
4. The 1985 Plan – As proposed... As realized

The following comments are from the 1985 Comprehensive Plan:

The plan can do little to influence the future of the town of Meredith by itself. It is advisory and must depend upon the willingness of persons and groups, public and private, to translate the proposals into actions.

Unless and until some type of commitment is made, the town will continue to change in a haphazard, sometimes harmful manner, in response to speculative interests. If this process continues the responsibilities for decision-making will gradually pass on to a higher level of government. Neither of these alternatives is acceptable. The responsibilities for the town's development and management of its resources is a local one and should be accomplished, for the most part, by programs administered by the Town.

Regardless of governmental actions, private individuals will perform a major role in the implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*, for these individuals still retain the decision to invest both their time and money in any particular community. As residents of the municipality, they will also be called upon to support local governmental programs, both at the polls and through the payment of taxes. Thus, a blending of public and private actions is necessary to attain the desired community development.

Those who worked on the original plan had a strong feeling that forethought and informed planning were necessary to achieve desired outcomes in the municipality. In this section, portions of the 1985 Comprehensive Plan are analyzed to try to better understand what the residents were trying to achieve at that time and then compare that to what was actually implemented. This analysis will allow the updated goals and objectives to be as effective and useful as possible.

The pieces of text in italics are Goals taken directly from the 1985 Plan. Following each Goal is a summary of what was achieved by the Town.

GOAL #1 – *Maintain and Protect the Town's Natural Resources*

▪ **Objectives**

- 1. Monitor and maintain air, water and forest quality*
- 2. Understand the impact of man's activity on our natural resources*
- 3. Promote an understanding of the importance of the town's natural resources through a citizen awareness program*
- 4. Encourage the proper design and management of recreation activities*

▪ **Means of Achievement**

- 1. Enforce existing regulations*
- 2. Natural resource plan*
- 3. Open space and recreation plan*
- 4. Educational programs on environmental topics*

Analysis: Protecting and maintaining the environment should always be a main goal of comprehensive planning. The objectives, however, were very difficult to actually achieve.

In 1975, the Town passed an ordinance entitled the Town of Meredith Building Permit Code in accordance with New York State Town Law Article 16, Section 262. The ordinance established two districts, hazard and non-hazard, and a building permit system under which only newly constructed buildings were subject to permit. Under this permit system, there were criteria to be followed depending on whether the building was in the flood zone or outside of it. A building inspector was appointed, and ultimately the Town expanded the position to Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), the person responsible for ensuring that all construction met the codes. A local law for Flood Damage Prevention was enacted in 1984, further describing conditions for floodplain development. The CEO also serves as the Town's floodplain coordinator.

Today, all new construction or renovation work in the Town of Meredith must be performed in accordance with the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. The CEO is required to keep current with code changes.

GOAL #2 – Preserve and Enhance the Small-town, Rural Quality

▪ ***Objectives***

- 1. Direct development into and around existing hamlets and villages and away from those portions of the town where significant physical limitations to growth exist*
- 2. Encourage support of local civic organizations*
- 3. Develop means of expressing local concerns*

▪ ***Means of Achievement***

- 1. Public meetings and communications with other groups*
- 2. Provide aid in securing sources of funding for community projects*
- 3. Land use plan*
- 4. Implementation of land use code*

Analysis: Preserving Meredith's way of life maintains the rural traditions on which the town was built. Objective #1 supports the goal very well, and achievements were specific:

- **Dump Control** - In 1987, the Town Board passed a legislation to prohibit illegal dumping in Meredith. It establishes restrictions, exceptions and penalties regarding placement of garbage and rubbish.
- **Junk and Junkyards** - The Town Board enacted "The Town of Meredith Junk Storage Law" in 1995, which regulates junk storage and junkyards and specifies locational requirements for the placement and screening of such materials. The law also established a permit system for new junkyards and required a temporary permit for existing junkyards to come

into compliance with the new regulations. If existing junkyards did not meet the criteria of the new law within a set time period, the Town could remove the offending materials at the landowner's expense.

- Adult Uses - The Town Board addressed adult uses in an ordinance in 1996. The ordinance defines what adult uses are and specifies locational requirements for those uses to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.
- Mobile Home Parks - In 2000, the Town enacted a law promoting the efficient placement and siting mobile home parks. It was realized that a large park that was improperly placed in the Town would have a negative impact on the rural character and resources of the area. The law requires a permit for new parks and addresses the elements needed for the Planning Board during its review. The standards adopted by the Town were modified from Article 19 AA of New York State's Executive Law and include reference to the requirements of the State's Uniform Building Code.
- Cell Towers - The Town Board passed the "Communication Tower and Facilities Law" in 2002. The regulation encourages co-location to minimize the number of towers in the town and specifies locational requirements to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.

The other objectives were not as specific, and thus difficult to implement.



Photo 12. Signs