
Village of Bainbridge Comprehensive Plan

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Revision 2015

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History

Introduction

The incorporation of the Village of Bainbridge in 1829 was preceded by a dynamic history of events beginning with the early settlers and their interaction with native peoples of the Susquehanna region and birthed through the industrial revolution and development of modern society. The Village history is characterized by a series of distinct social and economic transitions that follow an evolutionary sequence from a transportation crossroads, to a major source of fine lumber, then a busy dairy production area, and more recently as a “bedroom” community providing skilled labor to industries throughout the region. This latter state has continued to the present day with the community facing what seems to be another transition, the likes of which is not as yet clear.

Early Development and Entrepreneurial Efforts

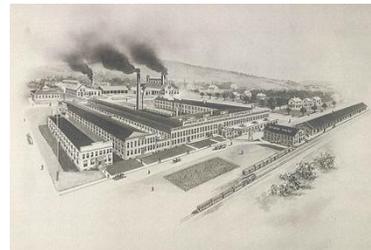
Beginning in 1800 the Village’s natural resources and strategic geographic location attracted the first of what became a long sequence of business entrepreneurs. It is this entrepreneurial legacy, together with its abundant natural resources that are the most interesting features of the Village’s past.

In the early 1800’s, Frederick DeZang, a German immigrant, invested heavily in toll bridges and turnpikes, a grist mill, saw mill, post office, and at least two stores. During this period, the unique geographical location of the village nestled in the Susquehanna River Valley along the banks of the Susquehanna river, made it possible for the community to benefit from both surface and water transportation routes. In particular, the Village was ideally situated to benefit from surface traffic that passed through it en route to such cities as Albany and Binghamton, and west to towns like Greene and Whitney Point.

In the late 1850’s, Orin Jacobs started a stock company that constructed the “Enterprise”, a flat bottom, stern-wheel steamboat that was an experimentally developed boat to move people and goods between Bainbridge and Lanesboro, PA, in an attempt to connect Bainbridge with the Erie Railroad. In 1857, Don Alonzo Gilbert, another entrepreneur, became involved in numerous business ventures including the Burgess Foundry and a saw mill. By 1883, Gilbert had organized the Gilbert Sled Factory to produce a variety of retail products including children’s sleds and wagons, dogcarts, and goat carts.

Modern Growth and Development

In the late 1880's, Bainbridge entered a new transition as lumbering gave way to the dairy industry, and yet, business entrepreneurship led the way once again. In 1886, Charles C. Hovey established a creamery plant in Bainbridge. By 1894, Reed and Carnick established a condensed milk and baby food plant. This plant produced the first commercially dried milk product. One year later, Thomas Collins and Lou Hartman began the American Separator Company which went on to develop a cream separator that was a low-cost alternative to the "butter accumulator" of Swedish design. This business later caused the Borden's Company to locate to Bainbridge so they could use products from the American Separator Company to make glue products. The dairy industry dominated the Bainbridge economy and remained a significant source of employment from the 1880's to just after WWII. By the early 1950's, Bainbridge began to experience another transition as the dairy industry contracted and Bainbridge began to evolve into a "bedroom" community. However, even as Bainbridge began to export its labor force to business and industrial firms throughout the region, the entrepreneurial spirit continued as evidenced in the discovery of the formula for Elmer's Glue-All by employees of the Borden Company in Bainbridge.





Village Government

Staffing Operations

As of 2015, the Village of Bainbridge government had a total operation budget (General Fund, Water and Sewer) of \$1,172,467 and 20 employees. Elected and/or appointed officials provide public service to the community without compensation or for minimal fees when necessary. The primary jurisdiction of the Village government does not exceed the Town boundaries except in a few cases. The Recreation Park, which was developed by the Town, is located in the Village limits. The Village pays a fee to the Town for its use by Village residents and provides maintenance through the Department of Public Works. Additionally, the public library is also located in the Village, and chartered to serve the Town but is utilized and funded by both the Town and the Village.

The Village of Bainbridge has its government office located in the old train depot on the west side of the Village. This facility, built approximately in 1915 and renovated in 1958, houses the Office of the Mayor, Village and Deputy Clerks and the Village Police.

Offices that Operate Under the Village of Bainbridge

- Department of Public Works
- Police Services
- Village Clerk
- Code Enforcement
- Planning Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Animal Control

Village of Bainbridge Government Responsibilities

- Maintain water and sewer systems
- Maintain roads and sidewalks
- Providing safe streets and appealing neighborhoods
- Implement hazard mitigation activities
- Encourage a vibrant downtown with a small town feel
 - Support addition of a pharmacy and grocery store
 - Find, use and support incentive programs for business district vacancies working with the IDA, state representatives and the NYS historic council
 - Support incentive programs for existing successful businesses to expand through revolving loan and grant opportunities
- Support public activities such as:
 - Development of youth activities
 - General Clinton Park, Village Green and local events
 - Youth center to fill the void of activities for young teens
 - Theater and promote the arts
 - Use of brochures, media and grant opportunities
 - Signage at entrance to the Village and increased signage throughout
- Support strong community groups
- Support a quality education system
- Support upgraded housing quantity and quality
- Support the Volunteer Fire Department
- Support public library and museum/historical society
- Secure funding through state and federal government grants
- Make strong effort to get state, county and federally elected officials to become invested in the new future and direction of Bainbridge
- Collaborate with community leaders and residents to invest in the goals of the Village
- Annual review of the Comprehensive Plan and revision every 5 years

Board Members

Phillip “Chick” Darling, Mayor

Jay Campbell, Deputy Mayor/Trustee

Richard Metzger, Trustee

Linda Noble, Trustee

Ola Tranvaag, Trustee



Executive Summary

Preface:

The mission of this project is to look at the previous comprehensive plan, update the demographic information, and map out a future plan for the Village of Bainbridge. The Board of Trustees first established, through several meetings, that the existing plan was outdated and the goals and initiatives were not implemented. The task at hand was to reassess the Village as it presently exists and with help from the constituents, meet the goals of their mission statement.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to become a vibrant, robust community to offer residents and businesses a progressive and safe environment to call home by collaboration with our business community, village residents and local government.

1. Provide safe streets and appealing neighborhoods
2. Maintain water and sewer systems
3. Maintain roads and sidewalks
4. Implement hazard mitigation activities
5. Support a quality education system
6. Encourage a vibrant downtown with a small town feel
7. Support strong community groups
8. Support public recreation activities
9. Support public library and museum
10. Support the Volunteer Fire Department
11. Upgrade housing quality and quantity

Initial Overview:

A revised Comprehensive Plan was identified as imperative to meet the goals set by the Village. There are projects that need to be started and/or completed. The previous plan was completed in 2002 and obviously outdated. This new Comprehensive Plan will give the Village of Bainbridge a plan and required supporting information to map out what is needed for economic, structural and community improvements. The Village Board of Trustees, community leaders, business owners and residents put together this plan to increase the economic stability and growth for Bainbridge, New York.

Long Term Goals and Objectives

- Annexation of land outside the current Village limits, to expand land mass and tax base and attract housing and business development using Village water and sewer systems as an enticement
- Utilize established county free trade zone to the Village
- Modernization of water system throughout entire Village
 - Study to decipher if existing service can support potential community growth
 - Explore installing dry hydrants with possible grant funds to improve fire protection and training
- Investigate the feasibility of co-op electric and gas run by the Village as a profit generator to attract business and new residents
- Update Main Street façade as part of total downtown remodel with the award of several grants and other funding sources
- Embrace flood plain and waterfront by opening it up for recreation and events
 - Relocation of DPW to Village owned property out of flood plain
 - Explore waterfront grant to improve the area with docks and a pavilion for larger attractions
- Support development of shovel ready site past Route 88 on Route 206 to develop both retail and industrial sites compatible with Main Street ideas
- Explore USDA grants for blighted properties

Solving the Issues, Meeting the Goals

1. Work with the Chenango County IDA in purchasing property and enticing new businesses to the area. The IDA has money to loan and speculative money to develop industrial sites
2. The Consolidated Funding Application is NYS's way of awarding grants. Learn the Consolidated Funding Application process as it is New York State's program for awarding grants.
3. Use federal programs for projects that are income based or flood related.
4. Use social media, websites and newsletters to promote the Village outside of the area.
5. The Mayor and Board members should cultivate their relationship(s) with County, State and Federal representatives for the area in order to encourage two way communications with them on issues facing the Village, as well as gain their support in seeking State and Federal grants and access to other regional, state and federal programs to meet the goals of this plan.

Survey Results- October 2014

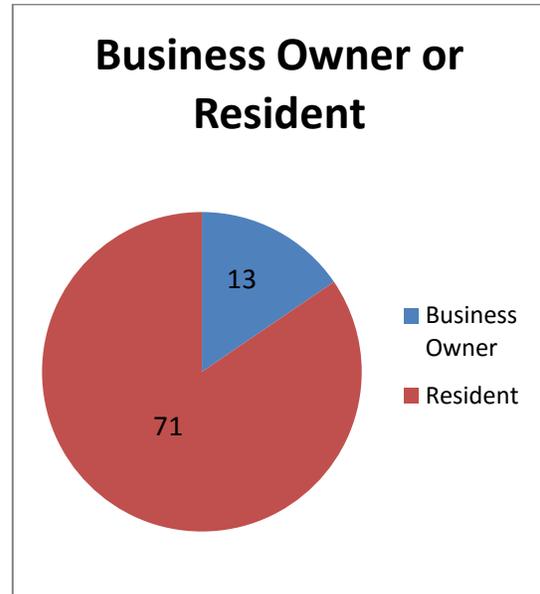
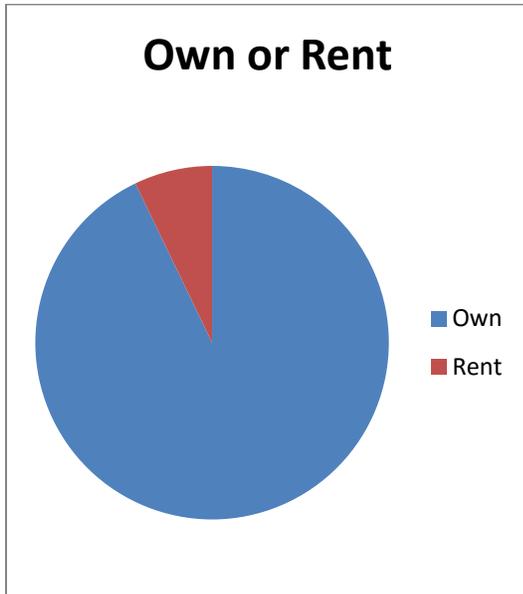
Description

In order to gain a clear understanding of what the Village of Bainbridge residents and business owners are looking for concerning ideas for growth, a survey was sent out with October 2014 water bills. There were 517 surveys sent out with a return date of October 31, 2014. Of those 517 surveys sent, the return rate was 16.2%, or 84 surveys*. The Village also held two public meetings to invite business owners and residents to discuss their ideas or concerns in a public forum. On October 29, 2014 13 members of the business community attended, and on November 19, 2014, 17 community residents attended. Below is the survey demographic information, concerns, ideas and issues that were gathered from both sessions. Copies of the original surveys and comments from public meetings can be found at the Village of Bainbridge office.

**Among the 84 returned surveys, many were incomplete. The anticipated plus/minus of 3% is a standard margin of error in factual information on the respondents.*



Tells the story of a place worth living



Assessor Information

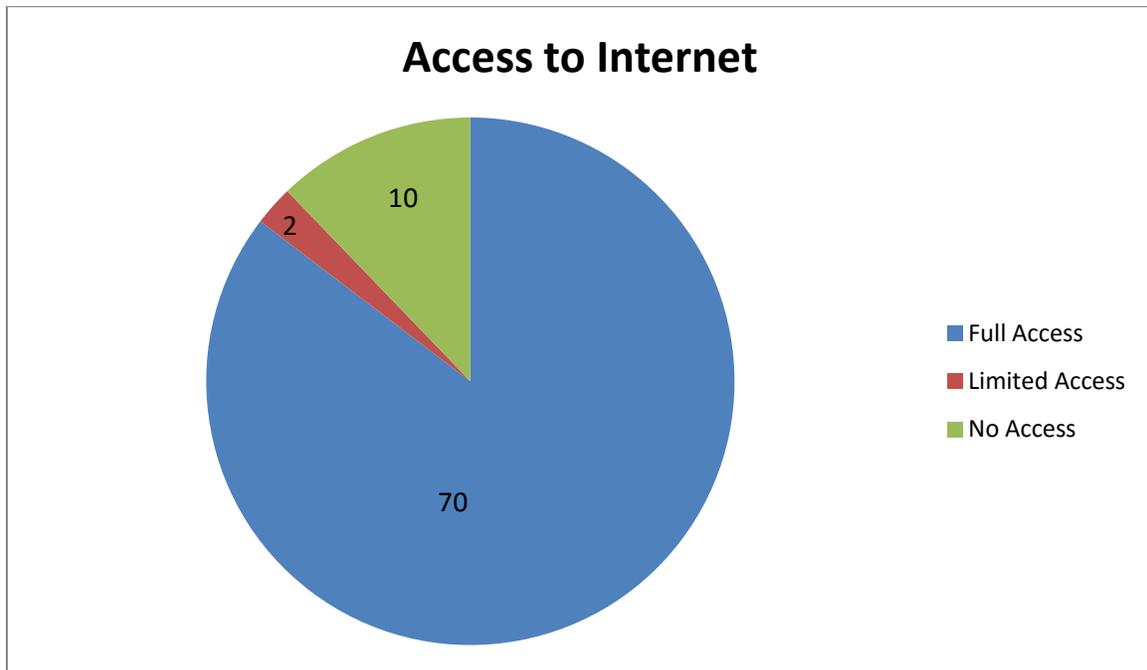
Total # of Households	647
Total # Occupied	589
Single Family Homes	354
Multi Family Homes	235
Vacant Homes	58
Abandoned Homes	unknown

What does this tell us?

1. Suggests the homes are generally taken care of
2. Appears to be a safe place to live

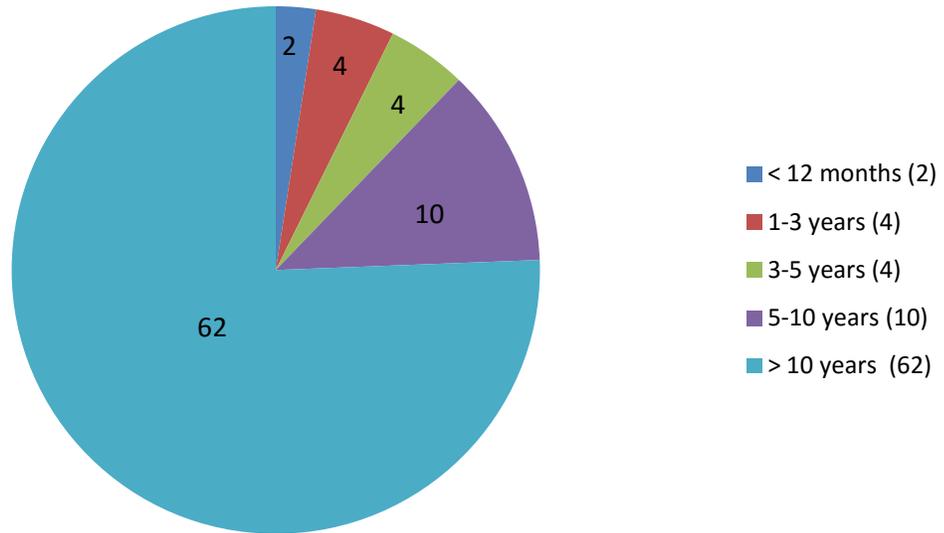
3. Village services are good or people would likely be moving out

Access to internet sends the right message



The study shows the population is technologically advanced. Community members are tapped into the internet and have the resources to either own a computer or have access to one. Considerations should be made for more online resources and use of social media to promote meetings, events and Village communication. Possibility of looking into Wi-Fi for the downtown merchants and community.

Length of Time Residing in Village



Observation and Indications from Results:

1. Quality work close to the village
2. Quality housing for young families
3. If the trend continues, the outcome will be a significant reduction in the school age population.
4. The reduction of activities for young people
5. The migration of the youth after their education to a more populated area where services and community functions are more prevalent.

Possible Solutions:

1. Industrial development in the immediate area is imperative to the community's survival; will lead to jobs and migration of younger families to Bainbridge.
2. Senior housing needed to provide options to those who wish to not be burdened with home ownership. This would open up the market to younger families looking to purchase a home in the village.
3. Use of local events, arts, festivals, and youth programs to showcase Bainbridge as a place to have a family.

Services Needed/Desired in the Village

- Pharmacy
- Grocery Store
- Youth Center/ Boys & Girls Club
- More Retail Locations

When asked what services are used among your village residents:

- Doctors
- Insurance
- Post Office
- Banking

When asked what resources they felt were underutilized, the survey concluded:

- River
- Vacant Buildings
- Parks
- Young People
- School

Village of Bainbridge Census Information 2010 v 2000

	2010	%	2000	%	Change	%
Total Population	1355	100.0	1365	100.0	-10	-0.73%
American Indian/Alaskan	2	0.15	0	0.0	2	.02
Asian	4	0.30	5	0.37	-1	-20.0
African American	3	0.22	3	0.22	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian	0	0.0	2	0.15	-2	
Other races alone	10	.74	4	.29	6	150.0
Two or more races	12	.89	11	.81	1	9.09
White alone	1324	97.71	1340	98.17	-16	-1.19
Not of Hispanic Origin	1322	97.56	1349	98.83	-27	-2.0
Of Hispanic Origin	33	2.44	16	1.17	17	106.25
Female	701	51.73	701	51.36	0	0.0
Male	654	48.27	664	48.64	-10	-1.51
Persons 0-4 years	101	7.45	81	5.93	20	24.69
Persons 5-17 years	217	16.01	279	20.44	-62	-22.22
Persons 18-64	821	60.59	799	58.53	22	2.75
Persons 65 years and over	216	15.94	206	15.09	10	4.85

Highlights

The population is fairly stable with a drop in residents of approximately 3% annually, due to reduced number of residents per household and lack of quality, affordable housing for young families. There is a shift in age groups to older residents, meaning fewer young families and less expendable income

Summary of Strengths: What to Build On

1. Route 88—easy on and off ramps and because of the interstate system it is part of, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia are all within reasonable driving distance. Our labor and building costs are far less than those metropolitan areas
2. Small town feel with a local work force is what companies that are employee conscious look for, and with the development of shovel ready sites, we should be able to get the attention of future businesses.
3. Close to two large manufacturers employing over 1800 people
4. Strong School System
5. Safe Community
6. Susquehanna River for Recreation
7. Police Department
8. Fire Department
9. Local Ambulance Stationed Right in Bainbridge
10. Very strong community based organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Bainbridge Development Corporation, Community Chest, Community Foundation, Lions Club, Jericho Garden Club and Council of Churches
11. Emergency medical facility 5 minutes away

Summary of Weaknesses: What to Address

1. Existing homes are outdated and expensive to remodel
2. Seniors are occupying homes with one or two people of limited income
3. New housing in village would need to be on annexed land because of boundary restrictions.

