

2015 Master Plan Committee Meeting

The **Master Plan Committee** Meeting of the Town of Cortlandt was conducted on November 6, 2013 in the Vincent F. Nyberg Meeting Room of the Cortlandt Town Hall located at 1 Heady Street, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567 with the following committee members and appointed staff in attendance:

Master Plan Committee

Supervisor Puglisi D. Puglisi, Town Supervisor	Barbara Halecki
Richard Becker, Councilmember	Dani Glaser
James Creighton	Adrian C. Hunte
David Douglas	Michael Huvane
Michael Fleming	Theresa Knickerbocker
Seth Freach	Maria Slippen

Staff Advisors

Edward Vergano, P.E., DOTS Director
Chris Kehoe Kehoe, AICP, Deputy Director of Planning
Rosemary Boyle-Lasher Boyle-Lasher, Assistant to Director of DOTS

Absent: Daniel G. Hayes

Supervisor Puglisi welcomed the 2015 Master Plan Committee members and stated that the minutes from the October 3, 2013 meeting had been emailed to everyone and that if anyone had comments or corrections to please let Sharon Palmiotto know later or to email her office. (The spelling of Barbara Halecki's name from the last minutes will be corrected by Judi Peterson)

Tonight, there will be an overview of the history of the Town via a PowerPoint presentation.

Supervisor Puglisi said that the Town has accomplished many things since the 2004 Master Plan and she wanted everyone to see what they would be doing during the process and how they will be making policies that the Town Board will implement.

The Town is approximately 40 square miles and is bounded by the Hudson River to the west, north by Putnam County, east by the Town of Yorktown and south by the Towns of New Castle and Ossining. The two Villages are part of the Town (Croton-on-Hudson & Buchanan) along with several hamlets (Montrose, Crugers, Mohegan Lake and Verplanck). Cortlandt is a beautiful town comprised of woods, hills, steep slopes, wetlands, streams, lakes and the Hudson River. Our population, according to the last census, is approximately 42,000 wonderful people. Cortlandt is located in the northwest corner of Westchester County and is one of the largest towns in the County. There are 45 municipalities in Westchester County with a population close to one million people.

A discussion of the Town's administration followed using the flowcharts in the PowerPoint presentation. The elected Supervisor is a full time position with the elected Town Board comprised of four part-time legislators who appoint various volunteer boards, committees and councils including the Planning and Zoning Boards, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Assessment Review Board, Conservation Advisory Council/Open Space Committee. All these boards, committees & councils are voluntary positions.

The Town Clerk, Receiver of Taxes and two Justices are also elected positions. Appointed positions are the Assessor, Comptroller, Human Resources, Town Attorney, Purchasing/Technology, Recreation and Conservation (also under Director John Palmiotto is the Office For The Aging located at the Westbrook Drive Senior Center and the Youth Services located on Memorial Drive).

We moved into our present location on December 5, 1992 after a full year of renovating a former Lakeland School District elementary school after previously sharing space with the Village of Croton-on-Hudson at their municipal building. Supervisor Puglisi had the honor of being the first Supervisor in the new Town Hall and the last in the Croton Building.

The Department of Environmental Services includes many divisions and is a big operating department in the Town. In the mid 1990's, the Town Board agreed with Supervisor Puglisi to consolidate departments in order to share equipment and services. It has been very efficient and we have saved a lot of money. The Highway Superintendent used to be an elected position but we put it up for a referendum to make it appointed and it won overwhelmingly. Highway now comes under DES (Department of Environmental Services) and Jeff Coleman is the Director. There are about 80 -90 employees in this department. The department includes Highway, Sanitation, Water, Parks and Central Buildings.

The Department of Technical Services. Ed Vergano is the Director of this consolidated department that includes Engineering, Code Enforcement/Building Department and Planning.

We are really proud of our Recreation Department, which includes our Office for the Aging and Youth Services. We have a full time IT person, Matt Logerfo, who reports to Peter McMillan who is the department head for Purchasing, Central Supplies and Technology. John Palmiotto is the Director of Recreation.

There are five school districts in our community: Hendrick Hudson and Lakeland Central School Districts, Croton-on-Hudson and a portion of Putnam Valley and Yorktown school districts. There has been talk in the past about having a central school district but it is extremely difficult to do and people don't want change. A coterminous school district would be something to consider, but it is very tough to do and would require referendum votes.

There are ten fire districts in the Town: Continental Village, Dogwood Fire Protection, FDR VA Hospital (paid firefighters), Lake Mohegan (also has 25 paid firefighters), Montrose, Mt Airy/Quaker Bridge, North Cortlandt Fire Protection, Verplanck, Buchanan and Croton-on-Hudson. The overriding majority of our firefighters are volunteers with a few exceptions. We are very fortunate to have them all.

Peekskill Sanitary Sewer District & Ossining Sanitary Sewer District: Ed Vergano reported that approximately 15% of the community is served by central sewer systems with the rest having septic systems. There are 17 sewer districts in the Town. Another district is in the process of being formed that includes Cortlandt Crossing, the old Fooks property (a retail center), a portion of the Cortlandt Town Center (which would be taken out of the Fawnridge Sewer District) and a few other properties. Michael Huvane wanted to clarify that it was 15% on sewer and 85% on septic and Ed Vergano said yes.

Supervisor Puglisi said to establish a sewer district is difficult. The Town Board first establishes a sewer district which then goes to the Westchester County Health Department for approval and then we

send out letters and have meetings with the residents in that section of Town to seek their approval. Ed Vergano did a townwide Sewer Master Plan several years ago so we have a plan of the neighborhoods that should be sewerred. We have gone around to some of these neighborhoods and held meetings and if there is not a good majority of the citizens that would support that bond (two-thirds is what the Town Board usually wants) then we won't do it. Sometimes they say yes, sometimes they say no – it is all based on individual finances. Also, if you live in another part of Cortlandt, we cannot legally charge you for this sewer district which is why there are individual sewer districts.

Ed Vergano said the general rule of thumb is: if it seems like the capital improvements are going to cost more than \$1500 per year per household for the next 20 years or so, people seem to lose interest. Supervisor Puglisi stated that for many sewer districts, the infrastructures are constructed by the developers so those districts residents are only paying maintenance tax which is very low. Typically we would ask, we cannot mandate, the developer to build a trunk line to assist some of the existing homes in the area.

The Town of Cortlandt has two water districts: Cortland Consolidated Water District (which is the majority of the Town) and the Montrose Improvement District (better known as MID). There is also a larger Northern Westchester Joint Water Works. In the mid 1990's Cortlandt, Yorktown, Somers and the Montrose Improvement District were individually mandated to filter their water. Supervisor Puglisi went to our neighbors in Yorktown and eventually Somers and MID and suggested instead of forming it individually, we should do it collectively and after several years, we formed the Joint Water Works. This is the plant you see on Route 6 and the other plant is in Amawalk, in the Town of Somers/Yorktown. We have 2 reservoirs: Amawalk Reservoir and Catskill Reservoir with dual pipe systems back & forth. If one shuts down, we have the other one. It services about 100,000 people and we have saved about 8 million dollars by doing it collectively. A true shared service.

Michael Huvane asked if all the water came from the NYC reservoir system and Ed Vergano said the vast majority of our water is from the NYC reservoir system, but a small percentage comes from Yorktown and a very small percentage comes from Peekskill, but 90% is coming from the Catskill reservoir system.

David Douglas asked what percentage of the Town has Town water compared to well. Ed Vergano said the Mt. Airy Road section of the Town is wells, but close to 90% of the Town of Cortlandt have Town water. It is a little bit higher percentage in the Village of Croton on wells, but in the unincorporated section of Cortlandt, a good 90% has Town water.

Medium Household Income: Our census is overseen by Chris Kehoe who stated that the Town of Cortlandt is very complicated to do census work in, the hamlets Verplanck, Montrose and Crugers are separate CDP's (census of designated places). You cannot just go to the census and punch in Town of Cortlandt because you will get more or less the 10567 zip code and then you have to add in Verplanck, Montrose and Crugers. You will have the same problem with almost everything: income, household size, etc. We are working with the County and if we get the grant we have applied for, we will work with our consultants to develop some good census data.

Adrian Hunte asked Chris Kehoe if he knew if the population had increased or decreased since the last census. Supervisor Puglisi said it went up 1% in the first decade and about 3% in the second decade. Jim Creighton said there had been a discussion in the last Master Plan about whether there was an undercount in the prior census because it seemed inconceivable that we only grew by 1% when you take into account all the improved housing stock. Chris Kehoe said it looks like there may have been

an undercount in 1990–2000 census and more or less a correction in 2010 because he thought we grew more in 1990-2000.

The Westchester County median household income is \$86,000 and the Town of Cortlandt is close to that. We have a median household income of \$75,000 – \$80,000.

Expanded Cortlandt Train Station: We used to have two very small, outdated, not handicap accessible stations in the Town: one in the Crugers area and one in the Montrose hamlet. Supervisor Puglisi was able to form a commuter committee that lobbied Metro North to buy land to build the Cortlandt train station in the late 1980's. It was June 1, 1999 when the first phase of the Cortlandt train station was opened up. We had input into the architecture, color schemes, statuary, art work and landscaping.

Metro North came back to us and said they had a lot of commuters coming from our area and they wanted to do Phase 2. We agreed even though they could supersede us (they don't need our approval) and they did a very nice job building the new train station. Metro North paid the Town of Cortlandt \$400,000 for 2 acres that the Town owned on the other side of the current tracks. Metro North bought some land from private sectors and 2 acres from the Keon Center who in turn bought their new property and built their new headquarters in the city of Peekskill. Metro North then opened up the second phase of the Cortlandt Train Station on Feb. 15, 2012. Altogether, there are about 1600-1700 spaces between both stations and the most important part about the new train station is the pedestrian walkway. So you just have to walk over the railway tracks if you work at the VA or if you are a Veteran going to the VA.

The new train station is also a green facility They have a lot of bicycle racks and spaces for hybrid cars and very soon, electric car outlet stations are going to be put in, just as we are going to have here at the Town Hall. We received a grant that Chris Kehoe and Jeff Coleman worked on and that Metro North is paralleling so within the next couple of months, you will hear about the ribbon cutting for the electric outlet stations. The closest electric car outlet stations are in White Plains.

Chris Kehoe mentioned that one of the big things we worked on was getting the station named the Cortlandt Train Station in keeping with the Town's identity. Supervisor Puglisi said we need more identity so every time we have an application (Cortlandt Town Center, Cortlandt Train Station, Cortlandt Crossing and Cortlandt Estates) we always ask that the name Cortlandt be used and we have been successful in that regard. A policy from the last Master Plan was more Cortlandt identity. Ed Vergano stated that in 2013, the Town received a Planning Federation Award for the Cortlandt Train Station project.

Adrian Hunte pointed out that when you get off of the Taconic Parkway, the sign says Peekskill, Yorktown, and there is no signage for Cortlandt. Supervisor Puglisi said she was working on that, that she has written letters, sent emails and has “begged” them and their response back has been - ok, we will get back to you on that. Let's put it in the new Master Plan, said Supervisor Puglisi.

Some of the Major Employers in the Town are: the Cortlandt Town Center with 1500 fulltime & part-time employees, the Hudson Valley Hospital Center with 1200 employees, Entergy with 1200 fulltime employees (and 2000 employees on a given day including contractors) and the VA Hospital with 600 employees (it was twice this amount but has dwindled down). There are still some permanent veterans who reside there from WWII, Korea and Vietnam. When you hear us say we want to save the VA, we want to say we are not only saving the VA for veteran's services but for jobs also. The brand new Curry Subaru/Toyota, which recently opened up on Cortlandt Boulevard, has roughly 200 employees

between the 2 new buildings and is a very green building. School districts & local governments are too many to name with over 1000 employees combined.

The Town of Cortlandt has 200 employees and in the summer 400 because we hire Town youth for our seasonal positions.

Hudson River Shoreline: Rosemary Boyle-Lasher stated that is what makes the Town of Cortlandt so unique is the Hudson River and our access to it in the area in the hamlet of Verplanck. We are one of the only areas between New York City and Albany where access to the river is not encumbered by railroad tracks. That is a very attractive thing when you are trying to seek funding from places like the State and other areas including the Federal government and we have had some success with grants. We view the shoreline of the Hudson River from the Bear Mountain Bridge to the north all the way down to Croton Point in the south as very valuable and is one of the things that attracts people to our community and one of the reasons why we are unique because of our dedication to bring people to the river and the river to the people.

We have implemented policies from our last Master Plan, including our active and passive recreational facilities. There has been a great deal of focus in creating new opportunities at the Cortlandt Waterfront Park which is a newly named park. Some recent improvements there include our boat launch, our Veteran's memorial, the new playground and Councilman Farrell is working with the Cortlandt Crewing Association. We have hangers there that will allow the Association to store their crew boats.

Supervisor Puglisi stated that we just had our first ever 5K run a few weekends ago with a little over 100 people running in it, including Master Plan member Adrian Hunte. There are a couple of sites in Cortlandt that are used for the Westchester County Eagle fest in association with Teatown that is very popular and we are very proud of our association with them.

A lot is happening on the river and we are very proud of it. Additional use of the riverfront property should be a part of our new Master Plan.

Policy 21 statescontinue to improve and maintain State and County parks within the Town. Supervisor Puglisi said you have probably all heard me say we would love to have George's Island. It is a Westchester County park and the Town of Cortlandt used it for our 225th Celebration this year and Supervisor Puglisi has asked the County Executive if we could perhaps take it over – he is getting back to us. That would be referred to the Recreation Department and the PRC Advisory Board for their input to the Town Board. It could be a policy in our upcoming Master Plan policies.

Steamboat Park: Rosemary Boyle-Lasher said this goes back to 1988 when a large part of our efforts to preserve open space in Verplanck started. Steamboat Park is a very popular spot for our senior citizens, a place where they can park their cars and be close to the river. Supervisor Puglisi said Rosemary Boyle-Lasher was a charter member of the group working on this. Our late friend, Marie Pritchard, was also instrumental in getting the park and a pavilion has been named after Marie.

Chris Kehoe mentioned that where the Overlook is, there used to be an oil distribution facility and that area used to be very industrial in nature. Supervisor Puglisi said we bought the land, a former marina, for \$600,000 in 1992/1993. Oil tanks were discovered underground during renovation and it took us 13 years to clean it up. Almost a million dollar cleanup and thankfully the Brownsfield program was there from the State and we got about 95% of the money back.

Lake Meahagh: It is a unique lake in our Town that was originally constructed from the Knickerbocker Ice Company. It is owned by the Town and is a manmade lake that has had some environmental issues. As part of Stormwater Phase II we had to identify certain lakes and water bodies in our town that match a certain criteria (we had heavy amounts of phosphorus in the lake). Ed was instrumental in working with consultants to get an aerator in the lake and to reconstruct the floodgate so we are able to open and close it in the winter time. You will see the lake drop pretty aggressively in the winter resulting in the freeze off of some nasty stuff. It is working very well. Just a few years ago the lake was very green.

Up until about 6 or 7 years ago, there was an algae problem with an extremely high phosphorus content which probably originated from the septic systems around and adjacent to the lake. Supervisor Puglisi said we retained an environmental consultant to give us ideas: aeration, lowering the lake, etc. Ed Vergano said we received about 15 recommendations and chose 3 non-chemical ones. We used aeration and the raising and the lowering of the lake to control the algae. We lower it in the winter to freeze off a lot of the vegetation that grows during the summer which leads to the degradation of the lake water. We received grants to pay for the aerators and they are working quite well. A month ago, Frank Farrell's crewing association was in Lake Meahagh crewing.

Jim Creighton asked when we started lowering the lake. Ed Vergano said about 7 years ago.

Jim Creighton mentioned how the Recreation Department used to allow ice skating on Lake Meahagh but now it very rarely gets thick enough to allow that. Many years ago it froze all the time, not the same now, perhaps from warming issues.

Cortlandt Waterfront Park: The Park was owned by Jim Martin who passed away about 8 years ago. Mr. Martin had property by the Hudson River that had a mobile home park, a homestead and a seaplane base on it. The Town entered into a life estate with Mr. Martin around 1993 where the Town gets the land and the property owner gets the benefit of not paying taxes for the rest of his life. He was allowed to reside on a part of it if he desired and the rest becomes Town dedicated park land. In a separate agreement, the mobile homes were able to stay there after his death for another 10 years and there are 2 years remaining on that agreement. We wanted to be fair to the mobile homeowners as it is affordable housing in a sense. It was a fair arrangement for everyone. We have this pristine property with no railroad tracks going through it. We have done all these things on this piece of land and we have a lot more to go and your input will be very valuable on this as we proceed.

We also named a playground after Mr. Martin. Rosemary Boyle-Lasher mentioned that the Town worked with the Recreation Department and the PRC Advisory Council and incorporated little planes into the playground to keep the seaplane base theme in his memory. Supervisor Puglisi thought of the planes for the playground area.

Veteran's Memorial: A request came from our Veterans to have a memorial place in the Town and where better than to have it on the river. The memorial was dedicated in 2012.

Community Boat Launch: The boat launch was dedicated in May of 2013. We received a grant from the State for an emergency services boat launch on the Hudson River just for firefighters, ambulance and police for emergency services boats to rescue people from the river. Since then, people have asked for a public boat launch. We were able to appropriate funds and had the dedication this year. Right next to that, Frank Farrell & Ed Vergano are working on another boat launch for the crew boats.

Affordable Housing: The Town of Cortlandt has been a leader in building affordable housing units. In 1988, four affordable houses were built on Bank Street in Croton-on-Hudson and that was the first affordable housing units in the Town/Village. It became a part of our fabric that we should consider affordable housing throughout the different parts of the Town.

Chris Kehoe said Jacobs Hill was originally proposed as a conventional subdivision by the developer Bill Balter. It was then converted to senior affordable housing with some rentals and some ownership units. We won a Federation Award for that plan. With subdivisions, the Town Board does not mandate affordable housing as part of Code, the Planning Board does it on a case by case basis: 6 units in Cortlandt Ridge, 2 units in Hollowbrook Mews & the most recently Roundtop (which is the 91 units near the new train station). Roundtop is part of the new affordable housing initiative where the Town of Cortlandt has more than met our requirement with respect to the housing settlement that the County Executive talks about. Roundtop provided 91 of the 750 units that the County has to complete. We have done more than other communities. As many as 12 units in Roundtop were designated for veterans.

Michael Huvane asked if the County helped to pay for this or does it just count towards their goal. Supervisor Puglisi said it just counts towards their goal of finding 750 affordable units countywide. Chris Kehoe did say that the private developer did get a lot of assistance from the County for infrastructure.

The Town of Cortlandt has a diverse housing stock which we are proud of from high end homes, to apartments and affordable housing scattered geographically throughout the Town, not just in one location, so we are very proud of that fact. We received awards for being leaders in affordable housing. Andy Spano gave us an award for being the first community to meet the first round of affordability.

These are reasons why Master Plans are so important. The State recommends that every 10 years we update, review or start a new Master Plan. Things evolve, things change. We are in a new era. However, the history of where we have gone on this journey is so important.

Furnace Dock Lake: When Con Edison said they were going to drain Furnace Dock Lake, Supervisor Puglisi & the Town Board would not allow it. It is a 100 year lake that was dammed up for the steam engine trains and is an important ecological area on 55 acres. Con Edison agreed to pay one million dollars for the repair of the dam to keep the lake for another 100 years and the Town paid \$300,000 for the lake property (\$90,000 to come from a new developer if they proceed and the rest of the money came from recreation funds and an open space account.) The Town now owns the lake and watershed land.

Michael Huvane asked if the dam was up to the State's mandate, that the State is getting real tough on dams these days and Supervisor Puglisi said the NYSDEC has been very much involved and has to approve it.

Hudson Highlands Gateway Park: The developer Martin Ginsburg wanted to build 352 units on this mountain, so a coalition was formed with NYS (then Gov. Pataki, who gave one million dollars), Westchester County (then County Executive Andy Spano who gave one million dollars), the Town of Cortlandt (who gave one million dollars), Scenic Hudson (who gave 2.5 million dollars), \$600,000 from private citizens and \$100,000 waived by Mr. Ginsburg. The land was appraised for 6 million dollars. The Town paid cash. It is now reserved open space hiking lands and we are very proud of that coalition.

Hollowbrook Golf Course: Wilder Balter Partners came in with 3 proposals: one was to build 200 homes spread across 100 acres, one was clustering with about 200 townhouses and one was a golf course with land (78 acres) to be deeded to the Town. We started a charette – a committee that (in this case) evaluates planning applications. Jim Creighton was on this charette and the third option, the golf course, was decided upon. The golf course has been generous allowing the high school teams to play for free, having two days a week where Cortlandt residents & guests can play at a reduced fee and they allow us to have an annual charitable golf outing for our first responders. We just held our 8th one this year with the most golfers we have ever had.

Muriel H. Morabito Community Senior Citizen Center: This center was named after the first woman Town Supervisor who served in the 1970's. Supervisor Morabito was able to get the funding to build the center which is used for senior citizens during the day, canteens for kids and basketball programs at night and where also residents can rent it out for a nominal fee. We enlarged it about 10 years ago.

Youth and Recreation Center: The Youth Center is on Memorial Drive near the Cortlandt Train Station and was opened in September 2010. We bonded for this facility and Colleen Anderson is our Director.

Charles Cook Park: Cook Park is off of Furnace Dock Road named after former Supervisor Charles Cook who served in the 1960's. He was Supervisor for 12 years. We have put a tremendous amount of money into this pool over the years, but it is very, very popular. Our next project is a water spray park to the left of the bath houses at Charles Cook pool.

The Dog Park: Jim Creighton said it was a tough park to do because we were on the leading edge when a lot of other Town's wanted to do them, we just happened to have the perfect location for it. One of the biggest problems is building something that would get a lot of use and with the potential for a lot of noise, you would not want that built by a lot of houses. The location at Sprout Brook Park was perfect for this park. Town staff did a really great job at researching on how it should operate and what it should look like and we ended up with a small dog and a large dog section that makes it work right. Town staff also built some of the materials in there, like the play sections. It is probably the most used park in Town.

Town Playgrounds: Michael Huvane said the most recent playground to be built (by developer Val Santucci) in the Town of Cortlandt is the Croton Avenue playground. The other playgrounds in Town have been modernized. Michael Huvane remembers growing up in the city and having small neighborhood playgrounds, mini parks and that is what the Croton Avenue playground became. All different ages use it and there have been no traffic issues which was a concern. The Muriel H. Morabito Community Center playground is handicapped accessible and we are one of the few towns in the County that has that. Chris Kehoe said all of our playgrounds seem new and that is because we have staff in the Recreation Department who have been trained, licensed and certified to be Playground Inspectors which allows us not to have to contract out for that service. Every 2 years they have to look at each park to see what needs to be done to maintain it. Recreation for all age groups is really important in this town.

We are considering creating another field, a lacrosse field, at Sprout Brook Park. From Policy 16, if the Old Croton Egg Farm property is developed and is clustered, then some of that property may become another field.

The City of Peekskill used to be part of the Town of Cortlandt. It was a village, but it broke away from the Town and became incorporated in 1941. Supervisor Puglisi always asks them if the City of

Peekskill wants to come back and join up with the Town. They have not yet said yes. To get to the City of Peekskill you have to go through the Town of Cortlandt.

Hudson Valley Hospital Center: Rich Becker said we have a brand new state of the art facility and all the rooms are now singles. The emergency room and radiology were also completely redone. Right next door to the hospital is the new medical office building that allows the doctors to shuttle back & forth between their offices and the hospital. The Hospital Board and President John Federspiel have gone through two expansions in the past few years. Hudson Valley Hospital Center used to be called the Peekskill Hospital even though it was in the town of Cortlandt. When the expansion was being done, Supervisor Puglisi asked for it to be renamed the Cortlandt Hospital but a compromise was met and it was named the Hudson Valley Hospital Center.

Michael Huvane asked if sidewalks would be put in the area and Supervisor Puglisi said we could certainly talk about it and that it sounds like a good idea. It could be in the new Master Plan.

Cortlandt Town Center: In the 1990's, the then named Mid-Westchester Mall was falling apart. CBL Associates bought it and they doubled the size of the old mall. It is 900,000 square feet. Supervisor Puglisi also asked that the name Cortlandt be in the name of the mall. It went through a five year Planning Board process.

Cortlandt Boulevard: Route 6 is a NYSDOT highway that starts in Provincetown on Cape Cod and goes all the way to San Diego, CA. Supervisor Puglisi asked the NYSDOT if our little part of Route 6 could be called Cortlandt Boulevard. After three years and many emails and meetings, they finally said yes. We asked the developer of the new Cortlandt Storage to cover the expensive of the new Cortlandt Boulevard signs and he agreed. Supervisor Puglisi & Rosemary Boyle-Lasher designed the signs. Supervisor Puglisi said that some residents were concerned that the Town paid for the signs but we did not, Mark Giordano did, the owner of the storage units.

We have a streetscape design for Cortlandt Boulevard. Ed Vergano said we received a two million dollar federal grant for streetscape improvements which involves sidewalks, do not block areas, landscaping and decorative plantings in center island areas and street lamps (which are already installed thanks to Mr. Curry at the intersections of Westbrook Drive & Locust Avenue). We have identified an area between Locust Avenue and Van Cortlandt Elementary School that we want to focus on. We are in the process of designing – everything has to be approved by the NYSDOT. Chris Kehoe mentioned that Supervisor Puglisi has wanted to see for the past 20 years the power lines put underground but it is very expensive. We are going to make that a policy of this Master Plan. Ed Vergano said we received an estimate from Con Edison who said it would cost around two million dollars.

The theme of the Cortlandt Boulevard (as it relates to economic development) is to keep with Town identification. It was not obvious to people in the past where Peekskill ends and Cortlandt begins or where Yorktown begins and Cortlandt ends so the new signs definitely makes that clearer. More importantly, Supervisor Puglisi did a significant reach out to all the businesses along Cortlandt Boulevard and worked with the Assessor and the State to see if any businesses wished to change their address to Cortlandt Boulevard. Many of them found that to be a very attractive thing from a business prospective. We are trying to make the road as attractive as possible. The banners are also important along the Route 6 corridors, paid for by the Town.

VA Hudson Valley Health Care System: The Department of Veteran's Affairs in Washington, DC has unfair plans to downsize the 162 acre campus. They wanted to lease off the land to a private developer

but we held rallies and won that fight. Recently, they want to demolish five of the buildings but Supervisor Puglisi, Veterans and other officials believe that is only a back door way to dismantle the entire VA. They say they want to do this to save money in Washington. Our Veterans deserve to have the best possible services now and into the future. The VA Hospital is historical, it opened in 1950. Chris Kehoe said we are in the process of retaining an architectural historian to investigate the entire campus in an attempt to get it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It has already been deemed eligible which means the government would have to go through a process if they wanted to demolish it, it will be better protected. It is currently zoned as single family 4 acre residential.

Bear Mountain Toll House: The toll house is on the National Historic Registry. We had asked the State (Gov. Pataki) for a \$500,000 grant to preserve and renovate the toll house and it was reopened in 2002. We have a director Laura-Lee Keating who is one of our historians and we have volunteers who operate it during the season (May – Nov.). The Town of Cortlandt put in \$250,000 to complete the work. The toll house first opened up its doors in 1924. It was built by the Harriman family and it cost 75 cents to go through the tolls in 1924. There was actually a gate that would be lifted up.

Croton Dam: The dam was built in 1892 and opened up in 1906. It was made by hand by many Italian immigrants. There is a gorgeous Village park there.

Bear Mountain Bridge: The bridge was also opened up in 1924 and it was built by Mr. Harriman. Folklore was it was built so his wife could go across the Hudson River to play cards with her girlfriends. Michael Huvane asked if the Bear Mountain Bridge was the first suspension bridge built in the country. Ed Vergano said no but Seth Freach said it was the longest. The Town of Cortlandt starts at the Bear Mountain Bridge.

Aaron Copland House: One of the foremost American composers in the United States of America lived in the Town of Cortlandt the last 30 years of his life. He lived on lower Washington Street and did a lot of his composing there. After Aaron Copland's death, his home was put up for sale. The Town did not want it to be sold and instead it became a museum in his memory. But it has become more than that, it is a living museum and is open for events and concerts during the course of the year. There is a wonderful foundation associated with it and Supervisor Puglisi recommends going onto their website. It is a mini Tanglewood and artists can reside there for a period of time.

Green Initiatives: Dani Glaser has been our consultant on important issues since 2009. The Town staff and government have done a wonderful job changing the culture. We have done a Greenhouse inventory and are focusing on our fleet and on changes that can be made to improve efficiency. We also have a residential program called Energize Cortlandt because the second biggest emitter of greenhouse gas is through our residents and homes. It is a program with information on how to make energy efficiency very affordably. We are one of six municipalities in the State that are in pilot program called Climate Smart and we are in the process of being certified. We have an incredible Green Team at the Town that puts on a Green Fair, Community Swap and Earth Day. These topics are also going to be very important in our new Master Plan.

During Supervisor Puglisi's first year as Supervisor we had a brand new mandate from the State to recycle and we had to come up with policies for recycling, implementing them and educating the public. We got together with other municipalities (Croton-on-Hudson, Ossining, Yorktown and Buchanan) and formed a coalition and saved money collectively. Shared services are huge in our town government. We have been on the forefront and have received awards for sharing services. Altogether, in 22 years, we have saved about 15–20 million dollars in sharing services. A big part of that was our

new police plan with the Westchester County Police who use offices at the Town Hall and also with the NYS Police. We have more police than we ever had before. We used to have a tiny little police force of 10 officers.

Another shared service is the Cortlandt/Peekskill Regional Paramedics. We all think we have paramedics for ever, we never did. In the 1990's we formed the ALS - Advanced Life Support. They can do more than the EMS. We did it collectively, regionally sharing services and is called the Peekskill/Cortlandt Regional Paramedics and they are located in the Hudson Valley Hospital Center. Residents are charged a very minimal fee every year on their tax bills.

GIS: Ed Vergano and Rosemary Boyle-Lasher are the experts on this subject. Rosemary said we have a new supplier for our GIS. We can access our geographical information from our website right now. This new webpage is being expanded next year with new mechanisms for better efficiencies.

We want you to LIKE us on Facebook. We also want everyone in Town to sign up for Cortlandt emails for emergencies, hurricanes or whatever. We have 16,000 parcels/homes and about 3000 have signed up for our emails so far.

We are so proud of everything we have done and we have more to do and that is why you are here. We wanted to educate you on the history of what has been done and what can be done more in the future, stated Supervisor Puglisi.

We will do the homework at the next meeting. Rosemary Boyle-Lasher has incorporated some of the policies already into the PowerPoint. We will be referring to this rather large document throughout the year.

Michael Huvane said it was nice being able to connect to the previous Master Plan when you point to something that has already been done.

Rosemary Boyle-Lasher said we have to think of what is next.

Supervisor Puglisi said we wanted to share with the committee so many of the things that have come out of previous Master Plans.

Michael Huvane asked about the old Con Edison building on Conklin Ave and Route 202. He thought it had been donated to Hudson Valley Hospital Center but now it has a For Sale sign on it. Chris Kehoe said it is now on the market. Michael also mentioned that the land by Cortlandt Lanes is for sale. Chris Kehoe said that is a critical area on the zoning and land use map and shows it as residential. It really cannot be developed commercially unless coming out of this comprehensive planning process are decisions that maybe that should be a commercial node or a recreation node. Chris said that is exactly the type of thing that we will be talking about with this committee. Rosemary Boyle-Lasher said you are thinking correctly Michael about those two areas of land.

Supervisor Puglisi said we have to talk about the next steps. Chris Kehoe said we have not finalized next month's agenda but we are thinking of having a Department Head or Department Heads coming in and going more in depth about their departments and letting members ask them questions.

Rosemary Boyle-Lasher is hopefully going to have at the December meeting a draft of the 2014 meeting dates.

Michael Huvane asked if we were still working on a shared site, Supervisor Puglisi said yes. Rosemary Boyle-Lasher said it is a little more complicated from a legal perspective but we are hoping to have a login section of our website available where we will be placing essential documents. It will be just for the committee and there will only be one login, not separate individual logins. Rosemary hopes to have this done by our December meeting.

Michael Fleming said we talked about a few properties tonight and asked if it was possible for the Staff Members to tell the committee what the other properties are that we are considering. There is a lot of land that we own called PROS (Parks, Recreational and Open Space) and a lot of that we may want to keep pristine or we might want to do hiking trails or cross country skiing paths. A map will be circulated to the committee as we proceed.

Chris Kehoe said maybe when John Palmiotto comes, he will bring the Parks & Recreation long range plans that Michael Huvane and Jim Creighton worked on. It is a five year plan for Recreation which we will use when considering all of these ideas when putting policies together.

Supervisor Puglisi also stated that she likes bus tours and that we may be doing some during the course of the Master Plan committee process.

Minutes will be emailed in advance and as soon as the next agenda is determined, it will be sent out to you.

Supervisor Puglisi said we have given you an overview, next we will get into specifics – topic oriented, department oriented.

Supervisor Puglisi thanked everyone for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend this meeting and to participate in this important process.

Meeting adjourned 9:12pm.