

Town of Peru

Visioning Workshop Summary

The Town of Peru hosted a visioning workshop in November. The development of a shared vision statement is important for the long-term success of Peru's Comprehensive Plan. Vision statement is necessary to judge future policies, programs and actions. It also acts as a "consistency test" for decisions made at the local level. Visioning is a strategic tool that will help Peru to:

- Develop a greater sense of community consensus
- Establish long-term direction for the community
- Initiate effective and creative problem solving
- Build commitment to implement the vision and plan
- Develop priorities for the comprehensive plan

At the workshop held in November 2003, 65 participants worked through a visioning process to develop a vision for the future of the town. Small groups worked together to identify specific elements of their vision and to devise a statement that characterizes that vision. The first step was to identify both negative and positive elements of the Town. These elements, or factors, were recorded, and then ranked by the individual groups by placing a "priority" sticker next to the factor each group member felt was the most significant. The following two tables categorize all of the negative and positive factors identified along with the number of priority stickers each category received at this first stage of the visioning process.

Negative Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants:

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this Category	Negative Factors Identified
Planning/Zoning	30	14	Commercial strip development Fast sprawling growth Too many trailers Too many single-family homes Converted to multi-family rentals Placement of an adult facility in a historical area Keeping growth with attention to character of community Need regulation to control lighting within residential area Open burning ordinance Hodge podge planning Nothing to prevent landowners from letting their property go Waiver of zoning laws No noise ordinance Town is becoming less cohesive-not a compact center Uncontrolled development Leash laws are not enforced Used car lot on Bear Swamp Road Leash laws, local barking animal Noise ordinance Mobile homes out of place Front yard setbacks out of line Mega developments/ planned Development Enforcement & zoning Excessive subdivisions Lack of rental property Too many dogs Lack of animal control Building codes - deteriorating structures, junk cars Town does not have an enforceable leash law No town center

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this Category	Negative Factors Identified
Traffic	24	11	<p>Traffic jams at 22 & 22B</p> <p>Traffic flow between Elm & 22B</p> <p>No traffic light at Maiden Lane</p> <p>Traffic speed</p> <p>Bear Swamp is main access into Berne – seems to be becoming more like Cornelia Street</p> <p>Too many kids on 4-wheelers going up & down road</p> <p>Traffic speed on Mider Lane going up to school out of control</p> <p>Increase law enforcement – traffic Laws</p> <p>Speeding cars & trucks becoming more of a problem</p> <p>Traffic Bear Swamp (McDonald’s, post office, credit union)</p> <p>Elm & Main Street – intersection near community church</p> <p>Exit from Highway 87, heading east & intersection at Bear Swamp & Telegraph, low visibility</p> <p>Blinking light at Stewart’s – heading Onto Maiden Lane from Main St.</p> <p>Reduce speed</p> <p>Speed limit on Lapham Mill Road</p> <p>Traffic issues</p> <p>Traffic flow especially around school</p> <p>Intersection of 22 & 22B congested</p> <p>Speed limits not enforced</p> <p>Speed limit on Bear Swamp road, need to lower</p> <p>Increased traffic</p> <p>Traffic patterns</p>
Rural/Community Character	16	7	<p>Vacant, abandoned buildings</p> <p>Aesthetics are deteriorating</p> <p>Center of town looks bad</p> <p>Loss of attractive apple orchards to housing</p> <p>Development along roads is a loss to Agriculture</p>

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this Category	Negative Factors Identified
			Lack of community feeling No center of town Empty Mason building – put to use Unsightly cement bunker on Barney Downs Road Need to pay more attention to the aesthetics of the whole town Lack of town center Losing country atmosphere Large barn complex, Union Road Bear Swamp & 22B over-commercialized
Youth	15	8	Need more organized kid events No curfew – night activities (teens) Halloween issues Not enough for kids to do Don't have places for teens to go Lack of control – curfew school kids Lack of supervised activities for older youth Town safety – large groups of kids Around – vandalism Lack of youth programs for those who don't play sports Unsupervised teenagers in town center on the rise Too many delinquents roaming the streets at night Too many kids roaming streets at Night
Environment	14	2	Water quality Housing, development and some farming threaten groundwater Water quality is poor/ expensive Water quality terrible Logging clean up @ Bear Swamp & Lapham Mills Spraying in orchards Non-drinkable water in town Burning allowed Development of Bear Swamp

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this	Negative Factors Identified
Aesthetics	13	8	Doesn't blend with environment Expensive water/ poor quality Water quality still needs improvement Lack of use of town's natural Resources/ tourism (rivers, lake) Light pollution People burning garbage
Recreation	13	2	Modern & historical design mixed Main Street – needs landscaping Side view – Topps Grocery Boarded up store building at Heyworth Village Upkeep of commercial building facades Smell of the town Litter along roadways Town is not aesthetically pleasing- especially town center Farm smell from the manure Entrances to town unappealing Erosion of scenic views from roadways – less open space Odors from farms Not enough development for boating Lack of cycling/ walking trails No place for skateboarding Don't like location of Ausable Park at bridge Not enough winter activity for kids Don't have free access to Ausable Point Recreational facilities – tennis courts, skating No bike paths Lack of centralized park for non-sporting activities No snowboarding park No place to ride bikes Lack of recreational facility

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this	Negative Factors Identified
Business and Industry	10	2	No well developed business district Business district too spread out Can't attack industry Lack of good businesses Lacking place for new technology Lack of job opportunities Adult entertainment locations Lack of commercial base (revenue) Depressed downtown Commercial development? Dependent on other areas for services/ shopping
Taxes/Tax Base	8	3	Increased housing development increases tax need for services Lack of services for taxes paid Property/ school taxes are too high Property taxes Too much tax exempt property High taxes Tax base – commercial development
Transportation	8	1	Too much oversize trucking Trucks out of sandpit at 6 a.m. – county trucks are big offenders Too many big trucks going through Town Light should have been at 22/22B rather than 22/ Bear Swamp Large trucks early in morning Large trucks/ heavy equipment driving thru town at all hours Landfill is importing garbage – trucks drive through Peru Traffic light at Bear Swamp & 22
Infrastructure	8		High water & sewage rates Deterioration of roads – oversized rucks Snow removal - bad Lack of parking in some areas Not enough sidewalks Need crosswalks & signs No trash collection

Category	Number of Responses in Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this	Negative Factors Identified
			Infrastructure to keep pace/ anticipate growth (water, sewer)
Police Coverage	6	2	Increase law enforcement - Vandalism Lack of police in the evening, Increased vandalism Speed enforcement around schools Lack of law enforcement No police force
Town government	6	1	Handling of school construction Lack of information from town on development issues No town newsletter Non-centralized town government Better communication Town hall too small
Senior Services	4	3	Need facilities/ housing Need interaction between town & Apple Valley Not enough senior housing Insufficient senior housing
Schools	3	3	Drugs near school
People	2		People moving to country but not wanting negatives Snobby
Community Center	1		No town community center
Historical	1		No historical society

Positive Factors Identified by the Workshop Participants

Category	Number of Responses In Category	Number of Priority Stickers for this Category	Positive Factors Identified
Rural/Community Character	28	21	Snobby Small community atmosphere Attractive appearance Walkable village Rural life style Small town atmosphere & rural Setting Bedroom community Rural character Historical look retained Quiet bedroom community General appearance of town Size Open spaces Ability to walk in town Charm of town Great neighborhoods Great farms & rural community Nice downtown, village area Community pride Good reputation as bedroom Community Rural landscape Rural atmosphere Uncrowded Good standard of living Small town atmosphere
Parks & Recreation	26	2	Kids recreation facilities(soccer) Adult recreation (hiking, lake, golf) State facilities – Macomb, Ausable Boat launch Town park & gazebo, Lapham Mills park Good youth programs Access to lake Good outdoor recreation possibilities Gazebo park will kept & used Lapham Mill Park

			Two state parks located in town of Peru
			Bert youth programs & fields and summer programs
			Concerts
			Recreation program
			Summer concert at gazebo
			Great parks
			Gazebo summer programs
			Play area
			Music/ summer program
			Heyworth Village Park
			Some community based activities in park
			Lapham Mills sports facilities
			Snowmobile trails
			Good sports & youth programs
Schools	18	8	Quality of educational institutions
			School quality
			Good schools
			Active schools
			Good school system
			School system, new facilities
			Education system
			School
			School system
			Good school district
			Education on the rise
			Presence of school in our town
			School district
			Exceptional school system
People/Sense of Community	15	7	Educated, motivated citizens
			Neighbors help neighbors
			Friendly community
			Nice place to live
			Friendly people
			Diversified population
			Community atmosphere
			Town employees
			Citizens of Peru
			Open minded to new ideas
			Community is cohesive
			Quality people, friendly & helpful
			Friendly, homey community
Scenic beauty	11	5	Physical beauty of village, farms
			Scenery

			Picturesque Landscape Mountains, lakes, rural settings Pretty town Scenic views Very beautiful/ scenic Beautiful setting Scenic beauty
Location	10	3	Town location Proximity to Lake Placid Proximity to Lake Champlain Proximity to Montreal Central location Convenient to many nearby Attractions Access to Interstate Great location – lakes & mountains
Agriculture	9	3	Good growing conditions Good farm stands Agricultural industry Orchards Farmland Apple orchards Farms – dairy/ produce
Environment	8	3	Lakeside Four seasons Lots of woods Lake No significant environmental Problems Air pollution is low No hazardous waste sites
Safety	7	3	Quality of life – safety Safe No gang violence, crime is low Low crime rate
Emergency Services/ Volunteers	7	3	Volunteers Fire department/ EMT Top notch fire & emergency Wonderful volunteer fire department Volunteer fire department Fire department Great volunteer fire dept. & EMT Programs
Library	7		Library Wonderful library

			Peru free library & summer Programs
			Good library – summer series
Housing	6	2	Apple Valley housing Nice quality housing developments Housing developments Senior housing Excellent senior housing
Business	6		Businesses are centralized Good place to have a business Development of Bear Swamp businesses & economy Car repair garage “Mobil” Farmers Market, fresh produce Sufficient population to support business
Historical	6		Historical aspects Historical Older historic buildings History Cultural heritage Town needs to focus on historical corridor along Rte. 9 with emphasis on roll of Town of Peru
Religion	5	2	Ecumenical religious collaboration Active churches in village Ecumenical spirit Two strong church communities
Roads/ Infrastructure	5	1	Condition of the roads Road & infrastructure system Many quiet roads Town water & sewer Good roads, plowing good
Services	4		Availability of services Full service garage Good road upkeep, plows, etc. Services available in town or nearby
Business and Industry	4		Restaurants in town Good grocery store Growth on Bear Swamp Road Nice store (Chases)
Youth	3		Youth commission Youth program – sports & Swimming Great youth program
Government	3		Town board gets involved in

			neighborhood safety
			All voting in one building
			Quality town officials
Planning/Zoning	2		Having zoning
			Opportunities for undeveloped land use
Growth	2	1	Growth
			Growth – many new homes being built
Taxes/Tax Base	1		Good taxes

Vision Statements

Group #1

Peru should be a community that has preserved as well as promotes our rich historical and cultural heritage, using zoning to consider issues such as lot size, setbacks and signage. Growth is consistent with community character and is reflected in a town center that serves as a focal point for activity. Greenspaces have been preserved and parkland developed as good health is important here. Our school district is thriving as a center of learning, offering opportunities for the whole community.

Group #2

In the future Peru will be visually pleasing with a village center that has developed restaurants and shops without franchising; the traffic pattern avoids this area. Grants are actively pursued; sidewalks and pathways provide access that unifies our neighborhoods and we now have active group participation that extends throughout the community. An excellent school system encourages students to meet their goals. Recreational activities are available to citizens of all ages.

Group #3

Peru will be a safe, attractive village with a well developed downtown where regulations are enforced. Our rural atmosphere has been preserved as uncontrolled development has been curbed and there are no large malls or large industries. The town of Peru will have plenty of recreational areas and opportunities. Residents enjoy a good standard of living and a low crime rate.

Group #4

In the future Peru has established a multi-cultural facility in a beautiful, active town center that recognizes town history and offers arts & entertainment for all ages. There has been development of a coordinated system of recreation areas, including a vibrant four-season facility in the town center and an interconnected trail system from the town center to public recreation areas where the scenic views of our protected farmland may be

enjoyed. The town supports a small business atmosphere with possible development of a light industrial park. There has been enhancement of a retirement community and residents throughout our town feel safe at home and on the streets due to a police presence.

Group #5

Community pride abounds in Peru's future. Community growth is encouraged and supported with infrastructure, allowing smaller, diversified industries with job opportunities to locate here. An environment has been created that supports our youth; funding education for the future of our community. Housing and services for our community's senior citizens and low-income families has been provided, along with family support groups aiding single parents and troubled youth.

Group #6

We see a vibrant, thriving, attractive, safe, accessible and compact town center with thriving small businesses in Peru's future. All new development is planned wisely to maintain Peru's historical legacy, encouraged by an active historical society. A high standard of continued education for all people is provided. Various recreational facilities for people of all ages are maintained.

Group #7

In the future we will protect the charm of the town and the beautiful open spaces through the use of proper planning. Great parks and activities for all ages will continue to be apparent in our town. Our town center will promote walking areas, easy access, great shops and good parking. There will be more housing opportunities for all ages. There will be a safe and well-maintained community appearance. Business development will provide for good services for the community residents as well as employment opportunities and a strong tax base.

Group #8

The center of Peru is a destination, visually appealing to the eye with tree plantings, new sidewalks and specialty shops. Town residents have free access to Ausable Point and enjoy recreational opportunity. Peru is a safe place to live and a quality education is fostered in a drug free school zone and benefits from a positive school board. The town of Peru has ample housing for our elderly residents. A small, clean industrial park promotes economic opportunity.

Group #9

We envision that Peru will continue to grow, but will still have areas designated for farming and associated businesses to market local products. The town offices and growing small businesses will be in a central location, providing employment to all area residents. Peru will be a well lit, clean, historically preserved small town. Municipal water quality will be excellent and road areas will be clean and consistent looking. The town will have affordable housing available for all ages. Our children will be provided with a quality education and opportunities to enjoy parks and recreation are available to all.

Group #10

Peru will maintain rural character through zoning that also allows promotion of business development while maintaining property values. Off street parking in the hamlet has been increased and town services have adequately maintained highways and utilities while keeping property taxes at a fair and affordable rate. Peru provides a high quality school system, recreational activities and other community resources for all ages. The town provides resources to the community for assistance to senior citizens and lower income families with basic needs of housing and transportation.

Peru provides emergency services that are readily available at all hours to keep the community safe.

Group #11

We envision a Peru that will have clean and well-maintained streets and properties with easy access to quaint, locally owned shops. Peru offers a great school system and quality programs and cultural events for youth and adults alike, often at our town park. Zoning and animal control are enforced; there will be a community watch group, a curfew in effect and more state police coverage.

Group #12

In the future the town of Peru has considered preservation of its rural beauty and historic value the number one priority. Village development has respected the aesthetic character of the town and maintained infrastructure. Peru has a quality education system in place. Beautification is evident in parks with trails, and landscaping throughout the town. Our comprehensive plan has helped to preserve our orchards and farms and encouraged quaint shops downtown.

Group #13

Community spirit is evidenced in Peru where a caring environment is fostered by communication and social interactions. A Neat and well-kept appearance defines use areas and open vistas as well as a vibrant, well-demarcated town center. Our integrated community includes superior schools, churches, businesses, recreational & social opportunities. Agricultural identity is maintained and regional self-sufficiency is promoted. Excellent levels of service are apparent in agriculture, community spirit, and appearance that are obviously the result of a well-functioning planning & implementation process.

Group #14

Peru offers interesting activities that involve people of all ages. Peru is an attractive area that is well-lit and safe to travel. The traffic flow pattern for pedestrians and vehicle traffic is controlled. Housing opportunities for people of all ages. Water quality is acceptable. Town newsletter/ Zoning restrictions to encourage attractive properties/ Long term planning/ Expand sidewalk coverage/ additional lighting

Group #15

Peru has a clean and quiet business and residential environment. The people of Peru are active, involved in a variety of town supported community events. Town beauty is

enhanced by encouraging access to open spaces and natural areas. Peru has adequate housing for people of all ages and economic resources. Streets and parks are clean and leash laws are enforced. The churches of Peru continue to work together for the needs of the community members. Peru offers and maintains safe transportation needs for autos and pedestrians. Peru has a variety of recreational activities for all seasons. Peru has developed an efficient system for clean and cheap energy. Peru offers excellent educational availability for youth and life long learning.