

The Town of Albion, Town of Gaines and the Village of Albion have begun a project to review and refresh our Comprehensive Plan, a project we hope will improve the quality of life in our community for all its citizens. A Comprehensive Plan, sometimes called a master plan, provides broad vision for the future growth of a community. It is often formulated using the guidelines from previous community visioning exercises and strategic plans. It is the next level of detail in the planning process after the basic community visioning steps. Typical elements of a comprehensive plan include projections of population growth and correlated plans for transportation, utilities, and community facilities to accommodate or direct that growth. The comprehensive plan is typically implemented through zoning codes and subdivision regulations. It serves as a guide for officials when reviewing development permits and applications to rezone individual sites. Our original Comprehensive Plan dates to 1996, and after that Vision 2000 was completed. This is an appropriate time to begin this project.

Citizen and business owner involvement is necessary for the process to be successful. If you are interested in being considered for involvement in this exciting process, please send a letter of interest and brief resume to the Town of Albion, Att: Councilperson Clifford Thom.

The unusual circumstance we face in dealing with a Comprehensive Plan is a loss of population. In 2006, the estimated Orleans County population loss was 5.2%; in 2008 it was 5.8%. The municipalities facing the greatest loss in Orleans County are the Village and Town of Albion. Our challenge, when working on our comprehensive plan, is to reverse that trend.

The NYS Department of State and Empire State Future held a conference in Albany on October 7: Revitalizing NY: Building a New Economy through Sustainable Development. Supervisor Koehler attended the opening ceremonies and then a series of panels. The following is a summary, by no means inclusive

“Smart Growth is sensible, planned growth that integrates economic development and community quality-of-life. It encourages growth in developed areas with existing infrastructure to sustain it—municipal centers, “Main Streets,” urban cores, historic districts, hamlets, and older “first-ring” suburbs. Communities and regions built on Smart Growth principles are becoming increasingly attractive to workers and businesses.” The top principles of Smart Growth are:

1. Compact, mixed-use community design
2. Re-use and re-development of existing buildings
3. Regional planning
4. “Green” buildings and infrastructure
5. Mobility choices—walking, biking, public transit
6. Well-planned and well-maintained parks and public spaces
7. Targeted investments in affordable housing
8. Age-integrated Communities. Collaborative, “bottom-up”, stakeholder-driven planning

If you would like a copy of Supervisor Koehler’s summary of the day, please leave a message (with your address) on her voice mail, or email [supervisor@townofalbion.com](mailto:supervisor@townofalbion.com) for an electronic copy.

One initiative the Town is pursuing is to help our residents take advantage of Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Credits. CEO Dan Strong and Supervisor Judy Koehler will be attending a conference on the topic, and the plan is to work with the Albion Main Street Alliance and the Village of Albion to offer a series of educational workshops to the public. Those workshops will be announced in January.

Even before the Board made the decision to collaborate on a three-municipality Comprehensive Plan, the Board took the steps necessary to change the zoning on the west side of Route 98, south of the village from general business to light industrial. The net effect of that was to permit further development in that area. One business has already opened, and we are investigating other opportunities for development there. In light industrial, all permitted general business uses are allowed. The change is in adding light industrial uses to the area.

The Town received a Records Management Grant for sorting through and disposing of out-dated court records. The grant made possible the disposal of 10 boxes of materials from our vault. There was also a \$1,500 allocation for the purchase of software for management of court records in the future, but since receipt of the grant the Town learned that even better software would be available from the state at no cost within a year. Therefore, the Town declined receipt of those funds as unnecessary use of State tax dollars.

The Town recently completed a security audit performed by its court security provider, Wackenhut Corporation. Details of the audit, because of valid security reasons, are not all available to the public. However, the review confirmed our excellent safety and security provisions.

Upgrades to the Town building, under the supervision and direction of our Code Enforcement/ Zoning Officer/ Fire Marshall (Dan Strong) and Councilperson Thom, are on schedule to be complete by Thanksgiving. Those upgrades include a ramp and door to/ from the dais, replacement windows in the court office, three new interior doors, fireproofing of highway garage wall, new and expanded sidewalks to the entrances on the north and west sides of the building, secure storage and adaptation of existing conference room for prisoner seating during court. This was paid for by one-time revenues and grant funds received in 2008 and the regular budget allocation for building needs.

Water Improvement Areas 7 A, B, C, and D should be complete by the end of this month. Water District 5 extension 1 is complete and was accepted by the board in September. Residents who require financial assistance to pay for the hook up to the municipal system in any district are encouraged to contact Supervisor Koehler (589-7048 ext 14 or [supervisor@townofalbion.com](mailto:supervisor@townofalbion.com)) to request a grant/ low-interest loan application.

We invite you to attend our monthly meetings, which are held on the second Monday of the month. Additional meetings are scheduled on an as-needed basis. A calendar of town activities is in the front window.

Town and Water Clerk Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30-11 a.m., 12:00-4:00 p.m., closed Wednesdays & Saturday;

Code/ Zoning Enforcement: Monday 12-8 p.m.; Tues-Thurs 7 a.m.-3:00 p.m.;  
1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 9 a.m.-12 p.m.