

1. **If you were trying to get a friend that lives a great distance away to come to the Town of Niles, what would you say to encourage them?**
 - Rural character, friendly/down to earth people, lake views, outdoor recreation (i.e. Bear Swamp), fishing opportunities, quiet, relaxing atmosphere
 - Enjoying tranquility of rural living, enjoy the rolling hills with farms, woodlands, and residences
 - Know your neighbors, welcoming area
 - Pretty lakes, open land, open country
 - Rural, peaceful
 - Rural atmosphere, lakes, outdoor recreation activities, peace and quiet, limited amount of traffic
 - Rural setting, reasonable tax base
 - Scenic views, close neighbors, close to major hospitals and food markets
 - Rolling hills, beautiful location within the Finger Lakes, rustic settings, quaint areas
 - Country setting, beauty, the fall colors
 - Quiet neighborhood, nice scenes
 - Skaneateles lake, open space, fresh air, gorgeous views, relaxed way of life, closeness to mother nature and her finest offerings
 - In the country, beautiful views, quiet, neighborly
 - It is a peaceful, beautiful areas and in this crowded world – we appreciate it
 - Skaneateles Lake – boating, cross country skiing, schools, agriculture
 - Hunting, fishing, relaxation, camping, boating
 - Rural, conservative, everything we need is here (church, ambulance, good roads, friendly people), great scenic views
 - “Elbow room”, peaceful, restful, scenic
 - Quiet, open spaces, spectacular views, lots of snow for winter sports, fishing, boating, water sports
 - I was born here, I am connected to my land, scenic views are beautiful, the winters are great
 - I wouldn’t necessarily encourage them to come, but if I was it would be because it is beautiful, peaceful, and quiet. They would probably rather visit a friend in Skaneateles – which is fine with me. Best time is after Labor Day – before June.
 - Beautiful views, wonderful summer weather, low/no crime, relatively low cost, good schools, wonderful neighbors, great soil
 - Beautiful lakeshore, good neighbors, laws in place to control random growth
 - Because the town and the Syracuse Water Authority, has in place regulations that control random growth or unplanned growth and regulations that prevent water pollution of both lakes
 - Open space, beautiful farmland, privacy – the right to do what you want with your own land
 - Quiet place to live with good neighbors for the most part
 - Rural, farms
 - Beautiful countryside, lakes!!, recreational opportunities, relaxing, calm, peaceful, friendly people, low cost of living (comparatively)
 - Great rural area, good hunting and fishing, friendly atmosphere, safe community
 - We spend a lot of time fishing, hunting, boating, and good looking sights
 - Great views, scenery, fishing, biking, boating
 - Proximity to Skaneateles, proximity to downhill and cross country skiing
 - A peaceful, relaxed and beautiful countryside with rolling hills and crystal blue lakes, neighbors very nice
 - Peaceful and cozy
 - Not many intrusive rules, farther from main cities
 - Historically quiet country, open spaces, lots of creeks, springs, low crime, small town
 - Situated between two of the prettiest glacially formed Finger Lakes
 - Come here for some great outside activities, clean air, no traffic, walks on country roads, you will see wildlife and country homes

- Niles is rural, scenic, mostly quiet, but easy to get to Auburn, Skaneateles, Moravia, etc. for shopping, entertainment, etc., very centrally located
- Clean air, great views, lakes – cool in summer (need to be cleaner), country setting, access to theater, NYC, eastern sea coast, cultural hubs, great shopping

GROUP DISCUSSION: Know who your neighbors are, wonderful neighbors, great soil, good schools, beautiful views, regulations in place for growth and to keep the lakes clean, seasonal changes are beautiful, hunting, fishing, wildlife, closeness to mother nature/finest offerings, not a lot of regulations, hub for cultural areas (shopping, travel, etc)

2. **What physical features of the Town of Niles do you value? In other words, which features would you greatly miss if they were no longer part of the Town?**

- Lake views, woods, farmland, wildlife, clean water
- Enjoying tranquility of rural living, enjoy the rolling hills with farms, woodlands, and residences
- Home/childhood memories of family home
- Farmland, lake views, wildlife
- Lakes, woods, animals (domestic and wild), fields, crops, hills, valleys, laneways, watched fox cubs playing 2 years ago, bald eagle
- I love the open spaces and the views of the lakes, if all these open fields were built up I would miss the space
- Roads without telephone/utility poles, unimproved roads, tree lined roads, pastures with cows in them, old barns, the view from Old Salt Road to the west
- Woods, open fields, low density housing, streams, lakes, wildlife, birds, safety
- Trees, woods, creeks, open land, wildlife
- Skaneateles Lake, woodlands, small hamlets (New Hope) with historic buildings
- Scenic historical barns
- Rolling “country” hills with fields of color, not all houses, beautiful natural lake views
- Lakes, foliage
- Lake and hill views, rolling fields, woods, wildlife
- Woods, the big swamp
- Skaneateles Lake
- Lakes, rivers, streams, various views, state forest and private forest land, farm fields
- Lakes, old barns
- Farm fields (color, shapes, smells), old barns, grazing pastures
- Colors in the fall, rolling hills, closeness of the lakes, small town atmosphere
- The trees and land, rolling hills, a lot of streams!, swimming in my pond (spring fed)
- Hardwoods and forests, farm crop land
- Lakes, hills, trees, fields, air, views, clean well water, wild life
- Views, quiet
- Truly is God’s world here in the Town of Niles, forests and fields
- Changing seasons, open land – able to camp on own land in woods, room for animals to run free space, lake and clean water, beautiful wild animals
- Farmland, woods, lakes, wildlife
- Scenic views, change in seasons, good people, hills
- Open space and views, night darkness (no artificial lights)
- No developments
- Open spaces, farm land, forests, wildlife
- Owasco and Skaneateles Lakes, fall foliage/forests, old barns and farm buildings, cows/horses/etc. and farming for a living
- Open fields
- Farmland and woods
- The right to farm my land and make a living for my family
- The open land and great vistas
- Foliage/greenery promotes oxygen, sunsets and stars at night = unbridled views
- Lake views, land views – farms, woods, animals
- The woods, fields, clean air, beautiful views to walk in, the water which is great but not as good as it used to be, I can walk through the woods to reach the neighbors, especially during the “off season” for summer people, snow, animals, fish, looking across the lake and seeing woods up the hill – not developments
- My lake, my land, the breathtaking views, private places that are no longer so private

GROUP DISCUSSION: Hardwood forests, farm cropland, accessible lake view/rights, wildlife, air quality, access to water/drinking, quietness of area, sky views at night, sunsets, historical buildings, rolling hills, farms, residences, private places that are no longer private

3. **What cultural features of the Town of Niles do you value? In other words, which community groups and/or individuals would you greatly miss if they were no longer here?**

- New Hope Mills, St. Ann's Church, Bear Swamp State Forest, conservation clubs
- Can not comment since I am not part of any
- New Hope Mills
- Fire Department and Rescue Squad
- Dedicated public servants, small rural churches and their architectural features, New Hope Mills and beautiful old historical cottages, one-room schoolhouses/schools
- Families that have been in the town for 100's of years
- Numerous churches, fire departments, and local clubs
- Senior citizens, open government, fire organizations
- Ties of Town and Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Farming, neighbors
- Farming, tractor pulls
- Farming – hobby for some, living for me, fire department
- Long lineage families (DeWitt, Badman, **Matijas**), my personal family goes back 6 generations in the area, family boating – history on Skaneateles Lake goes back to 1939, timber frame structures still survive
- People, the quiet
- Associations with Mid-Lakes Church, the fire departments, plays, programs at **Willard Chapel**, Auburn, and performances at Little York Lake (Cortland County), relations with families
- Sunday chicken bbqs, card parties with neighbors, school events and fund raisers
- Deer camp
- Old line families provide stability, everybody related, volunteer groups (church, firemen)
- Volunteer help
- If there were so many “new people” or seasonal only people who decide they are somehow superior or more entitled to the beauty of the town than the families that have been here forever, chicken bbq, great highway department, historical record is being kept in tact
- Older barns and buildings
- The church and dedicated public servants
- Firehouse activities, family gatherings, third and fourth generations working the land
- Family friends that are in the same occupation as me – I am a fourth generation farmer
- New Hope Mill
- Fire department and activities (tractor pulls, grass car, auctions)
- The culture of a friendly community
- History relating to Millard Fillmore
- Volunteers, dedicated groups (Fire Department, Auxiliary – helping groups), rural churches, New Hope Mills
- Owasco Reformed Church families
- New Hope Methodist Church, New Hope Fire Department chicken bbq
- New Hope Mills, outhouses, country store was old **Sekoal House** (should not be torn down)
- People mind their own business and leave me alone, none of my neighbors have taken a shot at me yet
- Have to this more thought – would like to develop a Historical Society
- Historical buildings, barns, my cottage built in 1884, Grange Hall already gone, New Hope Mill

GROUP DISCUSSION: Volunteer fire and rescue, dedicated public servants, families/relatives – several generations in town, rural churches, architecture of buildings, school groups/close knit, agricultural use of land, New Hope Mills, cottages, farm houses and outhouses, school house buildings – houses, similar/versatile building and land design, spirit of volunteerism, local ties with Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District

4. **What economic features of the Town of Niles do you value? In other words, which features would you greatly miss if they were no longer here?**
- Tourism, New Hope Mills, restaurants
 - Farming, we should be looking into wind and solar power locally
 - Farms, homes, businesses
 - Farms, generally small businesses such as antique store, gourmet shop, etc.
 - Need bus routes, need roadside stores
 - Reasonable tax bill off the lake, garbage pickup, town quarterly large pickup, small businesses
 - Farms in area, good care of roads, Stoyell's Automotive for all parts, grocery stores and banks are not far away, trash pick-up
 - Need buses, cable, country store, New Hope Mills, trash pickup
 - Farming, New Hope Mills, restaurants, cottages, industries, opportunities
 - I would miss the farmers – who'd feed us 3 times a day? I would miss New Hope Mills and would like to see Niles Gourmet Store succeed and perhaps see similar shops open up.
 - Low taxes, maple syrup producer on 41A in New Hope
 - Farming industry
 - Farm industry, any of the small businesses, lower taxes, farm related businesses (Stayton Tractor and Stoyell's Automotive)
 - Farming community
 - Our farms, small businesses with quality and a real person to speak with regarding you needs
 - Farming, motor sports at Frozen Ocean
 - Farms and support businesses (sawmill, tractor sales)
 - Active farms, New Hope Mills
 - Farms
 - Stoyell's Automotive, West Niles Fire Department, machinery dealers
 - The stores, firehouse, farming operations, machinery dealers, roadside stands
 - Low town tax and the way the Town Board manages the budget
 - My neighbor's farm
 - Farms (because these people are the best neighbors), New Hope Mills (miss it now that they are not usually open), Colonial Lodge (ok – its not in the Town, but its like a “community center”), Stoyell's Automotive (go there all the time), trash pick-up/clean up, small businesses with local people, **Mau's Marina** (Tammy and Pete are always helpful even when Pete is grumpy)
 - I would miss Stayton Tractor if they were to go before me
 - Would miss things tied to farming – fields, barns, etc., wish there was community access to one of the lakes
 - Trash pickup
 - Family farms, low taxes, equal representation on town issues (no large interests)
 - Local produce, Stoyell's Automotive
 - Farming, agriculture – Stayton Tractor
 - Don't know most of the businesses
 - Opportunities for agri-tourism are available, low taxes, garbage pickup, trash days scheduled, farms
 - Stayton Tractor, Stoyell's Automotive, all small businesses
 - Farming, Casey Kennel, New Hope Mills, any small businesses, garbage pickup, Stoyell's Automotive
 - Casey's Kennel, Doggie Do's, New Hope Mills, garbage pickup, Stoyell's Automotive
 - Farming industry, local foods
 - Small business environment, reasonable tax base
 - Farms, New Hope Mills, sawmills
 - Farming and locations to suppliers and markets

GROUP DISCUSSION: Low town tax, garbage/trash pickup, trash days, Stayton Implement, neighbors farms, small business – Casey's Kennels, New Hope Mills, forward thinkers, new business owners – keep area open to allow/welcome, town knows how to manage money

5. What projects, programs or changes would you enact to enhance the Town of Niles?

- Better schools, stronger zoning for lakefront development, more plow routes, a community park
- Have a community festival, convince our people to build wind power stations, etc.
- Spend a day that the community gets together
- Concentrate on developing public recreation areas for residents including lake access, trails
- Tax assessor from the area
- Encourage farm trusts, town park
- Enforce existing laws and codes, establish limitations on subdivisions beyond what we may have present
- Change nothing, public transportation like pollution – wastes supply
- I would keep things as close to the way they are now by supporting all the existing regulations
- Prohibit garbage trucks, public transportation and cultural events – bike path along 41A, public access to Skaneateles Lake
- Limit garbage trucks
- More community involvement – in government, fire service, community organizations
- Dog Park
- Large town picnic area, dog park, large park for public
- Would like to maintain the “right to farm” in our town
- Prohibit garbage truck travel through town, limit the number of cottages (septic systems) allowed on lakes (watersheds) with insufficient leach field (size) to adequately treat effluent
- More grazing animals (I work for Graze NY CCSWCD), farm tours, family restaurants
- Lower taxes – farmers are paying more tax than large businesses located in the Economic Zone – QEZEs
- Make taxes nonexistent for farmers
- A rule that nothing changes, won’t work but it’s a good wish nonetheless
- Limit change to necessary health and safety issues
- Public transportation to cultural events
- Get rid of busy bodies and Drance Kings and Queens
- Get actively involved with water quality issues (Skaneateles based Tri-County Lake Association usually ignores Niles)
- Tax assessor who lives here, transportation to cultural events, public picnic, greater control over watershed issues and recreational uses of lakes
- Have more control over school budget and the endless spending
- Taxes can always be lower
- Implement better watershed protection guidelines, restrictions on jet ski noise and usage, lake shore development restrictions, larger lot size regulations
- Get rid of junk yards, preserve lake and forest access
- Snow fencing requirements to make winter driving easier, outlaw wind farms, outlaw garbage trucks from downstate on Route 41A
- Fill in all the dangerous Giant ditches along the side of major roads that are eroding away the sides of our roads creating Grand Canyons, where small streams used to run, limit the number of new houses around the lake
- Have wildflowers planted at various parts of the main roads
- Limit tractor trailer traffic on 41A, public park on a lake
- Tax assessor, council member would have to live in Niles (no one from outside Niles could be on the Boards)
- Remove 18 wheel garbage trucks from State roads
- Signage regulations, negotiate trade cell tower rights for high speed DSL/fiber optic lines for all primary and secondary roads, all new utility lines will be underground, no more roads paved keep some dirt roads, access to both lakes for residents, sound controls
- Put a speed limit on 12 Corners Road – unfortunately people really go much too fast, would like more community get-togethers, stop checking my septic system and no one checks AUB (houses) on the lake (Owasco), what about farm runoff from liquid manure?

- Wind farming, equalize tax structure (lower for lake owners especially as primary residence), summer residence voting for local officials and school taxes, parks

GROUP DISCUSSION: No tax assessor unless they lived here, prohibit garbage trucks through towns, public transportation, community picnic, parties, cookouts, sidewalk/bike path, parks/recreation area, lake access (public), weighted opinion in regards to water (Skaneateles) – more say as to what happened to our lakes – lack of representation, too many communities involved = no “good of the county”, input from residences on major/large improvements done by county and state, are we being represented properly?, better control over recreational uses i.e. jet skis, trash on the lake, etc., limit number of cottages with insufficient leach fields, etc., be sure footprint of new homes = safe water

6. If you had unlimited funds, resources and control, what projects, programs or changes would you enact in the Town of Niles?

- Community Center (fitness equipment, racquetball courts, basketball, Internet), a community park
- Control water runoff better especially for winter weather, better ditches, road improvements (crown or on an angle), power lines underground
- To help my business look better from the road
- Protect existing waterfront on both lakes by buying any and all lakefront properties for sale and turning them into public/protected land
- Research history of some of the properties in Niles Center (had a mill, grocery store, church, cheese factory, rural school), Cream Hollow school, Bus routes (occasionally/monthly to Skaneateles, Auburn, and Moravia for seniors)
- Water quality – town’s input not enough, jet skis banned
- Buy the land/lake adjacent to Boy Scout camp (Owasco Lake) and build a Town Park with swimming and small boat access (car top), picnic tables, Town encourage farm land trusts, sewers, all utilities underground, Niles power company (replace NIMO), Town support to watershed inspection on Owasco Lake
- Sewer and water for Niles, broadband, central park with pavilion and playground, ball fields, ice rink or pond, do away with property and school taxes
- Bring in cable, phones, internet - time to get modern, have more say in the watershed issues – Niles is not Auburn, upgrade our power supply – hate depending on National Grid
- Buy development rights to key scenic properties – farms, forests, buy up and eliminate questionable (polluting) cottages on lake, buy out trashy residents, complete environmental and ecological assessment for base data
- Free wireless internet, municipal water and sewer, switch to an income tax from property taxes for school, county, town
- Road signs, taxes, another country store, public utilities, sewer system
- Public parks on Skaneateles and Owasco Lakes, high speed internet access
- Clean up roadsides more presentable
- Limit the number of oversized houses being built around our lakes, bury all electric lines in the ground, watershed – water quality for our lakes
- Purchase lakeshore property for public access, park
- Centralized town garage (new), town park on lakes, modern utilities
- Public water and sewers for all who want it, clean Owasco Lake – both water quality and algae/weed control
- I would buy as much land as I could
- I would have no neighbors
- Bring cable (fiber optic) into the Town
- Sewers and drinking water, recreational areas, bridge over lake, underground utilities, own power source, internet and cable, invasive species – Finger Lakes PRISM
- Improve electric distribution system, improve roads (but not to the point of making them “freeways”), give farms more incentive to keep open spaces, give incentives to keep land natural so don’t have to resort to development to pay bills, cable
- Some kind of tax relief to farmers when income becomes less than expenses so they can stay in business to keep the farms that so many people love but do not want to put their money where their mouth is
- Tunnel under or bridge over lakes
- Preserve Niles just as it is
- Control truck traffic, recreation area for entire community, continue effort to help people clean up their properties
- Upgrade the farm/property, install a public restroom
- More Graze NY funds for grazing farms (stops non-point source pollution in Owasco Lake watershed), more local funding for grassed waterways, stream stabilization, etc.
- Increase watershed monitoring both in personnel as well as equipment, ex. milfoil vacuum barges, scuba divers to actually collect plants for removal, monitor other potential species (invasive) that area threat to our water quality, same would apply to ground water potential contaminants, high speed connections

- Public sewer along the lakes, funds for agricultural projects i.e. water quality, soil loss
- Build a large public park with trees, flowers, wildlife, and tracks to walk and ride bikes on
- Build a park, have tours of the town, get people involved more, let the world know just what we got here, sewer, cell phone reception
- Better roads, better phone service, better power (electric) structure
- Buy more farmland hopefully from neighbors getting ready to retire
- Establish wind farms at some of the higher elevations in the town, install sewer system along both lakefronts, establish recreational areas for hiking/biking, etc.

GROUP DISCUSSION: Bridge over the lake and/or ferry service (Owasco and Skaneateles), sewers, sidewalks, all modern utilities underground, hi speed internet, fiber optics, power source other than NIMO, cable, cell phone service, clean up of lakes and monitor (ground water contaminants, invasive species, milfoil, zebra mussels, etc.)