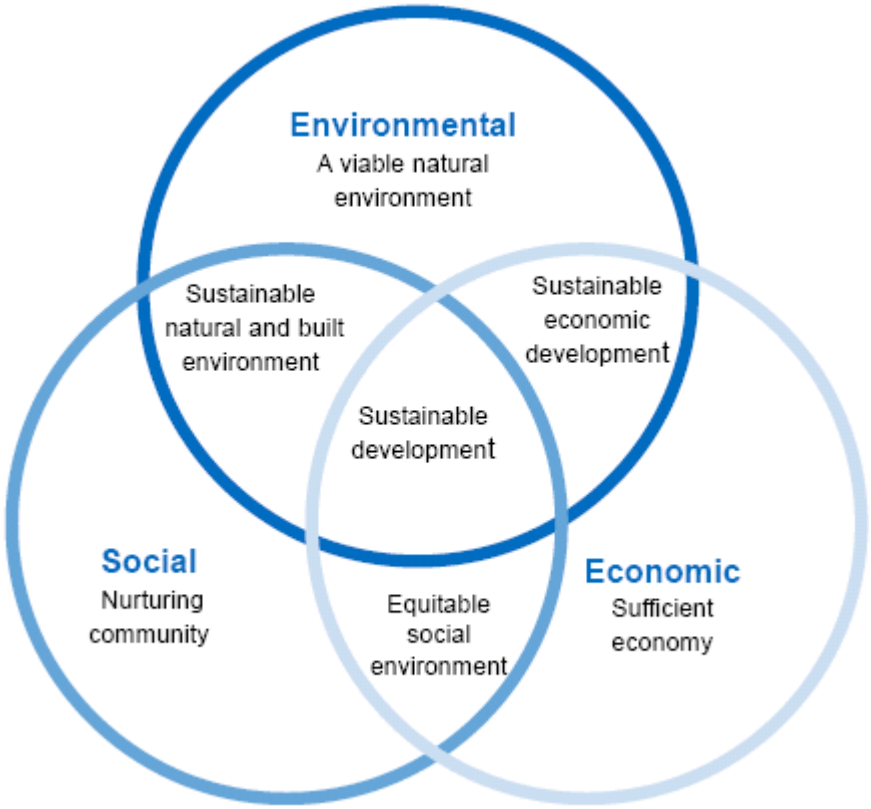
Village of Hastings-on-Hudson

Sustainability Action Plan

2010-2011

Version 1.0
Adopted April 6, 2010
Updated December 30, 2010

The Elements of Sustainability



Preface

The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson has come to the point where it needs a specific and directed plan to coordinate the ideas and initiatives that are germinating in the community concerning sustainability and reducing our carbon footprint.

And there are many such ideas. In Hastings sustainability is an idea whose time has come. One focal point of ideas is the section of the Comprehensive Plan having to do with sustainability issues and the work of the Comprehensive Planning Committee thereon. Another focal point of activity is the Conservation Commission, which has ongoing work, such as participation in the ICLEI process, and is going to undertake new work, such as a waste management initiative. In addition, the renewed attention to the LWRP and the process to submit it to the state has a bearing on the sustainably area. Finally, the Planning Board has been looking into approaches to make the building code adhere to more sustainable standards.

This Sustainability Action Plan takes specific action items under each major sustainability goal and specifies a time frame for the implementation of the action, and specifies what individuals and groups are responsible for moving this action item forward.

Here are some of the functions and advantages of this action plan:

- First, it is not static or meant to be complete. It will be modified and added to as we go along.
- Second, it is primarily a tool to help coordinate the activities and energies of many individuals and groups. It is an overview that allows everyone working on some facet of sustainability in the village to see the relationship between what they are doing and what others are doing.
- Finally, it is a clear statement that we are serious about sustainability in Hastings: we have clear objectives that we embrace as a matter of public policy; we have specific changes and activities that we propose to initiate within the next 12 plus months; and we are going to monitor and evaluate our progress and be open and accountable to the public about this.

This action plan has been developed out of a process of consultation with stakeholder groups and individuals—the conservation commission, the planning board, citizens groups, the Comprehensive Planning Committee, and village staff. I would like to thank and acknowledge everyone who has reviewed and commented on this draft plan during the past several weeks.

This Sustainability Action Plan will be a framework and a management tool for our various sustainability efforts over the next year and beyond.

——Trustee Bruce Jennings

Introduction

There is a strong community sentiment and political will in Hastings to be more sustainable and to reduce the Village's carbon footprint. A major publicly announced goal of Board of Trustees for 2009-2010 is to be a model sustainable community. Mayor Swiderski stated "we seek to make Hastings one of the preeminent examples of sustainable planning and programs anywhere."

Hastings has an active and informed citizenry, with a high degree of environmental literacy and concern. With other surrounding communities, Hastings has stewardship for a beautiful landscape, a vital watershed, and a rich historical heritage. Hastings has existing community groups, such as the Village Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board, the Village Comprehensive Planning Committee, and Sustainable Hastings that focus community expertise on sustainability issues.

The village has already taken many steps to improve its land use policies, zoning, waste management, storm water management, and local transportation in terms of energy conservation and ecological preservation. To continue progress on these fronts and to work in an even more systemic and effective fashion is the purpose of this Sustainability Action Plan 2009-2010. To that end, Hastings has joined the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and is following its guidance and using its tools and resources for sustainability assessment and planning.

The village government, as the representative of the entire community, has a responsibility to fulfill the goals of sustainability, not only for ourselves, but also for those elsewhere whose well-being our practices affect, and for our children and those who will reside in this place after us.

Goals

The overarching goal of the Hastings Sustainability Action Plan 2010-2011 is to reduce the harmful impact of human activities and the built environment on the natural environment. In a word, to live more gently and sustainably on our land. In particular, this Action Plan outlines actions directed and supported by village government that will promote a more sustainable form of living through energy conservation, reduction of GHG discharge into the atmosphere, and protection of biodiversity, ecosystem services, and the natural beauty and characteristics of our local landscape and watershed.

Overview

The Hastings Sustainability Action Plan is divided into five basic sections: (1) energy and climate change adaptation/mitigation policies; (2) transportation; (3) waste management; (4) storm water management; and (5) biodiversity conservation.

In each of these areas, village government will play a crucial role in three ways: (a) by setting an example through its own internal practices; (b) by setting out a framework of law and regulation that will shape the future of land use and the built environment in the village in the years ahead; and (c) by engaging and empowering private citizens through educational and information resources to live and act more sustainably in the use of their own property and in their own lives.

Notes:
Time frames in quarters (3 month intervals) begin in April 2010.
** indicates an action item that is already completed or in place
Under the Responsible column, it is assumed that the Village Manager (VM) and the Board of Trustees (BOT) will oversight. Consequently they will not always be explicitly listed, although they will always be involved.

HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN						
Action Item	**Month 1-3**	**Months 4-6**	**Months 7-9**	**Months 10-12**	**Responsibility**	**Comments**
1. Energy conservation and climate change adaptation/mitigation						
1.1. Make Hastings' commitment to energy conservation and climate change adaptation official, public and binding.					BOT	
Adopt a resolution to commit to climate action planning.	Board discussion and resolution				BOT	**DONE**
Join DEC's Climate Smart Communities http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html	Board approval; staff paperwork				BOT/VM	**DONE**
Join the Northern Westchester Conservation Action Coalition	CC explore				CC VM, BOT	See PACE program entry under section 1.4 below

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Action Item	**Month 1-3**	**Months 4-6**	**Months 7-9**	**Months 10-12**	**Responsibility**	**Comments**
Participate in Greenburgh Hazard Mitigation Plan; Update and supplement the Village emergency plan to include provisions for climate change mitigation.	On-going		BOT approval when Greenburgh plan complete		VM/HPD/HFD/Safety/PubHealth/ CC/Planning BD	(Cf. Nature Conservancy, Rising Waters Project Report and NYSDEC Hudson River and Estuaries Action Plan.)
1.2. Charge the Conservation Commission with serving as the village's version of a Climate Action Task Force dedicated to sustainability issues.			Demonstrate progress on the ICLEI and West. Co. recommendations		CC VM;	(Cf. the ICLEI Five-Milestone Methodology and follow the recommendations for municipal governments recommended in the County Westchester Action Plan for Climate Change and Sustainable Development.)
Add this to the official charge of the CC	CC REORGANIZED					**DONE**
Designate a Village Staff member to coordinate with the CC	F. Frobel to serve					**DONE**
Design a Workshop for Village staff and members of Boards and Committees to provide an overview of Sustainable tools covering all issue areas.					VM/CC/PB	

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1.3. Improve the sustainability of village government operations						
Develop a municipal greenhouse gas inventory.	Ongoing part of ICLEI work				CC	
Set a reduction goal (which should be consistent with the County reduction goals for 2015 and 2050) and develop a plan to accomplish this.	CC discussion	BOT discussion; joint works session	Public Hearing; BOT action		VM & staff/ CC/ Planning Bd/BOT	
Monitor progress yearly and report to public.				2010 Rept due	VM/BOT	
1.3.1 Funding Create a sustainability fund to support sustainability initiatives. Use savings resulting from use of LED or other energy efficient lights to fill this fund.	Build into budget process				VM/ BOT	Potentially this could be a fund developers pay into as well.
Collaborate with other communities in the Hudson River region to apply for grant money.	ongoing				VM/CC	
1.3.2 Municipal Vehicles Green the village vehicle fleet as we replace vehicles.	Hybrid van purchase finalize	Van put into service—DONE, DELIVERY 9-30-10; Make BP electric vehicle usable—LENT TO SCHOOLS FOR GROUNDS WORK			VM	**DONE**
Reduce the usage of vehicles by verifying the need for each vehicle and consolidating the municipal fleet	Review current vehicle usage; find efficiencies	Implement efficiencies; train village staff on practices, e.g. idling			VM/Department heads/ BOT	Check who's using DPW gasoline

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1.3.3 Municipal Energy Efficiency Improve energy efficiency of street lighting by converting to LED.	follow up on street lighting;	Three demonstration lights installed at Village Hall			VM	
Improve energy efficiency of government buildings.	Audit govt buildings complete;	Arrange audit of firehouses; plan remedial action			VM/HFD/BI	
Manage/program thermostats so heating and cooling is reduced	Complete				VM/Village staff	
Provide village staff and employees information and support concerning energy efficient practices.	Complete				VM/staff	**DONE**
Instruct staff to close all window shades at night to help insulate buildings.	Complete				VM/staff	DONE
Use reduced lighting when daylight is sufficient.	complete				staff	DONE
Shift electrical use to non-peak periods.					staff	DONE
Use management software, power strips or other methods to ensure electrical equipment (computers, copiers, printers, etc.) are not drawing standby power when not in use.	Complete				staff	DONE
Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents, LEDs, or solar powered lighting.	complete				staff	**DONE**
Install renewable energy such as solar and geothermal when cost effective.		Study feasibility		Submit a plan for 2011 action	CC/VM	

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Use the village pool as a model sustainable facility. Study feasibility of solar options to assume at least a part of the pool's energy needs (solar thermal is especially relevant).		Study feasibility		Submit a plan for summer 2011	Parks&Rec dept; PR com CC	
Ensure Sugar Pond Shack has passive solar light & heat on new roof, and even a solar panel, if possible.		Study feasibility		Shack renovtn	CC/PR	Can also be a model
1.3.4 Create a "Green Team" made up of Village department heads who would be responsible for reducing emissions in their respective departments.	BOT action	Select and train green team members			BOT directive; VM implement	DONE
Install software on department heads' computers to calculate and track emissions associated with electricity, fuel use, and waste disposal	Study/procure /install				CC/VM/IT staff	
Develop a reduction plan by department: calculate emissions inventories for government's internal operations and set reduction targets; and track progress towards reaching those targets.		Set up plan and process	Implement	Report	VM/Dept heads	
Develop guidelines and associated bid specifications for procurement of environmentally preferable products and services.	Study the issue	Draft such guidelines			VM/Departments; Village attorney/ CC/ BOT	

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1.4. Legislative and regulatory measures that will lead to energy conservation and GHG mitigation.						
Adopt ordinance banning use of Styrofoam and related products on village property and at village functions	CC rec. BOT enacted					**DONE**
Zoning: rezone large property tracts to conserve landscape and biodiversity	BOT attention to issue	Planning Bd recs to BOT Draft language and resolution	BOT discussion; public hearings; BOT passage		VM/Planning Bd/Village attorney/BOT	
Incorporate climate change mitigation measures into the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process by the planning board of new development and land use proposals.		Study and discuss issue	Implement		Planning Bd/Village Atty/BOT – depending on action	
Train the Building Department, zoning officials, as well as Zoning, Planning and Village Boards in technical aspects of green building.	2 in person trainings have been held, plus 1 webinar		Hold training		Planning Bd.	Done. Additional training will be needed
Enact a green building code for new construction and substantial renovation incorporating an green building standards. ++	PB study CC and other recs to BOT	BOT action			Planning Bd., CC, Building Inspector, VM. VA	Model on IGBC standards
Consider incentives for green building such as expedited permitting, reduced permitting fees, reduced taxes, as well as recognition programs. ++	Recs submitted	Action taken			Planning Bd.	May be incorporated in Building Code

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Encourage developers to utilize reduced "embodied" energy in materials, manufacturing processes, and construction methods as part of the site plan review process.	Recs submitted	Action taken			Planning Bd.	May be incorporated in Building Code
Review, evaluate and update current zoning ordinance and building code to eliminate any obstacles to installing green energy systems or ways to promote them.		Review complete	Actions taken		Planning Bd.	May be incorporated in Building Code
Explore participation in the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program; join with other municipalities to establish a Clean Energy Development Area to provide homeowner loans for energy efficiency improvements, repaid through an assessment on property taxes		Follow and take part in activities being launched by NYSERDA and Westchester towns and villages such as Bedford	ongoing		Trustees/ VM/CC	Program on hold currently at national level
Public education campaign to support conservation measures for existing homes and buildings.			Action taken		Planning Bd..ZB/CC	
Promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings as a alternative to new construction	On-going				Planning Bd.	Building 52 study forthcoming
Insist on site plans that minimize loss of pervious surfaces. **	Currently in regs				Planning Bd.	Comp. Plan
Develop a Sustainability Checklist to be provided to applicants for subdivision and site plan approval, and potentially ZBA applicants.		Action taken			Planning Bd.	

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Enforce the existing Westchester County no-idling law. Phase stricter enforcement in with a period of public awareness and education.	Disc enforcement plan	Finalize and publicize plan; work with WDOT, village staff, merchants	Period of public education	Begin enforce	VM/HPD/VA/staff	
1.5. Conserve water.						
Require low-flow toilets and Energy Star appliances in new construction and substantial alterations.	PB discussion				Planning Bd.	
Encourage existing households to replace/upgrade.	Plan public information campaign Get cooperation of local plumbers	Roll out			CC	
Look for opportunities to use gray water for lawn irrigation or flushing water closets.	Public information campaign				CC	
Create a municipal campaign to save water.	Plan campaign		Initiate campaign		Led by CC	
2. Transportation						
2.1. Move toward a more sustainable transportation system locally and contribute to sustainable goals in the region.				Long term plan	CC	In Comp Plan
2.2 Public Transportation Support extension/expansion of existing transit (buses, trains, shuttles, water transportation).				Long term effort		

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Provide new transit service such as a train station shuttle service.	PB discussion	Include in Comp Plan			Planning Bd.	
2.3 Parking Support expansion of parking at Park-n-Ride Lots and/or transit stations.		Explore with Metro North			VM/Parks Rec	Remote parking with shuttle service
Pursue opportunities to minimize parking supply through shared or banked parking. **		PB discussion			Planning Bd.	
Develop a parking management program to minimize parking requirements such as parking cash-out, parking charges, preferential carpool or vanpool parking, limiting parking available to employees.		PB discussion			Planning Bd. For site plan review.	
2.4 Infrastructure Roadway improvements to improve traffic flow. **					Planning Bd. As mitigation measures under SEQR.	
Traffic signalization and coordination to improve traffic flow and support pedestrian and bicycle safety. **					Planning Bd. As mitigation measures under SEQR.	9A bridge connector
3. Waste Management						
3.1. Reduce the amount of material disposed of in Hastings.					CC/DPW	
Review Village Code for improvements in solid waste management provisions		CC recs VA review	BOT approval		CC, VM, VA, BOT	DONE
Explore changes in institutional and household behaviors that would reduce the disposal of material into the waste stream.						**DONE**

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Undertake an information and education campaign with practical guidance on reducing disposed materials.	CC to plan and roll out					**DONE**
3.2. Increase the amount of recyclable waste that Hasting captures.					CC/DPW	
Enforce existing recycling laws.						
Place recycling bins downtown and in parks.	Purchase and Implement				DPW/P&R	
Perform a municipal waste audit to identify opportunities for waste prevention and reduction, improved recycling, and conversion of waste streams of recycling	Plan	Implement			VM/DPW/CC	Will be incorporated in ICCLE
Set community goals for diverting waste stream from landfills by measuring annual progress towards those goals.	CC recs	BOT action			BOT	
Develop a free bulky item reuse and recycling drop off and/or collection program. Create partnerships with existing non-profit reuse facilities.	Study and plan		Implement		CC/DPW	Consider an online "stuff" exchange like the County runs.
Encourage on-site recycling of yard waste and home mulching and composting	Public ed campaign				CC/Volunteers	
3.3. Study/ implement policies and procedures to increase and enhance the recycling program.	CC activity					**DONE**
Village board to set user fees for commercial disposal of yard waste.	Done Dec. 2009				BOT	**DONE**
4. Storm Water Management						

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Action Item	**Month 1-3**	**Months 4-6**	**Months 7-9**	**Months 10-12**	**Responsibility**	**Comments**
4.1. Minimize storm water runoff discharges.						
Consider reduction of site disturbances that require storm water management mitigation from the present 10,000 square feet to 500 square feet [the current standard in Greenburgh].	Study	Address in Comp Plan Implement			Planning Bd.	
4.2. Improve storm water storage capacity and quality		Address in Comp Plan			Planning Bd.	
Write zoning for site plan approval which encourages low impact site design techniques. [http://www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/region3_factsheet_lid_esd.pdf]		PB study and recs to BOT			BOT	
Encourage the creation of retention ponds and constructed wetlands.					Planning Bd. As part of site plan/SEQR	
Increase water management through landscaping along roads and parking lots					Planning Bd. As part of site plan/SEQR	
Encourage on-site storm water retention					Planning Bd. As part of site plan/SEQR	
Encourage the installation of storm water controls like rain gardens					Planning Bd. As part of site plan/SEQR	
4.3. Amend zoning laws to decrease impervious surfaces throughout the village.						
Set impervious surface maximums **	ongoing				PB	
Encourage permeable pavement/pavers **	ongoing				PB	
Encourage the construction of green roofs on buildings	ongoing				Planning Bd/ARB/BOT.	
4.4. Preserve and protect floodplains and waterbodies		Address in Comp Plan				

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Restrict/prohibit development within floodplains	Coordinate with LWRP and Comp Plan				Planning Bd.	
Maintain buffer areas along the Hudson and Saw Mill Rivers	Coordinate with LWRP and Comp Plan				Planning Bd.	
4.5. Set annual Storm Water Management Goals. Cf./http://www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/region3_factsheet_swmp.pdf					BOT/PB/LWRP	
Invest in capital improvements where necessary of the Village's sanitary and storm water infrastructure	Assess		Plan for 2011 budget and beyond			
5. Biodiversity Conservation						
5.1. Preserve, protect and restore wetlands		Incl in Comp Plan			BOT/PB	
Map and assess local wetlands.		Study need for zoning legislation		Complete zo leg	Planning Bd.	
Restrict development within wetlands					Planning Bd.	
Maintain buffer areas around wetland areas					Planning Bd.	