

# Village of Philmont Waterfront District

Summary of November 18 Open House



The village of Philmont is developing a strategy to stimulate and focus investment within the Philmont Waterfront District. The project has been made possible through a Brownfield Opportunity Area grant submitted by the village, in partnership with Philmont Beautification Inc., to the NYS Department of State. A Steering Committee of local and regional representatives, co-Chaired by two Village Trustees, meeting since October 2014, is leading the process. This Plan for the Philmont Waterfront District is built on the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan as the next step forward of strategic planning for economic development. The area includes the Summit Reservoir, a 21-acre publicly-owned body and a center catalyst for the area as a natural resource. Through extensive community input and collaboration, the result of this effort will help to focus the village on job creation, support environmental remediation, build community enthusiasm, and expand the tax base.

On November 18, 2015 the community came together for a day-long open house at Village Hall to review a draft of the Vision Statement, Goals and proposed projects for the Philmont Waterfront District. Representatives from Elan Planning were on hand for the entirety of the day, helping guide participants through the various stations set up around the room. The Open House event had about 50 participants that visited the 20 different stations. The stations began with a brief summary of existing conditions, which included demographic conditions and highlights from the interviews, focus group meetings and the previous Open House held on February 24<sup>th</sup>. From there, participants were guided through a series of stations that included the draft vision statement, draft goals, an overall framework plan, findings from studies of the reservoir, a plan graphic for the Lakeshore Park and Community Center, a plan graphic for the Mill #4 area located along Canal Street, and finally a series of stations regarding topic based recommendations including historic & cultural resources, nature & recreation, housing & neighborhood development, and finally, business & economic development. The final two stations asked if there were any thoughts or ideas that we didn't capture and an overview of next steps. Each station allowed participants to make comments with Post-It notes and most asked participants to vote "like" or "dislike" the proposal with dots.

The following pages provide a summary of comments received at each station asking for input.

Faces in the Crowd



## Collaboration

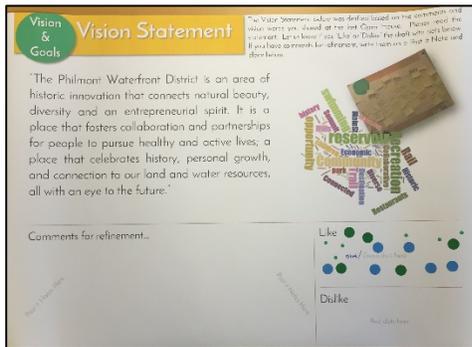
in a shared future

- 1 Mayor Clarence Speed
- 2 Jerry Howett - mill owner
- 3 Josephine Proul and chef - Local 111
- 4 Steve Benson, ZBA  
Faith Benson, Secretary of Library Board  
Chris Hoppe - engineer, and Board member for Library
- 5 Tom Taylor - designer, consultant for Summit Mill
- 6 Kate Martino and Carolyn Stern - Co-founders of PBI
- 7 Erik Bell - Old Klaverack Brewery  
Laura Smith - business owner of Tim Smith Stonemasonry

Driven by

## Community

## Station: Vision Statement



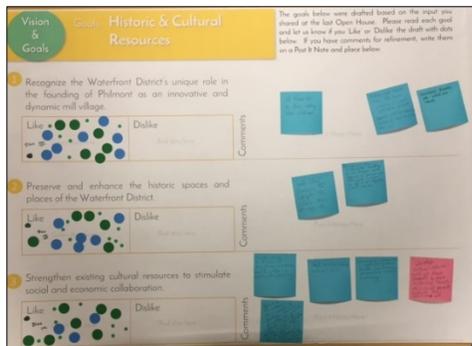
Comments:

None

Likes: 17

Dislikes: 0

## Station: Goals - Historic & Cultural Resources



Goals:

1. Recognize the Waterfront District's unique role in the founding of Philmont as an innovative and dynamic mill village
2. Preserve and enhance the historic spaces and places of the Waterfront District
3. Strengthen existing cultural resources to stimulate social and economic collaboration

Goal 1 Comments:

- Add fitness trail for those wanting extra challenge
- History angle could be strong. I see dozens stopping at Summit Mill and the photos at Gabriel's paint an enduring picture
- History kiosks or walking tour

Likes: 20

Dislikes: 0

Goal 2 Comments:

- Make flyer/brochure that highlights the historic value of buildings
- Recognize the successful history of the Village will appeal to people who otherwise might be apt to be negative about change

Likes: 20

Dislikes: 0

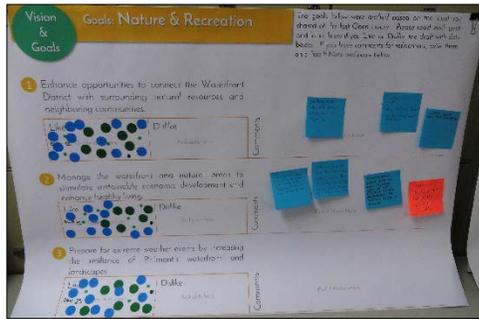
Goal 3 Comments:

- Create oral history from longtime residents to instill pride in Philmont's history
- Appeal to the library as a source of history, but also for ideas for growth and change. The library touches many different groups within the Village that don't always approve of each other.
- What existing cultural resources? How?
- Encouraging collaboration of different factions will (as always) necessitate extreme diplomacy.
- Develop cultural resources such as train students to give historic tours. Could generate revenue, jobs, tourism, etc.

Likes: 20

Dislikes: 0

## Station: Goals - Nature & Recreation



### Goals:

1. Enhance opportunities to connect the Waterfront District with surrounding natural resources and neighboring communities
2. Manage the waterfront and natural areas to stimulate sustainable economic development and enhance healthy living
3. Prepare for extreme weather events by increasing the resilience of Philmont's waterfront and landscapes

### Goal 1 Comments:

- Establish trails bike paths between natural sites is imperative
- Which natural resources? How does this connect communities?
- Connect areas with trails and paths.

Likes: 24

Dislikes: 0

### Goal 2 Comments:

- Make sure the relevant part of the zoning law with respect to the Conservation District is taken into consideration
- Would love to make this lake swimmable/boatable again. High Falls really draws visitors. The lake could do the same and would be a much safer place for swimming.
- Maintenance crews need to take better care of the publicly-owned properties to instill pride in place.
- I want to be able to swim in Summit Lake.

Likes: 23

Dislikes: 0

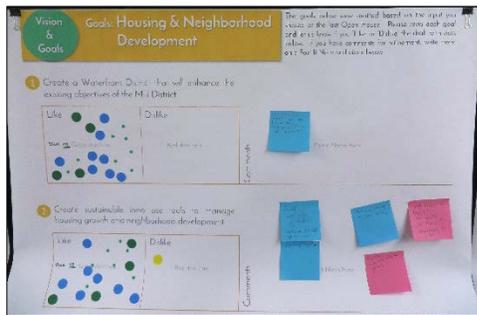
### Goal 3 Comments:

- No comments

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 0

## Station: Goals - Housing & Neighborhood Development



### Goals:

1. Create a Waterfront District that will enhance the existing objectives of the Mill District
2. Create sustainable land use tools to manage housing growth and neighborhood development
3. Invest in neighborhood infrastructure to foster positive social interaction and opportunities for healthy, active living
4. Support efforts to conserve and improve the Village's historic housing stock

### Goal 1 Comments:

- What does this mean? What are the existing objectives of the Mill District?

Likes: 20

Dislikes: 0

### Goal 2 Comments:

- Develop community gardens
- Who's interested?
- Is housing growing? Population declining.
- Develop Comprehensive Plan
- What kinds of tools? Who would use them? Incentives to use?

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 1

### Goal 3 Comments:

- Take advantage of the historical/cultural past to develop programs that involve the community
- Craft workshops. Community gardens.
- Skate park, basketball, both lighted for evenings
- Opportunities for active activities (as opposed to electronic are tremendously needed here. Recreation around lake would be popular among kids, teens and families.

Likes: 22

Dislikes: 0

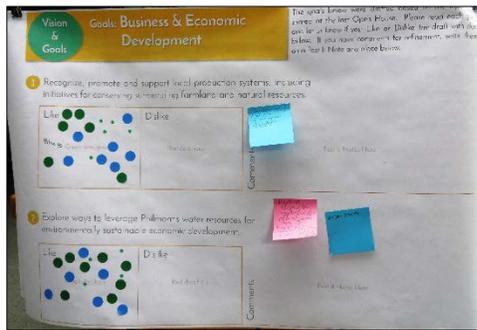
### Goal 4 Comments:

- Identify grants and incentives to improve and maintain housing. Also maintain character.
- Economic incentives for young home buyers to repair properties and renovate in Village.
- Create an architectural review board for certain districts and properties.
- This will encourage more home buying and appreciation of the Village as a whole.

Likes: 22

Dislikes: 0

## Station: Goals - Business & Economic Development



### Goals:

1. Recognize, promote and support local production systems, including initiatives for conserving surrounding farmland and natural resources
2. Explore ways to leverage Philmont's water resources for environmentally sustainable economic development
3. Identify strategies to encourage collaborations and entrepreneurship to support a dynamic local economy with entrepreneurial spirit
4. Promote community revitalization that restores economic vitality while conserving natural and historic resources
5. Create a community-informed revitalization plan centered on the Summit Reservoir area, starting with selected sites including potential brownfields, to stimulate public interest and promote economic development in the Village of Philmont and surrounding areas

### Goal 1 Comments:

- Development of local organic farming is essential

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 0

### Goal 2 Comments:

- Expand recreation opportunities around water ways. This would also increase physical activity and address obesity
- Hydro power

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 0

### Goal 3 Comments:

- Absolutely necessary to promote a more positive self-view & general opinion of Philmont
- Starts with economic incentives?
- Structure zoning to facilitate easy temporary uses: 1-day, 1-week, 1-month expedited approvals

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 0

### Goal 4 Comments:

- "Progress" which includes damage to the environment is the antithesis of progress
- Revise zoning for the former Sacred Heart Church to allow likely uses that the building would support

Likes: 18

Dislikes: 0

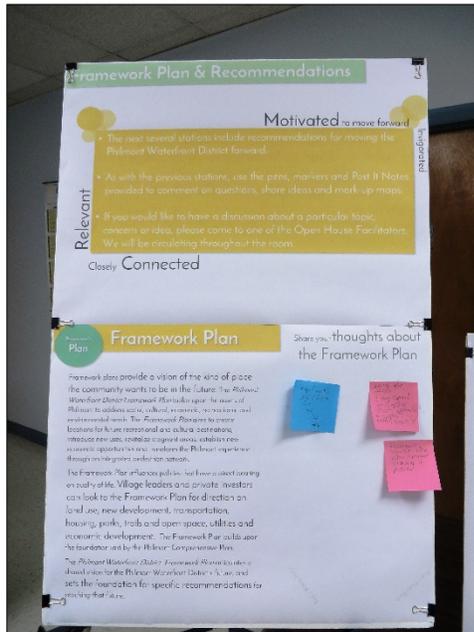
### Goal 5 Comments:

- Yes, any small improvement would help gain momentum and community involvement
- Develop mills to be a community asset, eg community center, historical museum
- An artesian workspace cooperative would be great. Our residents have a lot of skills to share.
- What about supporting a common workspace? Some residents are creating one they're inclined to keep it local and it would be great to support that (brings people and money to Philmont, supports working community already here)

Likes: 16

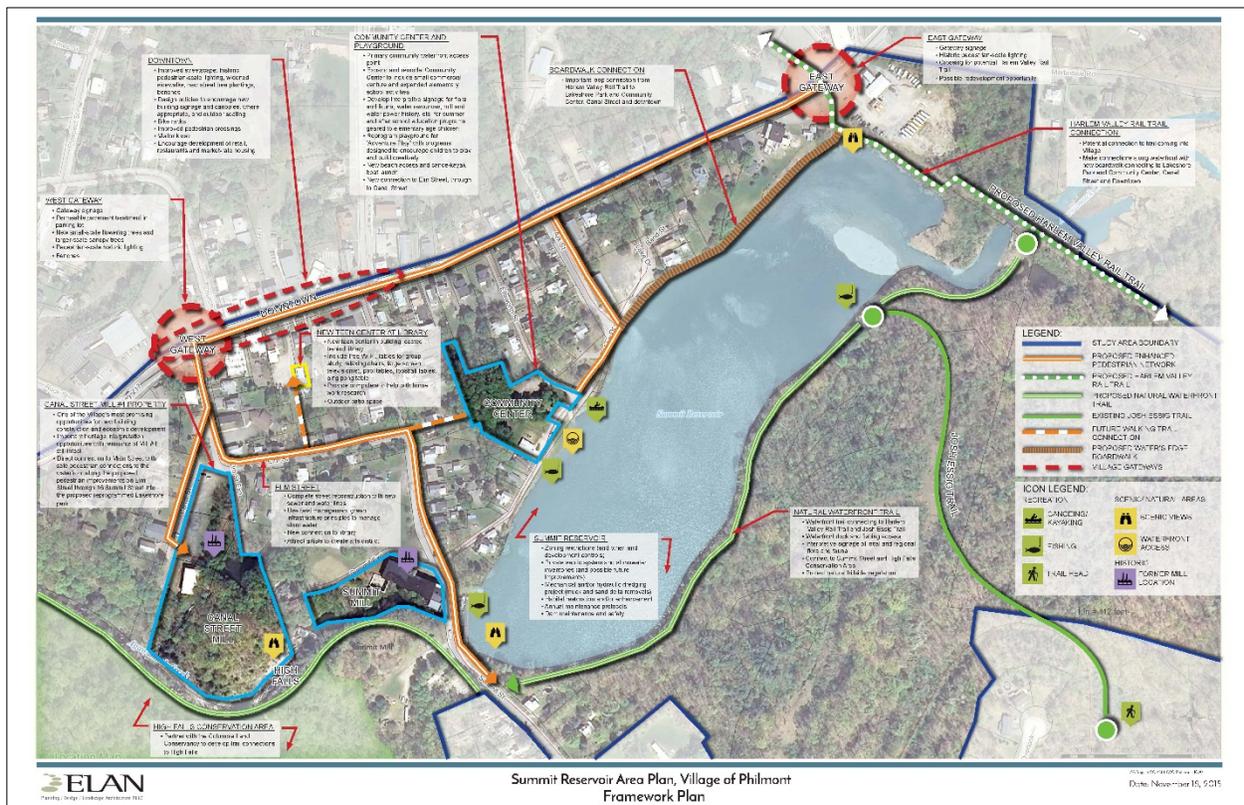
Dislikes: 0

# Station: Framework Plan



## Comments:

- Maple/Carpenter - good bike route for rail trail
- Love the trails. Strong support for complete streets approach to support a healthy community.
- Reservoir should allow/promote swimming
- Make connection from Lake View Dr. to Summit Street
- There used to be a right-of-way connection from Summit Street to the Community Center/Park near the "proposed" connection
- Consider connecting park to Main Street via property at northern end of community center park



## Station: Strategic Opportunity Sites



### Comments:

- No comments

#### 1. Downtown

- Provides the highest level of 'visibility' of Philmont, thereby forming impressions of residents, visitors and investors alike
- Will attract and retain residents, businesses and institutions, jobs, and investment
- Important gathering place for community residents and visitors

#### 2. Library

- Important community gathering space
- Centrally located on Main Street
- Nearby space to accommodate teen population
- Supports personal and professional development while providing opportunities for cultural engagement

#### 3. The Sacred Church

- High visibility location along Main Street
- Architecturally and culturally important building in Philmont
- Can be repurposed to facilitate the Health Economy: senior care, alternative health & medicine, and health and fitness activities

#### 4. 165 Main Street

- Important privately-owned community gateway parcel
- Prominent scenic views of lake
- Adjacent to historic properties and future Harlem Valley Rail Trail
- Potential for higher-value redevelopment: commercial/retail or small-scale banquet/conference facility, with design standards

#### 5. Community Center and playground

- Primary waterfront access point located along proposed waterfront trail connection with Harlem Valley Rail Trail
- Expand and remodel Community Center to accommodate small commercial venture and expanded elementary school activities
- Develop interpretive signage for flora and fauna, water resources, mill and water power history, etc. for summer and after school education programs geared to elementary age children
- Reprogram play ground to for 'Adventure Play' with programs designed to encourage children to play and build creatively

#### 6. 16 Summit Street

- Privately-owned property that provides critical safe pedestrian connection between waterfront and downtown via Elm Street and Canal Street
- 7. Summit Mill
- Privately-owned property with significant potential to contribute to the Village's future economic development opportunities

#### 8. 20 Elm Street

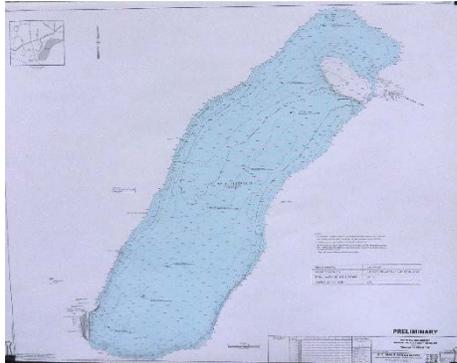
- Privately-owned property that could provide pedestrian connection to waterfront and Canal Street

#### 9. Canal Street Mill #4 property

- One of the Village's most promising opportunities for new building construction and economic development
- Important heritage interpretation opportunities with remnants of Mill #4 still intact
- Direct connection to Main Street with safe pedestrian connections to the waterfront along the proposed Elm Street pedestrian improvements through 16 Summit Street into the proposed reprogrammed Lakeshore Park and Community Center

# Station: Special Studies - Bathymetric Survey, Water & Sediment Testing, and Micro-Hydro

## Bathymetric Survey



Comments:

- None

Likes: 0

Dislikes: 0

## Water & Sediment Testing

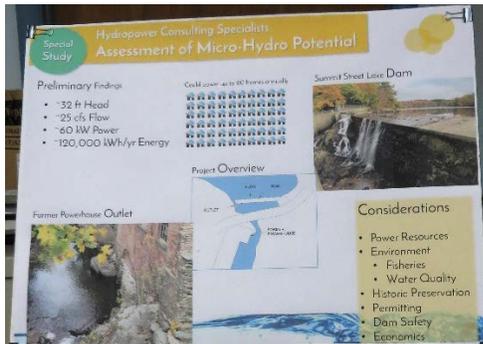
Comments:

- None

Likes: 0

Dislikes: 0

## Micro-Hydro



Comments:

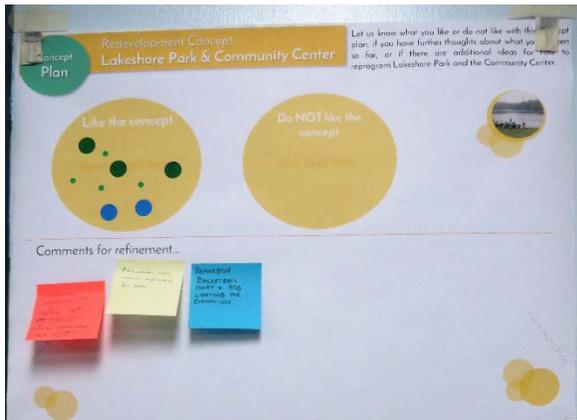
- None

Likes: 4

Dislikes: 0



# Station: Lakeshore Park & Community Center



- Comments:
- Enhance playground - jungle gym where community has input
  - Accommodate crafts, weaving, woodworking for kids
  - Refurbish basketball court and add lighting for evening use

Likes: 9  
Dislikes: 0



# Station: Canal Street Mill Redevelopment

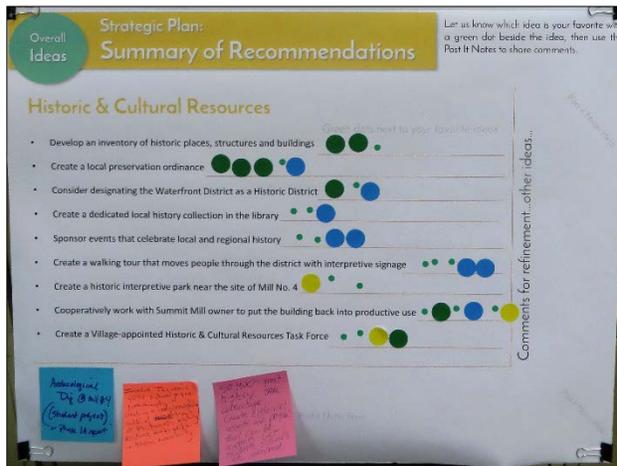


- Comments:
- Create local educational training opportunities for local trades: masonry, woodworking, etc. (x2)
  - A restaurant and deck overlooking the gorge would be great (x2)
  - Activity area for families \*Children's museum
  - How about a carousel. Specialty ice cream stand
  - Passive/active industrial archeological park
  - Establish a Culinary Institute of America training facility in Philmont
  - Need industrial archeological survey of area
  - Indoor volleyball and/or basketball
  - Village needs to get flood insurance because residents can't unless to the Village has it too

Likes: 8  
Dislikes: 0



## Station: Recommendations - Cultural and Historic Resources



### Comments:

- Archeological dig at Mill Site #4 (student project) or Phase 1A report
- Involve Taconic Hills Schools and the community in creating and implementing walking trail of Philmont's history, restore folks pride in the community
- So much great history. Take advantage. Create historical assets and programs that can be magnets. Get students, schools, etc. involved

Recommendations	Votes
Develop an inventory of historic places, structures and buildings	3
Create a local preservation ordinance	5
Consider designating the Waterfront District as a Historic District	3
Create a dedicated local history collection in the library	3
Sponsor events that celebrate local and regional history	4
Create a walking tour that moves people through the district with interpretive signage	5
Create a historic interpretive park near the site of Mill No. 4	3
Cooperatively work with Summit Mill owner to put the building back into productive use	6
Create a Village-appointed Historic & Cultural Resources Task Force	4

## Station: Recommendations - Housing & Neighborhood Development

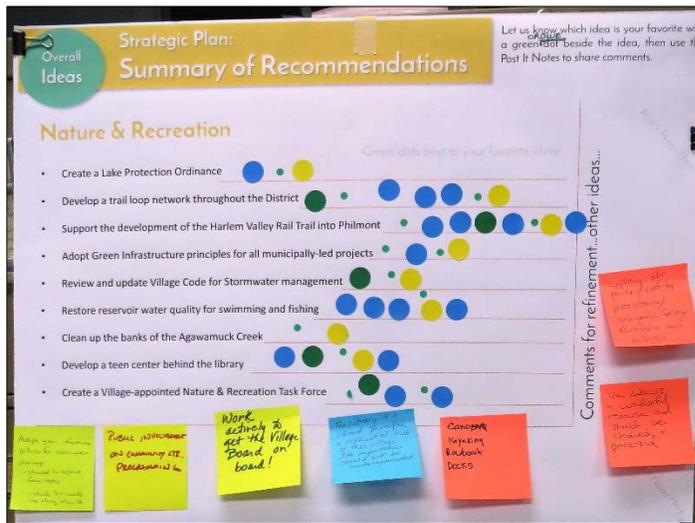


Comments:

- No comments

Recommendations	Votes
Develop a sidewalk maintenance program	5
Develop a Village tree planting program	5
Ensure all rental housing exceeds adopted minimum housing quality standards through systematic code enforcement	6
Promote educational workshops for restoration, rehab and maintenance	4
Encourage development of market-rate senior housing within district	1
Encourage energy conservation strategies in new and rehabbed homes	4
Develop low-impact development practices that increase stormwater infiltration rates	1
Create a Village-appointed Housing & Neighborhood Development Task Force	3

## Station: Recommendations - Nature & Recreation

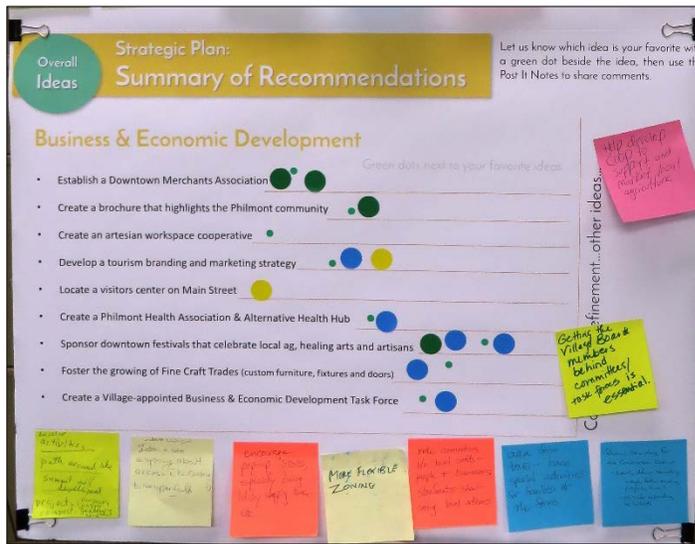


### Comments:

- Adopt green infrastructure policies for stormwater drainage
  - Should be separate for septic
  - Include bioswales especially along Main St.
- Public involvement on community center programming
- Work actively to get the Village Board on board!
- The library is a vibrant, powerful, and influential hub of this Village. Its importance shouldn't be underestimated.
- Canoeing, kayaking, rowboat, docks
- The lake is a wonderful resource and should be cleaned and protected
- Exploring solar power/rooftop/photovoltaics/solar panels for any refurbished or new buildings

Recommendations	Votes
Create a Lake Protection Ordinance	3
Develop a trail loop network throughout the District	7
Support the development of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail into Philmont	8
Adopt Green Infrastructure principles for all municipally-led projects	4
Review and update Village Code for Stormwater management	3
Restore reservoir water quality for swimming and fishing	5
Clean up the banks of the Agawamuck Creek	2
Develop a teen center behind the library	5
Create a Village-appointed Nature & Recreation Task Force	5

## Station: Recommendations - Business & Economic Development



### Comments:

- Help develop Coop to support and market local agriculture
- Getting the Village Board members behind committees /task forces is essential
- Review boundary for conservation district
  - Clearly define boundary
  - Maybe follow existing property lines
  - Consider expanding up hillside
- Area farm tours - have special activities for families at the farm
- Make connections between local crafts - people and businesses, storefronts showcasing local artisans
- More flexible zoning
- Encourage pop-up stores, especially during the holiday shopping time, etc.
- I don't see anything about access/construction to the upper falls
- Develop activities/path around the lake/summit mill development/projects: carpentry, compost

Recommendations	Votes
Establish a Downtown Merchants Association	3
Create a brochure that highlights the Philmont community	2
Create an artesian workspace cooperative	1
Develop a tourism branding and marketing strategy	3
Locate a visitors center on Main Street	1
Create a Philmont Health Association & Alternative Health Hub	2
Sponsor downtown festivals that celebrate local ag, healing arts and artisans	4
Foster the growing of Fine Craft Trades (custom furniture, fixtures and doors)	2
Create a Village-appointed Business & Economic Development Task Force	2

## Station: What Did We Miss?



### Comments:

- The Village should be making a more positive effort to work with the owner of the Summit Mill to get that project going!
- My concern is the accountability within the Village to implement positive growth programs. How can positive change begin in Philmont and be sustained over the years?
- The Rail Trail is an invaluable opportunity, but it needs support of landowners around that end of the lake.
- Skepticism exists here that development of the lake can actually be connected to economic development of the Village.
- Negative village groups need to be included, courted and respected with their opinions.
- Opportunities to create walking and recreational activities are likely to be hampered by inefficient parking - a major stumbling block.
- Enforce housing codes
- After school tutoring in a place for kids and teenagers
- Capitalize on the fact that we have access to so much - Berkshires, Albany, Dutchess to the south, connect to other mill sites in Western Mass, etc.
- Lack of ownership of plans by the Village
- Encourage more conversion to single family homes
- Create or upgrade new mixed use real estate that is of higher quality and consistent with character of Village
- Laundromat for community
- Ice skating rink, public sledding hill