as pets, construction equipment, and residential and commercial lawn maintenance equipment. These form the background of daily life in many communities throughout the United States. Relatively few potentially significant sources of noise and odor exist, when compared with cities and towns, or communities that have large, mechanized agricultural operations.

The Town finds that the Action does not recommend the addition of any new significant noise or odor sources. Noise impacts could increase in some areas of Town as a result of recommendations included in the Comprehensive Plan. In general, noise can be expected to increase in the future commensurate with the growth in population and vehicle traffic. The increase in noise will be most notable in the areas of Town in which new development occurs, as well as along those roadways that see the greatest increases in traffic.

Several recommended land use changes could result in increased noise in very specific areas—those areas proposed for central business district revitalization and development. The level of intensity of development in portions of these areas could be increased, potentially resulting in increased noise impacts at certain times of day from such typical sources as loading and unloading, conversations and music. Although the amount of traffic noise would likely be similar to the amount of traffic noise experienced currently in the business areas, increased commercial and mixed-use development may mean that more people could be within earshot of the noise. Any new development proposal made in accordance with the proposed zoning regulations for the business areas should be evaluated for its impacts on noise.

At the same time, the Comprehensive Plan includes land use recommendations that may lead to reduced noise in residential areas. New construction or adaptive re-use of commercial and residential buildings can result in temporary construction related noise and odors. Proposed site plan review regulations would better protect natural and wooded landscapes that help to further reduce density and attenuate sound.

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Apart from this general increase in background noise, the Town finds that no major new sources of noise different than those that currently exist in Town are expected to become established in the future. The overall noise level is expected to remain relatively low and there would be no significant town-wide impacts.

While localized odor problems may exist, there are no serious problems with odor that affect large parts of the Town. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that agricultural odors are part and parcel of a rural life where farming is an important activity. Agriculture is a commercial activity. Suggested mitigation actions recommended include segregation and “buffers” of residential development from agricultural areas. The plan does not promote elimination of farming to reduce odors. As no new sources of odor are expected to become established within the horizon period, no change in odor is expected to occur.

Most of the year, Willsboro is so quiet that sounds of human habitation are absent-except on the central business district. Noise and odor are not significant problems currently, nor are they expected to become significant problems in the future under implementation of the plan or any other alternative.

The Town of Willsboro finds that the Action will not will not result in increased noise and odor impacts. Recommendations included in the Plan focus Town efforts to improve regulatory review and administrative guidelines. These can mitigate project-related excessive noise and help protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents and business owners in the Town. Adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan can reduce noise and odor impacts in the future when compared to taking no action.

O. Impact on Public Health

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will result in positive impacts to public health. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on public health. The improvement of drinking and wastewater systems, traffic calming and pedestrian safety initiatives, family-friendly year-round recreational opportunities, promotion of essential retail services and employment, protection of aquifers, air quality, biodiversity, and open space, all resulting from the Plan’s implementation, can serve to comprehensively improve public health.

P. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

The Town of Willsboro finds that the proposed action will result in positive impacts on growth and the character of the community and its neighborhoods. The adoption and implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan will have a positive impact on the multiple aspects of community character.

The process of developing the plan was a community-based, participatory process that involved diverse stakeholders. It reflects the vision, goals, recommendations, and actions of the community

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to protect those attributes that make Willsboro an attractive place to live, work and conduct business. The Plan suggests a balanced approach that weighs fiscal and capital responsibility against the needs to revitalize the central business district, enhance and protect natural areas and farmland, and preserve residential areas. Recommendations for updating, clarifying, and streamlining of land use regulations will serve to make permitting processes more user-friendly. The Plan recommendations suggest the adoption of improved signage guidelines, landscaping, green infrastructure and buffer areas for multiple purposes. These actions can also improve the aesthetics of any development activities and enhance community character. At the same time, more illustrative and helpful guidelines serve to provide applicants and members of the planning and zoning boards with information, so that the community's expectations for retaining or enhancing character can be met.

Recommendations include limiting intrusion of commercial uses into residential neighborhoods so that business impacts do not adversely impact residential neighborhood character. The housing needs of Willsboro-area residents, employees and their families are supported through the promotion of affordable housing and housing choice. The Plan recommendations call for appropriately scaled commercial development and a suitable mix of commercial uses for the demographic profile of Willsboro so that community needs are met.

The Town finds that the implementation of the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan can preserve what is best about existing patterns of development and protect natural areas within the setting of the Town. Development is constrained by the Town's political boundaries and the presence of the Adirondack Park. Recommended development is not intended to be expansive. Incremental development is constrained by geographic limitations and by the Adirondack Land Use and Development Plan. The Plan recommendations promote adaptive main street revitalization, reuse, infill, mixed use development, green infrastructure, outdoor and indoor recreation, affordable housing, and conservation and context sensitive development. It is anticipated that implementation of the Comprehensive Plan can provide extensions of these recommendations in regulatory and non-regulatory formats.

6. Future Actions

Pursuant to 6 NYCRR 617.15(c), contemplated future actions which include, but are not limited to, revisions to the Town's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and on-site sewage disposal law, will be evaluated by an environmental assessment with due consideration to the GEIS and appropriate Determinations of Significance made with respect to the future action(s).

The Draft GEIS, Final GEIS, and this Findings Statement were developed to evaluate the environmental, social, and economic effects of the adoption and the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and its recommended implementation. The Town Board, the authorized entity under New York State law, is considering adoption of the plan. 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.

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It is anticipated that the once the comprehensive plan is adopted, revisions to the Town's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and on-site sewage disposal law, will be evaluated by an environmental assessment with due consideration to the GEIS and appropriate Determinations of Significance made with respect to the future action(s).

Zoning and subdivision regulation amendments promulgated by the Town as a result of the Comprehensive Plan adoption process should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, FGEIS, and this Findings Statement in order for the Town's SEQRA obligation to be satisfied. The Town Board will have the responsibility for determining if the zoning and subdivision laws amendments of the Town of Willsboro are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, FGEIS, and this Findings Statement. If the zoning and subdivision laws amendments are found to be inconsistent with the SEQRA documentation completed for the Town of Willsboro Comprehensive Land Use and Action Plan, the Town Board alternatively will revise the texts of the proposed laws to be consistent, prepare Parts 1, 2, and 3 of the Full Environmental Assessment Form and issue a negative declaration of environmental significance, or prepare a Supplemental GEIS in accordance with NYCRR Part 617.

7. Conclusions

This Findings Statement was prepared pursuant to 6 NYCRR § 617.11. The Findings Statement is based upon the information in the Draft and Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) accepted by the Town Board, the Comprehensive Plan process and plan document, and materials developed during the environmental review process. In preparation of this positive Findings Statement, Town of Willsboro certifies that the requirements of Part 617 have been met, that the action is approvable after consideration of the final EIS, and that the action chosen is the most appropriate one to avoid or minimize any possible or predictable adverse environmental impacts presented in the Final GEIS. In coming to this conclusion, the Town weighed and balanced: the information collected in preparation of the Draft and Final GEIS, including the comments and suggestions of the agencies and public providing during the SEQRA process. The Town weighed and balanced these alternatives and evaluated options within the social, economic, and other essential contexts impacting the Town and its residents. This Findings Statement also documents what the Town Board considered in order to balance the relevant environmental impacts with "social, economic and other considerations" for their decision on the proposed action pursuant to section 6 NYCRR § 617.11(d).

8. Certification

The Town Board of the Town of Willsboro finds and certifies that:

- 1) The Town Board has given due consideration to the Draft and Final GEIS, and information derived from other documents and public meetings held during the course of this SEQRA review process; and
- 2) This Findings Statement has been prepared pursuant to and as required by 6 NYCRR Part 617. The requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617 have been met; and

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- 3) Consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the proposed action assessed in the Draft GEIS, Final GEIS, and this Findings Statement, avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse impacts (if any) will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporation as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable; and
- 4) A copy of this Findings Statement shall be filed with all Involved and Interested Agencies, and all parties requesting same, as required by law.

Beverly Moran Town Clerk
Town of Willsboro
Adopted September 12, 2012
Findings Certification Attached

Edward P. Hatch, Town Supervisor

State Environmental Quality Review
Findings Statement

Pursuant to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act - SEQR) of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6 NYCRR Part 617, the Town of Willsboro as the Lead or an Involved Agency makes the following findings.

Name of Action:

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

Description 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

Location:

Town of Willsboro Essex County, New York

Agency Jurisdiction:

Lead Agency

Date Final Environmental Impact Statement Filed:

August 8, 2012

Facts and Conclusions Relied on to Support the Decision:

See LEAD AGENCY'S FINDINGS STATEMENT dated August 14, 2012 v3
Electronic Link:<http://www.townofwillsboro.com/comprehensive-plan.html>

Certification To Approve/Fund/Undertake :

Having considered the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement and having considered the preceding written facts and conclusions relied on to meet the requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617.11, this Statement of Findings certifies that:

1. The requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617 have been met; and
2. Consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is the one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that adverse impacts will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable.
3. (And if applicable) Consistent with the applicable policies of Article 42 of the Executive Law, as implemented by 19 NYCRR Part 600.5, this action will achieve a balance between the protection of the environment and the need to accommodate social and economic considerations.

Name of Agency



Signature of Responsible Official

Edward P. Hatch

Name of Responsible Official

Town Supervisor

Title of Responsible Official

9/12/2012

Date

Address of Agency

Town of Willsboro
1 Farrell Road, PO Box 370, Willsboro, NY 12996

cc: Other Involved Agencies
Applicant