



**RAW RESULTS OF VISIONING WORKSHOP  
PUBLIC INPUT  
RED SCHOOLHOUSE ROAD CORRIDOR  
LAND USE PLAN**

**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES,  
OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS  
(SWOT)**

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For the Village of Chestnut Ridge, NY

Workshop Held Thursday, October 30, 2017, 7:30 PM  
South Spring Valley Fire Station

## **INTRODUCTION**

On October 30, 2017 at 7:30 PM, the Village of Chestnut Ridge held a visioning meeting about the Red Schoolhouse Road Corridor, for the purpose of collecting background data, views and opinions from community residents and stakeholders. This was the first public meeting at the outset of the Land Use Planning Process to develop recommendations and zoning code changes to guide the future development in this important corridor at the heart of the community.

To accomplish this, NPV - the Land Use Plan consultants - coordinated with the Mayor and Village Board to design a meeting that would consist of three break-out groups.

This meeting was well-attended by roughly forty members of the public. The meeting began with introductions and a welcome by Mayor Rosario Presti. The Mayor provided a short description of why the Town was undertaking its update of the Comprehensive Plan one area of the Village at a time, and how the Red Schoolhouse Road corridor was the area to be updated. Max Stach, AICP of NPV explained the purpose of the public meeting, introduced the process that the consultant team had undertaken thus far, and provided a framework for the workshop procedure. Then Jonathan Lockman AICP of NPV presented a short summary of the corridor study area, including demographics, existing zoning, traffic counts, and a description of its location and setting in the region.

## **METHOD**

Prior to the meeting, blank flip chart pads were set up in three corners of the training room at the fire station, where the meeting was held. Maps of the area were on display showing aerial photography, zoning, existing land use, and the corridor's regional setting with surrounding shopping areas. Attendees were divided into three random groups according to their birthdays (Jan to April; May to August; and September to December).

Max Stach, Jon Lockman, and Mayor Presti served as facilitators for the three groups. The facilitators then led their group through the SWOT exercise. This exercise has facilitators prompting group discussion on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats present or confronting the Red Schoolhouse Road corridor within the Village of Chestnut Ridge. It was clarified that a strength was an existing positive quality of the Town, while an opportunity was a circumstance that was not present in the Town yet but could be pursued. Likewise a weakness was an existing negative quality of the Town, while a threat was a circumstance that was not present in the Town yet but could develop in the future. Groups were given approximately 15 minutes each to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Time periods were not strictly enforced, as some groups were proceeding more slowly than others.

Following the group discussions, each group facilitator reported his group's results for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Flip chart pages were placed along the side counter along one side of the room. Participants were asked to vote on the compiled lists of responses by placing up to six red adhesive dots next to the responses they felt were most important. Each person had to decide how to allocate each dot among the various responses in the four categories. Attendees were allowed to use all six dots in one category or on one item, or to place single or multiple dots among the various responses in different categories however they wished.

Because there was only one set of lists and only a few persons could vote at a time, this was done during an informal discussion period where several groups continued to talk amongst themselves. This also allowed opportunities for attendants to engage the consultants, the Mayor, and Village Board and committee members on a one-on-one informal basis.

Upon completion of the voting and discussion the consultant team announced the close of the meeting. It was announced that the results of the SWOT meeting as well as information on the Land Use Plan would be posted on the Village Website. Lastly, Mayor Presti thanked all attendees for coming and closed the meeting. It is noted that the responses set forth below are paraphrased notes of more robust discussions held at the meeting.

## **RESULTS**

These are the raw results from the exercise and no analysis of results is offered at this time. The number included next to each

<b><u>Strengths</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Dot Votes</u></b>	<b><u>No Dots Votes, But Listed (# of times)</u></b>
• Greenspace, country feeling, trees	9	
• Historic Significance, Red Schoolhouse building	7	
• Accessibility to Garden State Parkway	5	2
• Diversity of Area, Neighborliness	4	
• Proximity to Montvale NJ shopping & employment	2	1
• Industrial Uses are setback with green buffer	2	
• Quiet area but with good access to busy/built up areas		1
• Village well-managed	1	
• RSH Road Only two lanes, low traffic most of day	1	
• Provides traffic “relief valve” for Chestnut Ridge Rd.	1	
• Community services – EMS, Fire		3
• Good food & services (Hot Bagels, Chinese, Nails)		2
• Park with Gazebo and flowers		2
• 30 mph speed limit		1
• Limited truck traffic		1
• <u>Industrial park well maintained</u>		<u>1</u>
Total dot votes	32	
<b><u>Weaknesses</u></b>		
• Traffic congestion at morning and evening rush	5	2
• Character of new structures don’t fit	9	
• Lack of lighting	2	
• Lack of Codes enforcement	5	
• Conflicts/sudden change from housing to nonresidential	1	1
• Not enough restaurants	1	
• Summit Rd. acts as traffic relief valve	1	

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Number of Dot Votes</b>	<b>No Dots Votes, But Listed (# of times)</b>
• Trucks coming off road	1	
• No facilities for pedestrians, cyclists	1	2
• Foot traffic at northern end of corridor	1	
• Too much development, industry, warehouse		2
• Too much dense housing		2
• Left hand turns with limited sight distance (DiSalvo, Summit, Williams)		2
• Strip mall appearance		1
• Condition of parking lots		1
• Speeders		1
• School busses with holiday schedules		1
• No maintenance of the Red Schoolhouse		1
• Noise impacts		1
• Over-occupancy of housing		1
• Red Schoolhouse Road too narrow		1
• Weak retail market		1
• <u>Limited public transportation</u>		<u>1</u>
Total dot votes	27	
<b><u>Opportunities</u></b>		
• Create a Village Center at Chestnut Ridge Road	16	
• Make a charming Village Center appealing to residents to bring community together	16	
• Tax revenue, ratables	8	
• Village Hall/Community Room could move to RSH Rd.	7	
• Parkland, preserved open space, no change	6	
• Walsky (sp?) property behind Fleetwood school, across from Par, opportunity for high quality residential	6	
• Diversity of religions and cultures	1	
• <u>Solar energy production</u>	<u>2</u>	
Total dot votes	62	
<b><u>Threats</u></b>		
• Loss of tax revenue to tax-exempt properties	21	
• Outdated codes	9	
• Excessive high density housing	9	
• Worsening traffic	8	
• Environmental impacts of new development	4	
• Ugly development	4	
• Devastation to public school system	3	
• Too many variances for noncommercial uses on commercial properties	3	

<b>Threats</b>	<b>Number of Dot Votes</b>	<b>No Dots Votes, But Listed (# of times)</b>
• Developers “baiting and switching,” offering one kind of project but building another kind	3	
• Leaving land undeveloped	2	
• Loss of diversity, sameness of residents & bldgs	1	
• Overloading of infrastructure	1	
• Poor perception of school district		1
• Illegal multifamily uses of single family		1
• NJ draws shopping dollars, retail not sustainable		1
• Loss of neighborly feeling		1
• Loss of trees and greenery		1
• <u>Population turnover leading to unknown demands</u>		<u>1</u>
Total dot votes	68	
<b><u>Dots fell off, votes not counted</u></b>	2	
<b><u>Grand total, all dot votes</u></b>	<b>191</b>	
<b><u>Number of voters (191/6)</u></b>	<b>32</b>	