



2018 IN REVIEW AND THE YEAR AHEAD

We at Fallsburg's Future would like to offer a brief recap of our actions over this past year and share with you an outline of our priorities for the months ahead. All in all it was a busy time for planning and development in Fallsburg and we are pleased that we were able to make a substantive contribution to the public dialogue, especially concerning the town's updated Comprehensive Plan.

We lent our support to the Basha Kill Area Association (BKAA) in its effort to watch over environmental protection at the proposed Thompson Education Center project. Most of the project lies in the Town of Thompson with a sliver of land in Fallsburg. Early in the year BKAA challenged the legitimacy of the building permit that was issued in Fallsburg for the construction of a large residential building as part of the project. The permit had been issued even though the Environmental Impact Statement for the overall project has never been completed. After a lengthy review process and two public hearings, the Fallsburg ZBA upheld the permit despite our efforts.

We joined with the Pleasure Lake Homeowners' Association in their effort to stop a developer from using blasting procedures at a nearby project that threatened the Pleasure Lake dam and surrounding environment. Eventually, the developer rescinded the request to blast.

We submitted complaints to the Town of Fallsburg pertaining to six business storefronts in South Fallsburg that were run-down and in violation of the town maintenance code. Most of the problems have, to some extent, been addressed by the owners of the buildings. We appreciate the efforts of Fallsburg Code Enforcement.

Aided by generous support from BKAA, we consulted with an engineer to get up to speed about Fallsburg's water and sewer system and the challenges it faces with over 200 new homes coming on line each year. We met with the town engineer to learn more about

the water and sewer infrastructure in Mountindale and the costs associated with operating it, maintaining it and expanding it. See our update regarding this issue at www.fallsburgsfuture.org/mountindale.html.

We continued to reach out to other organizations like the Columbia Hill Neighborhood Association, the Rock Hill Neighborhood Coalition and Catskill Mountainkeeper in support of their campaigns to protect the environment and to align residential developments with town codes and regulations.

Many of our members supported the successful campaign to elect Rebecca Pratt to the Fallsburg Town Board. Rebecca made her mark on the Comprehensive Plan Committee and one of our members served as her campaign manager. She took up her position in December.

We regularly attended Fallsburg Planning Board meetings and voiced our points of view when the public could make written and verbal comments. Often our members were the only people representing the public, but through our regular FF Alerts and Updates, we were able to rally more residents to attend important meetings.

In our central effort during 2017-2018, we very closely followed the work of the Comprehensive Plan Committee as it updated the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. After their work was finished, the town board adopted the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU) in June and we were pleased that many of its 100 recommendations reflected our concerns and suggestions. We saw that some of our input had influenced changes to the reconfiguration of the zoning districts that will help control development in the decade ahead.

On the other hand, we were disappointed that the town did not take action on reining in several aspects of the Duplex Development Law or abolishing it altogether as one member of our group had advocated for in recommendations to the Fallsburg Town Board.

With the Comprehensive Plan and the new zoning codes in effect as of last June, our group of concerned residents believes we must now focus our attention on the list of recommendations that need to be carried out. A key recommendation is that the town set up an

Implementation Committee to assist the Fallsburg Town Board in following through with those recommendations. Here are general areas that we believe are important and should be focused on:

- **An overall assessment of the cumulative impact of large-scale development**
- **Increased transparency with regard to the Town, Planning, Zoning and Architectural Review Boards' processes**
- **Environmental protection of water, open space, etc.**
- **Aesthetics related to building design, public spaces, etc.**
- **Development of community parks and eco-friendly recreation facilities**

We will continue to update our website...www.fallsburgsfuture.org and to send out alerts and updates through our email list. If you wish to receive our mailings, please send your contact information to neighbor@fallsburgsfuture.org.

We wish all of our friends and neighbors a wonderful new year and hope that our town continues its slow renewal and development in ways that improve the quality of life for all of us and our visitors.

Fallsburg's Future...

an activist group of Fallsburg residents...

concerned about issues relating to sustainable residential development.