



Jessica Montgomery <montgomeryj@togny.org>

Fwd: Comprehensive Plan

1 message

Peter G. Barber <barberp@togny.org>
To: Jessica Montgomery <montgomeryj@togny.org>

Mon, Mar 3, 2025 at 1:15 PM

Peter G. Barber
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[REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Mar 3, 2025 at 6:59 AM
Subject: Comprehensive Plan
To: Peter G. Barber <barberp@togny.org>

Hello Supervisor Barber,

Please accept this letter of gratitude to you, the Town Board, and the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee. I commend the collective efforts to complete the recent Town of Guilderland Comprehensive Plan Update.

I spoke with you briefly following your recent State of the Town address. Specifically, I approached you to offer feedback and request that the Comprehensive Plan not overlook the adolescent population in our community. While the Plan addresses parks and recreation offering playgrounds for toddlers/young children, and new pickleball courts (for example) for older residents, no mention was found addressing consideration of our teenage adolescent population.

At the end of our brief conversation, I commented I would express my thoughts in an email. Well, I did not forget. To be honest, however, I have softened on that feedback: I am not convinced allocation of town resources to age-specific outdoor options is the answer.

I had been concerned the adolescent population (tween & teenagers) is an often-overlooked population for municipal services. Peer interactions and social connectedness have long been established as essential for mental health and social development. Parents and older generations continually complain about screen time and the difficulties separating this age group from their devices. On the other hand, it often seems there are fewer and fewer places kids have to meet friends, converse, and simply enjoy downtime from their academic endeavors. As you are well aware, even Crossgates has recently changed its escort policy such that even our High School Juniors and Seniors are prohibited from spending time without a parent or adult over 21.

Anyway, I spent time thinking about it after we spoke, talked with my children, and spent some time researching other municipalities' attempts to create spaces (skate parks, bike parks, etc). The bottom line is I'm not convinced the significant expense has been justified in these endeavors. We are not an urban community, with distance and the inherent reliance on cars ongoing obstacles for this young population trying their hand at independence. A strong, safe community with vibrant business and retail spaces and ongoing efforts to improve walkability and sidewalk connections may prove more valuable in fostering connectedness for this population.

Thanks for listening. Long email to rescind earlier comments!

All the best,
Jodi Novak Wey

