

# CALLING ALL RESIDENTS: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We, the newly formed Comprehensive Planning Committee, need your help in creating the 2007 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Niles. The Comprehensive Planning Committee is a volunteer group comprised of residents, business owners and other interested citizens and we have been charged with developing a document that will help guide future growth and development, while maintaining the traditional, rural character and high quality of life that we all cherish. The comprehensive plan will reflect the views of the entire community; therefore, we need your ideas. ***Our first public meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 24, 2007 at 1:00 pm in the Niles Town Hall on New Hope Road.*** All residents and business owners are encouraged to attend.

Our town is uniquely situated on two of the Finger Lakes: Skaneateles Lake and Owasco Lake, both sources of drinking water and numerous recreational opportunities. Niles is also comprised of rolling hills, vast expanses of open land, working farms and rural living at its best. These water resources and scenic landscapes are a tremendous asset to our community and they need to be protected for future generations to enjoy.

As more people move to this scenic and affordable area of the Finger Lakes region, how do we share and maintain these natural resources? How do we entice new businesses to locate to our town and employ our residents? How do we balance land use changes and development in our community? These and several other questions will be addressed during the comprehensive planning process.

A comprehensive plan, also referred to as a master plan, is a public, consensus-driven document that will be used by the elected

officials as a blueprint for decision making within our town. The plan will not only include information on the history of Niles and the changes that have already taken place, but will focus on how we want our community to look in the future.



View of Owasco Lake from Route 38A.  
Photo taken by K. LaManche

The major components of the Town of Niles Comprehensive Plan will include:

- An assessment of our community, trends in population, housing, economics and land use;
- The identification of our community's vision for the future;
- A detailed explanation of the goals and objectives for achieving our community's vision for housing, public facilities, education, public safety, cultural and recreational resources, economic development, land use regulations and environmental protection; and
- An implementation strategy that states the short, medium and long-term action items that will support the goals and objectives of the plan.

The entire comprehensive planning process is reliant upon the interest and participation

of the public. The plan will not be written by the elected officials, but will be a compilation of the opinions of the residents of the Town of Niles.

This process will involve a series of public meetings to solicit ideas from the community. Each meeting will focus on a different set of topics and questions, so it is important that you try to attend each one.

The meetings will be held at night or on the weekends, so that we can allow as many people to attend as possible. All meetings will be held in the Niles Town Hall, unless noted otherwise. Meeting announcements will be placed in the local newspapers, on the project website ([www.cnyrpdb.org/nilescompplan](http://www.cnyrpdb.org/nilescompplan)) and throughout town.

There are plenty of opportunities for you to contribute your opinions and follow the project's progress, including the following:

1. Attend the monthly public meetings;
2. Contact the Co-Chair of the committee at [dianacramer@yahoo.com](mailto:dianacramer@yahoo.com);
3. Contact the project's consultant, Kristy LaManche at [klamanche@cnyrpdb.org](mailto:klamanche@cnyrpdb.org) or (315) 422-8276;
4. Visit the project's website to review meeting agendas and minutes or post your questions and ideas;
5. Participate in the public survey which will be mailed to all residents in the fall of 2007; and/or
6. Send a letter with your comments and concerns to the Niles Town Hall, c/o Comprehensive Planning Committee, 5923 New Hope Road, Moravia, New York 13118.

Once the comprehensive plan is completed, it must go through the SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) process and be formally adopted by the Town. Once adopted, the comprehensive plan will help the elected officials make land use and development decisions. The adopted plan will also strengthen the community's ability

to obtain funds for implementing the changes and improvements that were included in the plan.

#### **Important Points to Remember!**

- The 2007 Town of Niles Comprehensive Plan will reflect the views of the community as a whole.
- All Comprehensive Planning meetings are open to the public.
- The first public meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, March 24, 2007 at 1:00 pm in the Niles Town Hall.**
- Check the project's website ([www.cnyrpdb.org/nilescompplan](http://www.cnyrpdb.org/nilescompplan)) for updates, meeting minutes and other important information.

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) will be serving as a consultant to the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The CNYRPDB is a public agency that was established in 1966 to provide a range of services in the areas of economic development, environmental management, land use and transportation and regional information and research, to Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego Counties.

Since 2002, Congressman James Walsh has secured funding for the continuation of the CNYRPDB's Finger Lakes Water Resources, Agriculture and Open Lands Conservation Project. The goal of the project is to help municipalities protect water resources and open lands, preserve fertile agricultural soils, and maintain the traditional, rural character of the Finger Lakes region while promoting growth and development whenever appropriate. The CNYRPDB's assistance to the Town of Niles is paid for under this grant.