

Community Forums on The Future of the Rensselaer Plateau Combined Results for Forums of April 12 & 13, 2010

1 Overview

1.1 Hosting Organizations:

Community Forms on the Future of the Rensselaer Plateau were hosted by:

- New York Forest Owners Association (Capital District Chapter)
- Trout Unlimited (Home Waters Chapter)
- Black River Raiders
- Rensselaer Plateau Alliance

1.2 Facilitator

These meeting were facilitated by Nancy Bell of the Conservation Fund.

1.3 Invitations

All members of the public were invited via e-mail and phone of the hosting organizations, by press release in the local papers, by flyers posted in public locations and by personally delivered invitations.

1.4 Venues

Meetings were held:

- Monday, April 12th from 6-9pm at the Stephentown Fire Hall in Stephentown, NY.
58 Participants
- Tuesday, April 13th from 6-9pm at the Grafton Fire Hall in Grafton, NY.
77 Participants.

1.5 Meeting Structure

Participants broke into working groups at tables. Each table answered 6 questions and marked areas on maps of the region. A person at each table was designated as the 'scribe' and was directed to write what participants said, using their exact words. Participants were directed to not let the scribe move on until their thoughts were recorded as stated. We have made every effort to copy every detail of what was said word for word from the paper copies into this document.

This document summarizes the textual responses to the 6 questions. The geographical information from notes made on the maps will be supplied separately.

Please see additional information and errata in the Addendum section.

2 Results

2.1 Question 1: What do you Love about the Rensselaer Plateau?

2.1.1 Monday

Swimming at Cherry Plain State Park • harvestable resources forestry and gravel pits • hiking trails • biking roads • mountain biking • snowmobiling • ATVing • good road network; reasonable access to all parts of the Plateau • fishing • wildlife • snowshoeing • canoeing and swimming • landscape views • beauty • remoteness with proximity to cities • continuity of forest • hiking • population mix • mountains • Dunham Reservoir • long agricultural history • wildlife – bears, moose, deer, fisher, mink, turkeys, beaver, bats, deer, osprey, eagles, owls, piliated woodpeckers • native plants • privacy • Wide variety of scenery, landscape • rock formations • peace and quiet • running water – abundant water resources • Barberville Falls • diverse community • Pikes Pond • Cherry Plain State Park and the Capital District Wildlife Management Area • Dyken Pond • unbroken forested wilderness • hunting • vastness, huge area • recreation – snowmobiling, biking, cross-country ski, fishing, hiking, wildlife • State Parks – Cherry Plain, Grafton • easy access good road network • business – mining – logging - farming • clean water • many different communities • lack of population lower people • affordable • wilderness • hunting opportunity • birding, hiking • moose, bear • undeveloped nature of Plateau • access to Wildlife Management Area • wildlife viewing • existing forestry operations • Grafton LSP – hiking/skiing • large bogs • vernal pools • open space • the wilderness • wildlife corridors • xc skiing on Plateau • the hardwood forest • public land • lakes • recreational opportunities • beautiful flowing streams • trout fishing • large mammal sightings • kayaking • hiking • bushwacking • hunting • waterfalls • historic sites – old mills • cemeteries • rolling hills • vistas • berries: blackberries blue berries, raspberries • cross cultural connections (ski slopes) • horseback riding • beautiful fall foliage Rt 22 • unbroken forest • unfragmented • snowshoeing • Plateau buffers us from urban suburban sprawl, anywhere, Albany, East Greenbush, etc • I love it there are no stores nothing • no traffic • hiking • bears • moose • wildlife • birds • pond • cool air • snow • rain • lack of people • frost on hilltop • open space • trails: walking, snowshoe, skiing, snowmobile • feeling of wilderness • bicycling • close to home since I don't live on Plateau • like being in Adirondacks • wildlife • Dickinson Hill • wildlife • open forest land • ability to get away from mankind • lack of development • historical sites (charcoal pits and foundations) • State Parks • natural diversity • rivers and lakes • old cemeteries • fresh air • access to population centers • close to ski resort • cross-country ski trails • snowshoe trails • ability to sit in backyard and relax • scenic views – can see to the Catskills • close to art centers

2.1.2 Tuesday

trees • quiet • Dyken Pond • Eagles • Freedom • Big bear • Owls • Not commercialized • Self sufficiency • Fire tower • Streams • Deer hunting • Access • Fishing • Trapping • moose at Cherry Plain • Moose at bog • Cowee land • Public land and state park • Logging • Wildflowers • Ferns • Peace Pagoda • walking around Spring Lake • quietness around Spring Lake • community

around Spring Lake • wildlife • peace and quiet • open space • wildness and extensive trails • relatively few people • night sky (no light pollution) • lakes, streams and fishing • flora, fauna, and climate different from surrounding areas (especially Troy) • escapism from Albany • Grafton Lakes State Park • Cherry Plain State Park • Scenic quality from surrounding lowlands (few homes and construction seen) • Small, tight, close (human) communities • Winter sports (skiing, snowshoeing...) • Forests & wetlands • Lakes (by themselves) • Miniature version of the Adirondacks (and close by) • Potential commute to Albany • Great bicycling • Clean air/clean water • Hunting • Potential for plateau to remain as is • Sense of history • freedom of the landowners • wilderness setting • diversity of wildlife • beauty – of mountains, trees, flowers, nature • good neighbors • trails for biking and hiking • winter outdoor activities (example – snowmobiling) • cross-country skiing at Pine Ridge, Cherry Plain • hunting (turkeys, small game, deer, grouse) • mountain biking • fish • privacy (the ability to keep people away/off my land) • marshes • Cranberry Bog • The watersheds • Blueberry fields • Historic sites (such as Dutch Church) • Barns • the people • the hunting • the land, climate, snow • the fishing • the forest (contiguous) • scenic views, forestry products, recreation • wind energy potential • the blueberries • local government encouragement of local growth/good land use planning • local people make decisions (home rule) • many wetlands for flood control • water quality/water resources • views from blueberry ridge • it has “everything” • home – beautiful here • it doesn’t have congestion, pollution • limited mining “+” (presumably meaning a “positive feature”) • fresh air • quiet • natural beauty • geography • cooler summers • foliage (ferns) • flowers/fauna • red foxes • mosquitoes • blue herons • old rock walls • adequate clean water • low traffic (good for biking) • ponds, lakes, streams • marshes and swamps • friendly people • cross-country skiing • peacefulness • birds • old charcoal pits • “MTB” trails (presumed to mean “mountain bike” trails) • mosses and blueberries • old cemetery • endangered wildflowers • library • fire department • fire tower • churches • hiking • Berlin Mountain • woods • nature • fresh air • skiing • hiking • quiet • snowshoeing • hunting • fishing • wildlife • boating • lakes • streams • open space • green space • history • rocks • farms • parks • libraries • churches • small communities • climate zone • schools • clean water • wildlife corridor & contiguous woodlands • wild blueberries • native fauna/flora • birds • owls • newts • Dyken Pond • Grafton State Park • Cherry Plain State Park • Loves it the way it is, don’t change anything • Forest, birds, animals, and sparsity of people • Quiet and peaceful • Beautiful scenery (lakes, forests, ponds, streams, mountains; beautiful to drive) • Hiking and birdwatching • Grafton Winterfest and other activities • Large, expansive area • Diverse ecosystems • The people (best neighbors) • Hunting • Fishing • Cross-country skiing • Good place to bring grandchildren • People helping people out • Large contiguous forest • Maple syrup • Forest products (firewood) • History of the area • lakes, water, streams • snowmobiling • vast wilderness • abundant wildlife (birds, birding) • fishing • small villages • recreation available/opportunities • State parks (Grafton & Cherry Plain) • Dyken Pond (county park) • Own weather • Four-wheel trails • Hiking trails • Cross-country ski trails • Dirt roads • Trees/forests • Scenic views • Serenity • Hunting • History • Rocks/stone walls • it’s beautiful • the wildlife • its unique ecosystem & environment (like the Adirondacks but further south) • its windpower potential • the quiet • it’s God’s country • the historic aspect • Dyken Pond, the environmental education center • Hiking (the Taconic crest trail) • Picturesque • We’ve got everything on the Plateau • Small towns & communities • Animal tracking, especially in the snow

- Its potential for outdoor education and just getting kids & families outdoor
- Diversity of spring wildflowers
- Its air quality
- Its water quality
- It has beautiful view

2.2 Question 2: If you were to look far into the future, what would your vision for the Plateau be?

2.2.1 Monday

Forests remain • no clear cutting without cleanup and planting • clean air • clean water, wells, streams • abundant wildlife • great local economy • sanctuary • today's character is kept • don't want to drive down 43 and just see buildings • all recreational opportunities that we have today • all connecting forest corridors • some wind power • historic sites maintained/revived • ability to live off the land • right to farm • land use plan • sustainable (environmental, social, economic) • public access • protection of critical areas • large areas left natural for large animals • contiguous tracts for large animals • working forest (sustainable management) • not too developed • tours (guided, nature, walking, educational, historical) • education • trail systems • access to unique areas • water quality • professional foresters involved with logging • connection between large public/protected areas • organic agriculture • sustainable working landscapes (maple sugaring, firewood) • local governments value open spaces • master plans • mining plan (adequate but permanently limited areas) • continue the unbroken wilderness (sense) • small cottage industry • no large scale industry • future generations have an appreciation of the local history • support and access to state parks and public lands • environmentally responsible and sustainable wood products industry • support for local citizens who make living in forest industry • support for private land owners who log their land and loggers • designation by DEC for land protection and resources to achieve this • DEC consistent in approach to protect the plateau vis a vis permit approvals • home rule • rules enforced for use of off road vehicles • preservation of green space • restricted development • planned development • sustainable economy • tourism development • develop hiking, biking, horseback trails • concentrated technology development • improve tax base • improve schools without paying more money • basically the same • no change • no subdivision • trail – through trail north to south multiuse • no more government interference in our lives – having to ask permission to do things on our own property, i.e. building • no ATV • C-9 snowmobile trail open to bicyclists • be particular selective what you cut (whose definition) • forest management • replant • keep climate • neighbors - relationships • that it's protected • respectable land management – no clear cutting • no more mining • responsible mining • watershed protection • blueberry fields • maple syrup from preservation of maple trees • no invasive species • diversity of wildlife: moose, bear, bobcats, eagles • unfragmented forest blocks • large really big trees • universal zoning instead of fragmented zoning • open space stays open • increasing public land • increased access to private land • north south corridor of green space • reopen rail line (light) • more open access to lakes and streams • retain large forest blocks • more trails • no extensive residential development • keep 2 lane roads • watershed protection – drinking water • native flowers remain • open space • 25 foot wide snowmobile trails • designated use trails • more deer more wildlife • better wildlife management • water quality maintained • affordable land • small business to support recreation • restaurants convenient stores • recreation oriented businesses • coordinated snowmobile permits • trout stream management • logging in state parks • continue farms - fields open • supported CSAs community supported agriculture • support land trusts • windmills • looking for opportunities to promote Taconic Crest and Plateau to

enhance protection • support of the Alliance to pool resources and work together to establish symbiotic relationship • encouraging tourism to bring economic benefit – bring revenue to local businesses • increasing awareness of resources for recreation • maintain rural character • peace and quiet • connected network of trails • sustainable commerce • clear, clean drinking water • fishing holes • bogs • an appreciation of local history – preservation of history • preservation of historical sites e.g. cemeteries, farms, homes • clean air • community education • kids in tree swings • hiking trails • physical expansion of the Plateau (geographic boundary) • very little change, remaining the same 50 years from now • no more power lines, corridors • where there are people there is a greater density of them • more public access across private land • more dirt gravel roads • not everything paved • leisure hospitality • increased local farms stands or farmers markets • responsible hydropower • restaurants and eating places • thriving local economies • safe habitat for wildlife

2.2.2 Tuesday

Wind power • A Mecca for recreation • The parks present and well-funded • A bike trail on the old Rutland railroad up the valley • A forward-thinking open space plan that protects the precious resources • Housing and other development built with common sense • Clean water and healthy streams and lakes sustainable local economy • Keeping the schools, keeping education in the area • Keeping a vibrant town center • Sustainable forest management • High speed internet • Wildlife corridors still present for a variety of wildlife • Areas of forest that are approaching old growth • A viable, sustainable forest products industry • Trails connecting all the major parks and recreation areas and communities • Including horse trails • Restricted areas for snow mobiles • Tunnels for wildlife to cross roads • Quiet and safe lakes (no jet skis) • No gas-powered motorized boats • Our native habitats preserved for amphibians • No drainage of wetlands and other wet areas, whatever their size • Dirt roads preserved (e.g. keeps the speed down) • Create more opportunity for recreation • Respect for each other's property and each other • Diversity of recreation opportunity, trails for all • Respect for forests and wildlife • Limited population growth • Growth of towns/villages, more mom and pop stores and businesses • Cluster growth • Rehabilitate farms, keep farms in the family • Vibrant forest industry, lumber • Road corridors stay the way they are • Deeded trails are permanent • More seasonal homes • Businesses catering to vacation/seasonal people • Campgrounds, B&B's, coffee shops • Wind power • Preserve wildlife • Education of land/area • Keep taxes low on forests • Increased population does not equal more \$'s to towns • Balanced population growth • Continue to be like it is now • Resource management • That the plateau will look the way it does now • Don't want gentrification (big 2nd homes) • No more roads • Continued opportunity for recreation • Job opportunity in B&B, camping, restaurants • Remain sparsely populated • Keep housing reasonable price • Local government planning for the future • Water protected—stays clean and adequate • Balance between commercialism and maintain this way of life (may not be so/so) • No too much restrictive zoning • People not bothering your business • To maintain quality of life may have to restrain some commercialism • Balance of open space/woods • Recreational tourism • Well thought out long term development, i.e. residential development, sustainable and good school systems, wind power, hydropower, solar, wood, gravel, local food, clean air, tree farms, blueberry farms, maple, cheese, llama, alpacas, sheep • Wind turbines • Water—pure water • Sustainable forestry •

Responsible logging, no ruts • Maintenance of non-motorized trails for recreation • Maintain unimproved gravel roads (not paved) • Keep building lots large • Preserve open space (forest and land) • Limit development on waterfronts • Low impact zoning • Preserve water quality of lakes and ponds • Aesthetic management of power line ROWs • Limit large scale logging and clear cutting and gravel pits • Wind power as part of new economy • Children can run around in a safe environment, great place to raise kids • Controlled and regulated mining • More young people and families • Jobs, proximity to jobs/tech valley • The forest is still there • Single family middle income and affordable homes, bedroom community • Local oversight of development to maintain rural character, controlled growth • Outdoor recreation as a part of the economy • Stable school and property tax base, stable property taxes • Commuters are good because they don't bring industries to the plateau • Limited commercial and industrial development • Keep land in natural state • Continued connection to other states for services (MA, VT, NH) • Bennington, Williamstown, West Sand Lake, center Brunswick for commercial • Communities have adequate tax base using "green" power • Children outside playing • My grandkids swinging from a tree branch • Less government-regulated areas • People have the right to hunt and fish • That people have at least a 5-10 acres parcel of land with their home • Personal liability laws protect the landowner • A "balanced" plateau, allowing for hunting and fishing as well as available economic resources and services for the community • Enforcement of environmental laws (eg. as regards to hazardous waste) • The plateau is kept mostly residential • Clean air • Clean water • Better stocking (of fish) methods • The plateau is for the future what it is now—forested, habitat wildlife, animals, birds and plants • Still have paths, dirt and gravel roads (not everything paved) • A better tax base to help the plateau stay much as it is now • We want kids to enjoy what we enjoy now—country setting, scenery, good preserved water areas, community • A setback to people's property • Remain as is, including sense of history and landscape • Coordinated trail network across plateau (especially north-to-south) • Wildlife corridor (wide expanse, connectivity, undeveloped in middle of Plateau) • Wider recognition of plateau identity • Better planned development (sustainable) • Guide book focused on the plateau (trail, wildlife areas) • Learn lessons from Adirondack land use planning (what worked and didn't work, including economics) • Sustainable forest management • Sustainable lake management • Public access on working forest land • More private land access • Lack of clear cutting • Broad-band internet access • Cell phone access (including improvement) • Cell phones off the trails • Cell phone reception without cell towers (locate elsewhere) • Resource-based jobs on plateau (outdoor recreation) • More B&B's for visitor use (not to stay) • Bike lanes on main roads of plateau (including route 2) • Self-promote motorcycle use on main roads • Self-promote motorcycles with mufflers • See more moose • See more wildlife • Less airborne pollution from upwind sources (relation to fish warnings for mercury in Dunham reservoir) • Wind turbines • Expanded trail network to bed and breakfasts • Tourist economy • Snowmobile economy • Broadband internet access • No snowmobile economy • Electric ATVs • Controlled ATVs—trails not everywhere • Preserve rural character—not develop like Brunswick • Increase zoning laws—don't sell out to developers—stop developers through zoning • Conscious development • Respect for history and old timers • Affordable housing and taxes

2.3 Question 3: What do you see as threats to this vision?

2.3.1 Monday

Fragmentation of forests • too many people moving in • proximity to Albany and Troy • reluctance of private land owners to allow public access • dam removal • fear of outdoors • climate change • invasive species • dumping trash • ATVs • snowmobiles • deer over browsing affecting native species of flowers • property taxes • absentee ownership • the demise of local town centers/stores • historic buildings gone • closing or underfunding public lands/programs • development without consideration for development • unplanned development • invasive species • taxes • taxation without representation • increase taxes force people to sell forestland • infrastructure – if it's too good it will attract development • decreasing population • increasing population • people • population increase is bad • taxes • forestland taxed differently - needed • poor economy – selling land • gravel roads being paved • zoning • DEC regulations • town regulations • increase population at a fast rate • people who don't agree with my defined use of the Plateau • ATV riders who don't respect landowners wishes • people who destroy land – dumping, partying on land that is not theirs • mining • hard rock mining • Dewey Loeffel Landfill • hazardous waste • threat to Hudson River watershed • water contamination • windmills • unplanned suburban sprawl – second home development • clear cutting • forest fires – lack of proper forest management (public or private) • unregulated raping or resources • overwhelming trash - roadsides • people • lack of technology – safety issues limits business possibilities • decreasing population • abuse of land/dumping • no jobs for high school graduates • suburban sprawl: subdivisions • no planning and land use • non-sustainable timber harvesting • mining • loss of wildlife and habitat • over hunting and fishing • no shoulders on roadsides for walking/biking • lack of community minded businesses • invasive species: both insects and plants • pollutants threatening invading watersheds • the zoning policy not keeping up with the demographics and trends • people not being able to afford their land anymore and selling it off to subdivision • unfunded State mandates • overpopulation • city slickers, second homeowners • clear cutting • no tax base • eroding tax base • no long term plan that the community has bought in to • irresponsible mining • no regional plan • light pollution • noise pollution (especially from mines) • irresponsible trespassers (without permission) • emerald ash borer • invasive species: plants and pests, woolly adelgid (attacking hemlocks) • threats to trees/forests • overpopulation (humans, deer) • deer ticks • close to Capital District • rural sprawl • development • lack of master plans/conservation plans • lack of coordinated planning • poor/no zoning • inaccessibility • conflicts between newer residents and traditional users • aging population forced to subdivide for economic reasons • climate change • concept that Plateau become APA • fear of government • too much development • paying for it • lack of access to private property • different communities with different visions • people don't like change

2.3.2 Tuesday

Red tape, over-regulation • Overexploitation of the resources • The property taxes (can't afford to stay here) • Overdevelopment • Carving the plateau up into small lots/pieces • Fragmentation • Increasing stress and changes due to climate changes—on both people and wildlife • Lack of forest

management • Not realizing the value of the natural resources on the plateau • Loss of sense of community • Invasive species • Under-regulation of natural resources • Breaking up big parcels into small ones • Close-mindedness • Sub-divisions • Not being able to afford to keep property • Not being able to pay property taxes • Having to sell land because of taxes • Lack of town planning in some towns • Lack of planning on whole plateau (regional planning) • Lack of common vision • Lack of community involvement • Too much government—excessive rights over people who have no say • Yuppies • Too much government without community involvement • Population growth • That someone wants to control our property, other than us • Overpopulation—dense housing blocks • Land and forests broken into two and three acre plots—loss of open space • Threat from not enough or too much planning • Not having the right kind of zoning for the right area • Not involving community in decisions • Not following the laws we have for development • People failing to become involved • People with money being treated better • Loss of individual rights (to farm) • Environmental threats—loss of trees to infestations, climate change • Change to quarry changed weather • Too many deer • Not enough hunters to eat deer • Multi-unit housing/large developments • Over-utilization of extractable resources—i.e. logging, mining • Declining revenue base • Demographics • Quality and size of school districts • Road building • Apathy • Second homes • Extremes—over-growth, too many tourists, second homes, residences • Government failing to act • Board of education • Lack of zoning and lack of planning • Increased taxes • Non-government • Lack of zoning • Lack of commercial tax base, no industry • Home-based, computer-based businesses don't add tax base • Lack of public transportation • Poor primary and secondary school system • Loss of home rule—loss of local control (e.g. Grafton Lakes State Park taking and closing, loss of tax base with parkland) • Too many regulators may limit wind power potential • Worry the state may affect local control • Higher taxes from loss of tax base may prevent new families • Infrastructure needs improvement (e.g. roads—need investment in state highways) • Limitations of water and sewer limit opportunity for dense development • How does the larger capital region affect the plateau (e.g. large job losses) • Deforestation • Pest insects and forest diseases • Government, not landowners • People who don't own the land want to use it and try to tell us what to do with it and use it for their own • Loss of tax base • Fear—of government telling us what to do • Any person, organization or government taking control of our property and making our home rule decisions • Lack of education of our youth to the natural world—to nature • Lack of respect of properties • Overdevelopment and regulation of the plateau—turning into suburbia • Property taxes too high • Over-development • Lack of a wildlife corridor • Lack of state \$'s • Poor planning/no planning • Losing wilderness • High property taxes • Mining • Inappropriate forestry practices • Pollution (especially air and water) • Forest fragmentation • Inability to create/explore renewable energy • Lack of good schools • Change in flight plans to increase over plateau • Over-regulation • Under-regulation • Climate change (threat to sugar maple—fall foliage and sugar industry) • Imported bugs (threat to trees) • Invasive species (in general)—including woolly adelgid (hemlock threat) • Indifference and ignorance • Lack of connection of youth to outdoors • Lack of appreciation for the outdoors • Increased deer ticks and Lyme disease • Organized resistance to recognition of the plateau • Organized resistance to forest legacy area • Developers • Newcomers who don't understand rural culture • Overuse of natural resources like water • Unregulated use of land (ATVs)—culture of disrespect • Lack of education—ignorance of land use and reverence • Property taxes • Invasive species—emerald ash borer • Fracking natural gas

2.4 Question 4: What do you see as Solutions to the Threats to get to the Vision?

2.4.1 Monday

Planning/long range thinking • conservation easements/fee title acquisition • invested population • incentives for property owners to protect or preserve or delay development • helping landowners plan long term • develop local forest products industry • encourage development where previously developed (new business/industry) • develop economic use for waste wood chips • Christmas Tree farms • local organic agriculture • ecotourism • support for entrepreneurs • County Government support • many people with this as priority • develop a master plan for the Plateau – communities all having input • organize effort to education everyone on importance of a plan • educate on value of Plateau • speak to other types of groups – local papers, speaking at local groups • educate on threats to Plateau - show by examples where mining has impacted Plateau and outside examples – also water contamination – show public by concrete example • educate to specific audiences according to their interests • empower people – persuade them that their voice counts • develop carrot/stick approach to convince others to maintain rural character • no trespassing • community forum to discuss values • town adopted plans • consequences for people who dump trash, don't obey landowners wishes for use • education on the resources and what we will lose • more citizen involvement • forest legacy area designation • comprehensive planning!! • more jobs • good schools • tourism development • public awareness • success of forest legacy enabling New York State to purchase easements • expanded recreational facilities • high tech/green industries • increased easement opportunities – with legal protection • enlightened land management • incentives for business development • forest legacy designation • leadership • cooperative planning • attentiveness to issues as they arise before they become full blown problems • land owners attentive to their forests • education to help people preserve their properties (wetlands, forests) • educating kids • liability protection for landowners so they can let others use/access their property • local decision making not State or Federal • regional planning • private funds raised to acquire large parcels • more funds for easements no matter where the funds come from • voluntary mechanisms and incentives to keep land in forest • easements • deed restrictions • same for farmland • master plan • master vision • conservation plan (regional) • planned infrastructure changes • well planned development • core areas (keep undisturbed) • education about importance of the Plateau resources and preservation of the Plateau • raise awareness • good sustainable forestry practices • education – outdoor/environment • town government involvement • public awareness • recreation easements • education about invasive species • conservation easements • forest legacy designation • promote positive outdoor experiences and connections to the land • comprehensive regional plan • Rensselaer Plateau Based Committee/Council engaged in bottom up planning like Tug Hill Commission was • tax incentives for open space protection • incentives for public access to private land • reform liability laws protecting landowner • networkers • more information dissemination = better funding • diversify alliances • update thinking to deal with current circumstances re: APA/DEC/Rules • adaptive change • superseding of State over local • find ways to get to common public goals

2.4.2 Tuesday

more local participation in local decisions • following through on rules (enforcement) • more town board members attendance at community meetings • money facilitates solutions (e.g., money for easements to make remaining property value more affordable) • a comprehensive plan • more local participation • combined resources • accessing money resources from numerous sources • broad community involvement • regional planning • landowner rights • education on controversial issues to landowners & residents • tax incentives • broader tax incentives for forests to include wildlife & other uses • easements • more referendums on government actions • community consensus (forums) • more meetings like this with all towns represented • monitor clear cutting • give people chance to give input • better community communication • local control • education (environmental issues, local resources) • “*NOT” closing the parks • close the park • proper zoning to limit growth • property owners heed to the options (with towns helping this) • public control to maintain forest areas • tax incentives (for unimproved land, but not forced by law) • tax incentives to support the vision and limit threats to the vision • conservation • conservation easements • thoughtful zoning • education about the need of conservation • education for need to be involved • involve youth • community spirit/involvement • involving part-time residents • community/municipal events • better education districting • rural business zone • zoning • planning commission • limited waterfront development • expansion of home-based businesses • environmental education • expand recreational business • create huge recreational business venue like other places • better state representation in this area (...to advocate for better roads, schools) • grants for people to improve homes • (modernize septic, well, heating, insulation) • regulate/controlled growth to maintain rural character (processes are fair and predictable; septic regulations control) • educate youth to the natural world • increased hikes, walks, nature centers • increased environmental education and river ecology • take your kids for a walk • lower taxes to make it possible for people here today to afford to purchase it or to keep it • landowners who live on the plateau and pay taxes should have the say and control of the land • want local control for landowners • wide recognition of the Plateau as a special place • legislation from state designating the Plateau as a unique area • critical amount of protected preserved land (public & private) • increased interest by land conservancy (The Nature Conservancy) • state funding for targeted acquisitions • planned/coordinated managed development • get towns and county involved in the plateau (in general) • greater recognition of unique history of the Plateau (including charcoaling, fern gathering,...) • more information meetings • town & county coordination • widespread distribution of maps & guidebook (to people) • newspaper coverage of maps & information • more coverage of the Plateau in the media • organized network of snowmobile/bike trails throughout the Plateau • organized network of cross-country ski trails throughout the Plateau • quieter/cleaner-burning snowmobiles • realty transfer tax to go for conservation easements • political activity (citizen involvement in community planning) • education of citizens of environment • respect of local culture • build sense of community and responsibility • supporting organizations with common goals • regional planning (all communities are connected; Rensselaer Plateau Alliance) • People having a larger view than just where they live (working together for the common good)

2.5 Question 5: Who would YOU need to be to fulfill the vision; what traits would you need to have?

2.5.1 Monday

Open minded nature loving person • considerate of others who move into Plateau • real and honest • educate others about different vision • environmentalist • educate children • money • \$ • respectable • involved • evolved • adaptable • open minded • loud • open minded • collaborative • willing to compromise • educated • an educator • an advocate • proactive • willingness to take risks • willingness to volunteer • committed • politically active • preserver • persuasive • be respected • be respectful • be nice to others • be non-judgmental • dedicated philanthropy • more informed • a better more active listener than talker • more involvement in community discussions • more involved at the town level or county level of government or school district • increase my physical/recreational activities and my leading of these activities (hiking, skiing, biking) • dedicated leader: people like Teddy Roosevelt, John Muir, Rachel Carson, Pete Seeger • involved in community (altruism) • collaborative • Rachel Carson: courageous • arbitrator • friendly • open minded • god • invested • priority • vision • educated • politically active • committed • open minded • tolerant of diverse opinions • willingness to join groups/work • seller of vision • coalition builder • committed • devote time • effective communicator • good listener • good learner • visionary • leader • good team member • good sense of humor • not easily frustrated • persistent • friendly • knowledgeable

2.5.2 Tuesday

respectful • considerate • accepting of other people's opinions • community-minded • charitable • empathetic • generous • willing to sacrifice • environmentally conscientious • understanding that everyone has something to offer • being able to listen • recognizing the value of other people's opinions & perspectives • being able to explain your perspective (information) • being idealistic without being narrow-minded & ego-centric • non-judgmental • broad-minded • involved • good listener • communicative • flexible • educated on laws, regulations, and environmental issues • fair-minded • empathetic • even tempered • look at things from all sides/angles • forward thinking & also a historian • listener • committed • not an authoritarian personality • communicator • thick-skinned (don't take things personally) • persuasive • responsible • able to see the big picture • think outside of the box • persistent • be respectful • concerned about area even if not a landowner • landowner being a good steward • someone who comes to a meeting • willing to listen • willing to participate • willing to talk/discuss • energetic • thick skinned • open and receptive to new/differing ideas • willing to change (flexibility) • tactfulness • honest • dedicated • innovative • proactive • not narrow minded (open minded) • risk taker • entrepreneur (conscientious; teacher – kids) • flexible • fighter to protect resource base • collaborator • be an example with my own property • visionary over long-term view • generous in all ways • active participant in public meetings and good role model in civic engagement for future generations • listen to all sides before you form an opinion • good stewards of our land resources (e.g., forests, water, and all land; includes air & minerals) • get involved (run for public office) • open communications • involve community •

encourage participation in environmental, political, educational aspects • Me • being proactive • open or envisioning to owning land • committed to being a landowner • be a landowner • an open active listener to the community • open-minded • an advocate • a caretaker • concerned • passionate • involved and engaged • thick-skinned • good listener • participatory • strategic long-term planner (keep an eye on the goal) • to be patient (have patience) • student of nature • flexible (to consider different strategies) • appreciative of all points of view • having a sense of place • having a sense of history • someone who loves to leave a legacy • persistence • be political (with savvy) • responsible • conscious • respectful of land & others • educated • understand goals • committed • vision • walk the talk • accepting • boy & girl scouts (“☺”)

2.6 Question 6: What are three actions you can take now?

2.6.1 Monday

Serve on environmental advisory committee • participate actively • become master forest owner • serve on Rensselaer Plateau Alliance • conserve my own property • bird survey • educate the current population • join one of the groups sponsoring this event • get involved with environmental cleanup • support forest legacy nomination • make other people aware • stay involved in Alliance • keep up to date with RPA activities • diversify trail system uses and users • talk to local politicians • talk to friends and neighbors • education yourself on Plateau Alliance • make a donation • individual plan to maintain your own land • be a better forest manager more active • join NYSFOA • hire a master forester to help manager or provide a plan for land/forest management • increase the rides/hikes I lead on the Plateau • be more vocal at meetings • spread the word to my neighbors • teach kids about wildlife • volunteer for kids nature activities • participate in different community groups like this (RPA) • make sure town officials know what I value at the Plateau – letters to the advertise/newspaper • road signs (entering the Rensselaer Plateau) • education people about usage • participate in more forums • meet people that don't have same vision as me • good example on our property • write educational articles.

2.6.2 Tuesday

Become informed • I could take down my posted signs • Keep people involved • Educate people on the importance of the resources • Avoid the use of chemicals (especially outside) • Read the local newspaper • reduce (1st), reuse (2nd), recycle (3rd) • Include/bring “impact-on-the-environment” into the (as a) criteria for what to choose/use... • Write your local politicians to support the Plateau • Educate friends/neighbors & self • Get involved; join one or more organizations • Join a snowmobile group or other • Buy and/or preserve land • Make views/opinions known to others • publicize the issue • stay involved • educate myself • educate the public • support the local economy (buy local produce) • join an organization that has the same vision I have and work with them • become a Master Forest Owner • start at home (conserving your own property) • teach your kids and grandkids • teach your children • teach friends & family • participate/volunteer • educate yourself • listen/consider new ideas • call & write to news media, government representatives, legislature • use social networking • join/volunteer for organizations • publicize the issues • become a leader • practice what you (I) preach • think globally but buy locally • write letter in support of Forest Legacy Area • make my business more “green” • educate children & grandchildren & ourselves about conservation & stewardship • try to motivate people to get involved in the community • communicate what I have learned tonight with public • keep informed on upcoming issues (educational, environmental, governmental) • find out as much information as you can about what is going on in and around the Plateau • bring others to the issue • buy land • become educated with regard to community (local) policies • attend and be involved at the town government level • lead walks, hikes, and bike rides • publicize events better to increase involvement • show visitors the sites on the Plateau • use a Master Forester to help plan better forest management • stay involved • talk it up with friends & neighbors • have information meeting in home • become more familiar with land

involved • support the Rensselaer Plateau Alliance • research Plateau history • support sustainable forestry on Spring Lake lands • join New York Forest Owners Association • educate friends, neighbors, and family • manage my property/forest appropriately • take Master Forest Owners program • get a conservation easement on property • assist with Rensselaer Plateau conservation plan • increase work on Rensselaer Plateau conservation plan • lead educational outings (on the Plateau) • advocate against more mining • protect the land (area) you are able to • let people know about the area • learn more about the area • help more landowners learn about natural features on their land • contact your representatives to increase Environmental Protection Fund funding • take care of your property • educate your neighbors about land protection options • participate in groups with vision • be active in larger community • pass it on (educate community) • find out who major landowners are • live simply • local involvement • replace yourself and no more • grow a garden • buy locally (use CSA/community supported agriculture) • work with user groups to develop trail network • teach my kids to appreciate wild-ness • slow down • be happy (☺); minimize anger • • (Grafton Meeting loose cards) • purchase land • be a landowner • encourage landownership • become a steward of your land

3 Addendum

3.1 Additional Thoughts Supplied at the meeting

One group on Monday provided an extra sheet that was written as follows:

People we need to reach out to:

- Educator
- Politician
- Environmentalist
- Economist
- Planner
- Know the law
- Business leader
- PR representatives
- Donors/
- Moneybags

3.2 Additional Thoughts not yet supplied

One individual on Tuesday evening felt that her thoughts were not captured accurately and requested to be able to send her thoughts by e-mail. We have not yet received this information but will post it here in a newer revision of this document when it arrives.

3.3 Errata

If you attended one of these meeting and feel that any of your statements have not been captured please contact us at info@rensselaerplateau.org and we will make sure to update this document with your statements.