



Village of New Glarus Comprehensive Plan Chamber Board Prioritization Exercise February 17, 2016

1. WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF NEW GLARUS? In answering this question, you might think about:

What New Glarus in the year 2035 looks and feels like

How the community functions

What New Glarus' best future features are

How the community inspires residents, land owners and businesses to improve their lives

RESPONSES:

- Maintain Swiss theme and heritage, which has been important to growth. This should include architecture and attracting businesses with ethnic uniqueness
- More business growth—both retail and light industrial would be good
- Variety of shops and services
- Provide good overall experience for visitors, so they come back with friends
- Focus on the image, character, and activity of the downtown
- A Village government open to new ideas, with a can-do attitude to get things done
- Manage tax rate to allow people to afford community—provide value for taxes and fees collected
- Figure out and provide what will engage the new generation (parks & recreation?)
- Bike trail and State park are a critical component

This is the Vision Statement from the Village's 2005 Plan, which was shared with the Board after the above discussion: "The Village of New Glarus will maintain a high quality living environment, with a full complement of community services, while retaining a relaxed small town character. It will support excellence in education, encourage and support commercial business development, promote light industrial development and maintain and promote its Swiss heritage through its architecture and annual festivals. Property values and the surrounding environment will be protected through partnering and planning with Village residents and the surrounding Towns to assure efficient, coordinated development." Board members felt this statement was pretty much on target

2. WHAT INITIATIVES SHOULD THE VILLAGE PRIORITIZE OVER THE NEXT 5-10 YEARS? In answering this question, you might want to think about:

Land use or zoning	Recreation and community activities
Economic development	Resource protection
Redevelopment	Community services
Tourism	Public facilities
Housing	Utilities & stormwater management
Neighborhood development	Intergovernmental relations
Historic preservation	
Transportation	

RESPONSES:

- Provide financial assistance for improvement of downtown buildings (e.g., no interest loans, tax subsidy) to make it look like America's Little Switzerland
 - State and federal historic tax credits, most easily accessed in historic districts
 - Revolving loan fund via tax incremental district funding
- Revisions to sign ordinance to allowing for modifications from strict requirements while still achieve the purpose of the regulations
- Improve consistency in enforcement of regulations
 - If require Swiss theme, should be consistent about it.
- Explore possibilities around the pool for more family friendly activities
- Extend bike trail/riverwalk
- Consider community center for all generations (exercise, dance, etc.), to create a more self-sufficient community.
 - Look to existing spaces first.
 - Could lower level of Swiss Center serve a senior center function?
 - Expand use of Village Hall—larger meeting room is ugly and underused.
- Catch up on stewardship and maintenance of Village facilities (e.g., garage) and basic Village functions (e.g., snow removal).
- Rationalize and lower water service rates.
- Explore potential for festival grounds with shelter, relatively close to downtown. Railroad Street near the Depot may be a good on-street location. 4th Avenue may not be the best spot—churches, fire access, funeral conflicts.
- Need better intergovernmental cooperation between Village and Town

- Need to address shortage of land for new light industrial and commercial development; have businesses we are trying to respond to but don't have space.
- Improve aesthetics of entryway experience along Highway 69
 - Railroad Street; backs of buildings/storage uses
 - Sewage treatment plant's lack of landscaping

3. WHAT INITIATIVES DOES YOUR GROUP OR ORGANIZATION HAVE FOR THE NEXT 1, 5, OR 10 YEARS? How can these initiatives be advanced or coordinated through the Village and its updated Comprehensive Plan?

RESPONSES:

- Tourism—it's what keeps our shops and restaurants going.
 - Chamber is focused on tourism and festivals mainly
 - Festivals are critical to the community. 50% of festival revenue goes back into the community (e.g., playground equipment, fire equipment, downtown beautification)
 - Chamber staff has grown to fill needs and lessen reliance on volunteers
- Improve cooperation between Chamber and Village
 - Can Village be responsible for banners, decorations, watering flowers, and beautification in general?
 - Other villages play a more active role
- Can there be better outreach to Jack Links, and community contributions?
- Addressing challenges in maintaining Swiss heritage as time moves on:
 - Need to broaden base to not just people of Swiss heritage
 - Can schools teach the "Swiss-ness?"—right now summer school class offered
 - Continue and expand German language program?