

**TOWN OF ROSEBOOM**  
**Comprehensive Plan**

**December 2011**

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# TOWN OF ROSEBOOM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DRAFT

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## **Section 1: ENACTMENT AND PURPOSE**

### **1.1 Enactment**

At the February 12, 2010 Town Board meeting there was a general discussion that took place regarding the Planning Board's duties and responsibilities. Several areas were identified: Comprehensive Plan, by-law review, high speed internet service, gas drilling, town parking law, cell towers grants, and grant writing.

On February 15, 2010, the Planning Board met and the information the Town Board discussed on their February 12 meeting was shared with the Planning Board. It was then decided that the Planning Board would begin the process of creating the Town of Roseboom Comprehensive Plan at that meeting.

### **1.2 Purpose/Vision Statement**

#### **TOWN OF ROSEBOOM VISION STATEMENT**

This vision statement is a reflection of the views of the townspeople through their input at workshops, focus groups, and the survey of 2010. This statement will serve as a benchmark for decision-making and actions for the Town in its future. It is meant to set the stage for the Town's future direction; it gives the citizens' views as to what they desire now and what they envision for the Town in the years to follow.

The Town of Roseboom is located on the eastern side of Otsego County within the State of New York. The Town cherishes and desires to protect and preserve the rural character, natural resources and landscapes, scenic vistas and clean and safe land, air and water, with the full enforcement of all local, state and federal laws and mandates.

Priorities of the highest order include preservation of and accessibility to open spaces, maintenance of safety and security for residents and future generations, viability of agriculture and the farming community, and safeguarding of the Town's rural character.

The people want to assure continued accessibility to all of the Town's plentiful open spaces for their families' recreation and health. It is also important to the economy of Roseboom that we preserve our active agricultural and farming community. We desire safe environmental conditions for future generations to live and grow, while maintaining the town's important national historic character. Our Town is rich with the history of America's earliest colonial beginnings and we want to keep that in mind while we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure.

In the coming years, we will responsibly manage and improve new growth while respecting property rights in order to protect the integrity of our town. We do need well built and maintained roadways, but we also need traffic volume and speed controlled to be in harmony with the gentle nature of our Township.

We wish to set quality design standards to insure that new growth and development will enrich our community aesthetics. We wish to hold together the existing fabric of our Town and its hamlets, while still connecting the people of Roseboom to the rest of the world. As such, this Vision Statement and Comprehensive Plan must be an everchanging and on-going document.

## **Section 2: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### **2.1 Community Survey (See appendix page 8)**

### **2.2 Meetings & Workshops**

March 8, 2010

April 12, 2010

May 10, 2010 Special meeting with Terry Bliss giving a description of the Comprehensive Plan and how to go about implementing such plan.

July 12, 2010

August 09, 2010

September 13, 2010 (survey to be printed and prepared for mailing)

October 18, 2010 (report on surveys received)

December 13, 2010

December 27, 2010

February 21, 2011

February 28, 2011  
March 7, 2011  
March 21, 2011  
April 11, 2011  
May 9, 2011  
June 13, 2011

July 11, 2011  
August 8, 2011  
September 12, 2011  
November 14, 2011

December 12, 2011 – Public Hearing before regular meeting

### **Section 3: INVENTORY AND DESCRIPTION**

#### **3.1 Town of Roseboom Inventory and Description**

The Roseboom Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. Portions of the text below were adapted from a copy of the original nomination document (Appendix page 20).

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The Roseboom Historic District comprises the historic core of the rural hamlet of Roseboom, located at the intersection of NY Routes 165 and 166 and the Cherry Valley Creek in the town of Roseboom, Otsego County, New York. The hamlet is surrounded by open valley land, some under cultivation, which rises to hilltops crowned by woods. The Cherry Valley Creek itself divides the hamlet into two areas, which in earliest times had different names, but from the mid-nineteenth century have been considered one place. NY Route 166 runs along the Cherry Valley Creek valley floor, which runs south southwest to north northeast, and the flanking ridges rise to approximately 1800 feet on either side. NY Route 165 runs roughly south southeast to north northwest and crosses the creek and its associated floodplain. The area southeast of the creek was once called Lodi, while that northwest of the creek was known as Greenbush. The latter focused on NY 166, once a plank road leading to the village of Cherry Valley to the north, and a highway leading to Milford to the south. In addition to the two main routes passing through Roseboom, smaller streets provide extra space for hamlet buildings. Joining NY 166 and NY 165 with an elbow is Beaver Street, while joining NY 165 and Gage Road in a similar way is John Deere Road. Near the intersection of NY 165 and John Deere Road, County Route 57 follows the earlier course of the road adopted as NY 165. Beyond the western boundary of the Roseboom Historic District is

Roseboom Hill Road, which developed as part of the hamlet after World War II.

The hamlet of Roseboom includes a variety of building types and styles common in rural New York State hamlets meant to serve a local populace in the nineteenth century. The Roseboom Historic District includes two churches, a cemetery associated with the former Baptist Church, a general store, two early twentieth-century industrial buildings, a schoolhouse (now used as a dwelling), a grange hall (now disused), and dwellings with associated agricultural, industrial, and commercial outbuildings. The bulk of these properties developed between 1840 and 1900.

Due to the widening of NY 166, a stone blacksmith's shop, a barn, and a small number of dwellings on the west side of the highway were lost in 1959. A doctor's office associated with #118 NY 165 was moved to the Genesee Country Village and Museum in the 1980s. And the large, Greek Revival Style Roseboom Hotel, once standing at the main intersection of the hamlet burned in 1973. Other than these losses, the hamlet retains its plan and a large number of its nineteenth-century buildings with few intrusions. In addition, many retain original finishes and stylistic details dating to their initial construction or to typical remodeling episodes of the late 1800s or early 1900s. The hamlet as a whole retains a high degree of historic integrity dating to the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The portion of the hamlet west of the Cherry Valley Creek has a more commercial aspect than the part east of the creek. The general store, currently called Bob's Country Store, stands at the southeast corner of the intersection NY 165 and NY 166. This frontal gable, two-and-a-half-story, frame building retains the form and some decorative features of a late nineteenth century commercial building, but it has been resided recently and some of its windows replaced. The store now houses the post office, which has been housed earlier in at least two other buildings near the crossroads.

Further north on the opposite side of the road stands the Greek revival style Methodist Church building (built 1861). This frontal gable building retains a late nineteenth century, Gothic taste stained glass window in the front façade and an off-center entrance porch. The older Grecian bell tower survives, as do the corner pilasters and the full return on the front. The second church building in Roseboom, the Baptist Church (now the

Roseboom Historical Association) faces onto NY 165 about three-quarters of the way between the main intersection and the bridge crossing the Cherry Valley Creek. Also a Greek revival style building (built 1844), the frontal gable church retains a square bell tower and paired entrances in the front façade. A louvered fan accents the flush-boarded tympanum. This building retains a simple, late Victorian interior with bead board wainscoting, complete with a metal-lined baptismal tank set into a dais at the front of the sanctuary.

Behind the old Baptist Church is the community cemetery. Graves here date from the earliest settlement of the hamlet in the early 1800s to the present, and stones from all periods, including early “bed board” types in marble and shale, obelisks, mid-Victorian examples, and twentieth-century granite blocks, are represented.

Backing onto the cemetery’s southern boundary is the lot containing the last Roseboom village school. A frontal gable, two-room affair with a decorative arched window in the front peak and small frieze band windows on the sides, this building is now a dwelling. A modern porch and entrances alter its appearance, but its typical “school form” remains evident. Across from the old school on Beaver Street is the old grange hall (built c.1930) now disused, the two-story, frontal gable building also retains the iconography of its type.

Recent dwellings built round out the environment of this side of the hamlet. Those facing onto NY 165 appear to be not only the best preserved, but perhaps the most stylistically developed. The earliest remaining dwelling, #111, is a well-developed example of the Greek revival style. This house retains the classically derived pilasters and frieze typical of the style. Less fancy are #108 and #122, on the opposite (side) of the road. Built at roughly the same time as the Baptist Church, the house built by Dr. Sterrick (#118) has a frontal gable with flush board tympanum embellished with a steeply arched louvered fan mirroring the one on the church across the way. The doctor’s house was added about 1870.

Most of the remaining houses facing onto NY 165 north of the creek date between 1856 (the Gates map) and 1868 (the Beers atlas). They tend to retain the rectangular forms with gable roofs popular during the first half of the century, with less classical detailing. The fairly plain appearances suggest middle class dwellings, though #113 retains a full set of very

exuberant matching Italianate window and door frames, probably purchased from a local mill.

Beaver Street, laid out in the 1870s and now almost entirely residential, retains two dwellings in this same style. The frontal gable dwelling (#155) near the corner of NY 166, once the plank road to Cherry Valley, retains the gable roof of earlier designs, but the entire building is much taller in proportion to Greek Revival ones. Its “eared” door frame is similar to those of the window and door frames of # 113 NY 165. A more purely Italianate house stands a little further down at #148 Beaver Street. This building has a blockier form surmounted by a flat roof with the deep frieze, wide cornice, and brackets typical of this style. Other dwellings on Beaver Street are smaller and less detailed than these two, suggesting working class dwellings of the third quarter of the century. A few properties on Beaver Street retain outbuildings, mainly small barns and workshops dating to the last quarter of the nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries.

NY 166, the old plank road to Cherry Valley, was the main commercial street of the hamlet of Roseboom. Two buildings were lost that emphasized this function, including the stone blacksmith’s shop and the old hotel. Once a narrower road, both sides were lined with buildings, those on the west side abutting the hillside beyond. North of the Methodist Church, a frame barn, used since the early 1900s as a store, is set well back from the road. This stands on the site of a nineteenth-century cheese factory shown in the 1868 atlas. South of the store at the main intersection, mainly nineteenth-century dwellings, an early twentieth-century shop building, and one modern house line the road for a few hundred yards before the hamlet gives way to open land. These retain the forms and sometimes details of the Greek revival and Italianate styles.

As NY 165 north of the Cherry Valley Creek did, this portion of the hamlet also developed between 1856 and 1868, and all but one residence illustrate the late use of the Greek revival style: low, rectangular, and gable-roofed, with modest detailing. Because several of these buildings have been renovated with non-historic materials, they may also have lost some stylistic details since their construction. One further Italianate dwelling stands in this row. This retains the deep frieze and cornice supported by brackets typical of the style, as well as the flat-roofed boxy form.

Several properties in this part of the hamlet retain characteristic nineteenth-century outbuildings. On NY 165, #108 retains an assemblage, including a novelty-sided carriage barn with a raking cornice set off with a high Italianate taste molding and a small arched window in the gable end, a small dairy barn, a two-story shop building, and a c.1920 frame milk house. Across the street, #103 NY 165 retains a brick smokehouse, while Sally's Four Seasons Restaurant (#3220 NY 166) on the corner of NY 165 and NY 166, the site of the old Roseboom Hotel, has a stone one. On NY 165, both #113 and #119 retain small barns. Two frame outhouses also survive: one at # 119 NY 165 and a second, moved from #103 to #111 NY 165, and used as a garden shed.

On the opposite side of the Cherry Valley Creek, the hamlet of Roseboom includes mill sites, agricultural outbuildings, and several dwellings. Because of the open land within the hamlet, this part of the Roseboom Historic District feels more rural than the area north of the creek, which evolved as a commercial area. This area grew up around mills situated on a creek feeding into the Cherry Valley Creek, which remains dammed about half a mile from the hamlet on Gage Road. An additional dam, now breached, remains partly visible in woods to the east, and several races and two millpond areas remain visible. One race ran under John Deere Road: then turned north to fill a millpond near the old Howland mill, marked by a cinder block building set on an older stone foundation. That foundation once supported the new Howland mill, built in the 1860s to replace the first one, built in 1800. The building was last used as feed store, farm supply, and John Deer dealership, thus giving the road its name. A depression east of #116 John Deere Road marks its location. A second race came down from the smaller dam and millpond east of John Deere Road, passing the old Eldred mill at the corner of John Deere Road.

NY Route 165 diverges from the Roseboom-Pleasant Brook Road's earlier route at the southern edge of the hamlet and the older course is now called CR 57. Through most of the south part of the hamlet, NY 165 follows the old course and passes two frame houses dating to the first half of the nineteenth century. Where new NY 165 veers off, a large square-plan stone house with a frame wing is a prominent landmark on County Route 57. Across from this stands a relatively early hop house, which was noted in the 1868 Beers Atlas.

John Deere Road, which creates an elbow from NY 165 to Gage Road, retains four frame dwellings dating to the early nineteenth century, as well as several nineteenth-century barns and two additional hop houses. Two of these houses, #105 and #147, belonged to mill owners. The first, built shortly after 1800, retains fairly elaborate Federal taste details, including the Palladian window in the gable end. The second, with its heavier lines and square Doric columns supporting the veranda, dates later, possibly to the purchase of the mill from Delos White of Cherry Valley by the Elwells in 1836. In addition to these two houses, there are two more Greek revival houses: a very small example retaining its frieze and raking cornice (#116) and a temple-farm house with an inset porch supported by Doric columns.

### **3.2 Historic Significance**

The Roseboom Historic District is significant in the areas of community development and architecture as a highly intact example of a typical upstate New York rural hamlet developed primarily during the period 1800 to 1940. Located in northeastern Otsego County in the Town of Roseboom, the hamlet is about two miles south of the larger and older commercial Village of Cherry Valley. The hamlet of Roseboom first developed as a mill hamlet about 1800 on the south side of the creek; by the mid-1830s, a commercial and service district developed on the north side of the creek. By the 1850s, these two areas were considered one hamlet and known as Roseboom.

Virtually all of the hamlet's built environment was in place by 1900, and the community has suffered relatively little loss since then. The Roseboom Historic District preserves the appearance and some of the services of a small rural hamlet nearly a century later, with its general store, post office, church, meeting hall (in the old Baptist Church building), and cluster of mainly Greek revival and Italianate style dwellings.

Roseboom grew up around mill seats established on the Cherry Valley Creek and one of its tributaries, possibly before 1800. French's Gazetteer of 1861 states that the hamlet's first grist mill was erected by Brice and Bros. in 1796. More commonly, the hamlet's recorded history states that Abraham Roseboom started the first mill – to saw timber and to card and pull wool – in 1806, but this appears to have been farther north than the hamlet itself. Abraham Roseboom has established an estate further north,

near the present day Cherry Valley town line, in 1800. Born in 1772 Abraham was a member of the rising generation at the close of the American Revolution, and like many of his peers, eager to expand into new areas like Otsego County. The son of Jacob Roseboom, who in colonial times held the Belvedere, McKean, Long, and Beaverdam Patents, encompassing land in the modern towns of Cherry Valley, Roseboom, and Middlefield, Abraham Roseboom took land south of Cherry Valley. With the exception of that village to the north, much of the area remained forested after the Treaty of Paris of 1783 as was typical of Otsego County.

The hamlet that would eventually become known as Roseboom developed about a mile south of Abraham's estate on the road to Cherry Valley. Mills seated on a tributary flowing west into the Cherry Valley Creek played a central role in the hamlet's earliest development. Different sources record various mills: French's Gazetteer of 1861 notes a mill founded by Brice in 1796. Hurd's History of Otsego County notes that Cornelius Low started the first gristmill in Lodi in 1818. Harmond Howland's mill built in 1800 is the most commonly cited founding mill in the hamlet. Howland came from Dutchess County. Delos White of Cherry Valley also established a mill, which was sold from his estate to Benjamin and Samuel Elwell in 1836. By 1856 the Elwells and the Howlands appear to have held all the water rights and become the established millers.

The 1868 Beers Atlas shows a well-developed race system to power Elwell's large, three-level grist mill and Howland's saw mill and sash and blind factory. Four years earlier, Howland had rebuilt his mill with a coursed limestone foundation, which remains today. By 1950, the old Howland mill had ceased work, but the building was reused as a farm supply store. It burned in 1952 and was replaced in 1953 with the now-deteriorating building once used as a farm supply store occupying the site today.

In addition to milling, the Elwells and the Howlands owned agricultural land as well. The Elwells owned land across John Deere Road, north of Gage Road, which they sold to the Gage family before 1903. The Howland farm is now separated from the mill property, but a late nineteenth century dairy barn and at least one three-bay English barn, dating before 1850 still stand. Two additional English barns, one with an unusual Greek revival style cornice and partial returns, as well as a c.1880 hop houses stand on the rise overlooking the elbow in John Deere Road. Before the Elwell's mill

was torn down, these would have overlooked that building as well. In addition to these, two more hop houses stand within the hamlet area. One at #157 NY 165 has been converted to a garage with a room above and a second, altered almost beyond recognition by a remodeling, faces the stone house #107 on County Route 57. This pattern of diversified economic activity in rural hamlets is common in upstate New York.

Like many small mill hamlets, the settlement around the Howland and Elwell mills, called Greenbush in the early period, was ignored or barely acknowledged by all gazetteers published before the Civil War period. For services beyond milling, farmers in the outlying area apparently relied on the much larger Village of Cherry Valley to the north where there were places for banking, legal services, trade, and spiritual sustenance from that village's several churches.

In 1830, however, a plank road extended south from Cherry Valley Village through Lodi, following the route of modern Route 166 as far as NY 165, and then turned to cross the creek to Greenbush. Two years later, possibly prompted by the plank road's construction, Daniel Antisdal (also Antisdale) opened an inn and store at the point where the plank road turned south of the mill hamlet. The tavern, which burned in 1973, was in its day a success, as a decade later Antisdal provided funds to build a stone blacksmith's shop with two forges a little further south on the opposite side. The blacksmith's shop would have complemented the tavern as a service for travelers, as well as providing the local people with a shop closer than Cherry Valley. This formed the beginning of the commercial hamlet on the north side of Cherry Valley Creek, which called itself Lodi and complemented the industrial hamlet of Greenbush on the south side of the creek.

In 1840, the English-trained physician, John Sterrick, opened his office in Lodi. While his residence (#118 NY 165) remains, his free-standing office was taken to the Genesee Country Village and Museum in the 1970s. Sterrick's son, also John, carried on the practice after obtaining his certificate to practice medicine at Albany Medical College in 1875. Thus, by 1842, with the exceptions of the law and a bank, Lodi's small commercial and industrial establishments provided most of the services necessary to rural life of the nineteenth century, and continued providing them until well after 1900.

Adding to these temporal services were two churches. The Society of the First Baptist Church organized under Deacon Sherman's leadership in 1843. A year later, the society erected its Greek revival style building on land purchased from Abraham Roseboom for ten dollars. Built at a cost of two thousand dollars, this ambitious church was designed to seat eight hundred in balconies and on the main floor. The church building remains a prominent landmark in the hamlet's streetscape; from a considerable distance south of Roseboom, its white tower and frontal gable façade stand out in the surrounding rural landscape as an icon of a typical nineteenth-century upstate rural hamlet. Such Greek revival-style churches were common: their classically derived forms and details alluded to the classical civilizations that Americans hoped to emulate in the new republic. Lodi was no exception, and at the time of the Baptist Church's erection, virtually the entire hamlet's built environment illustrated the extremely popular Grecian taste.

Though less commonly used for domestic architecture by the 1860s in much of the nation, the Greek taste survived in New York State's relatively remote rural areas. Thus, the Methodist Episcopal Society also built a Greek revival church in 1861. This church's earliest symmetrical façade was altered about 1900 with an asymmetrical entrance and a large central stained glass window. This building also is prominent in the hamlet streetscape and still has an active congregation. The older Baptist church building is now owned by the Roseboom Historical Association and is the town's only remaining large meeting hall.

The large cemetery, still used, extends behind the Baptist church building to Beaver Street. In use since the mid-nineteenth century, this site provides a highly intact record of Roseboom's residents and a sort of illustrated catalog of common funerary monuments from the early nineteenth century to the late twentieth. Predating both churches, the graveyard was first a community plot, though the portion nearest the church belonged to the Baptist Society, according to the tax records, in spite of the society's dissolution in 1966 due to lack of funds and membership. A plot map hanging in the Methodist Church shows the boundary between the two areas. It also shows the plot owners, who came from both sides of the creek, thus demonstrating the link between the commercial and industrial hamlet areas from at least the mid-nineteenth century.

When Cyrus Gates mapped Otsego County in 1856, he labeled the community "Roseboom P.O.," which suggests that by this date the earlier names of Lodi and Greenbush were passing from use. Lodi was easily confused with Lodi in Seneca County and mail often went astray. Two years earlier, the Town of Roseboom was split off from the older Town of Cherry Valley, which may have provided the community with an easy way to distinguish itself. At this date, Roseboom was less than half the size of South Valley, the other hamlet within the new town's boundary, in terms of population and services. While Gates provided an expanded plan of South Valley, he surveyed Roseboom P.O. within the overall map only. Nevertheless, this map shows that Roseboom P.O. was still a very small community: a hotel, a doctor, a blacksmith shop, two mills, a school on the south side of the creek, and eleven dwellings, with a plank road connecting it to Cherry Valley. J.H. French, who published a gazetteer in 1861, referred to the hamlet by its older name, Lodi. He recorded one church (the Baptist Church; Methodist built after French collected his material) and 111 inhabitants. The slightly earlier 1855 New York State census listed 1,887 souls for the Town of Roseboom, revealing how agrarian the population was, as South Valley accounted for only an additional 225 people.

Between the time of Cyrus Gate's 1856 survey and G.W. Beers 1868 survey for an atlas of Otsego County, the hamlet of Roseboom exploded. South of the creek, in the old Greenbush section, Howland had rebuilt his mill and added a sash and blind factory. This map shows a large mill pond south of John Deere Road (aptly known as Mill Street in the earlier period). The Elwell race and its large upper mill pond are also shown on the 1868 map. The district school had moved north of the creek to the old Lodi area of the hamlet. It stood in a now densely packed hamlet streetscape of dwellings and commercial establishments, including two wagon shops, a cabinet shop, a dress shop, a store, and a meat market, which now line both sides of NY 165 and NY 166. The new Methodist Church stood at the north end of the hamlet with a cheese factory just beyond. In 1856, Gates mapped eleven dwellings; Beers recorded approximately thirty.

By 1872, Hamilton Child noted in his Gazetteer of Otsego County that Roseboom had two churches, two stores, a hotel, a wagon shop, two blacksmith's shops, a grist mill, two saw mills, a cheese factory, a shoe shop, a millinery and dress-making shop, a physician, and a planing mill.

Two hundred twenty-five people resided there, a considerable rise from the 111 recorded in 1861.

The 1868 plan of Roseboom suggest that land in the commercial area had reached a saturation of development; this is borne out by the laying out of a new street called "Side Street" in nineteenth century sources. Known today as Beaver Street, it creates an elbow southeast of the main crossroads of the hamlet. The form and style of domestic structures on Beaver Street suggest a platting date in the 1870s. It was certainly in place by 1881, because School District No. 2 built a new schoolhouse there, having outgrown the one on the plank road built between 1856 and 1868. This last School No. 2 was a one-and-a-half-story, two-room, frontal gable framed building with a raking cornice marked by a high, rounded Italianate molding. A small arched window in the front gable end and frieze band windows allowed light into the upper half-story. These probably made converting the schoolhouse into a dwelling more appealing than most simple one-room schools as it had an upper floor and a somewhat larger than average footprint. Today the building survives as a dwelling, though its entrances are altered.

Child's 1872 statistics probably describe the hamlet of Roseboom near its peak population and range of services. By 1903, the next published map of the area, the shoe shop, the cheese factory, and the grist mill were gone. Throughout Otsego County rural hamlets and villages generally began a gradual population decline in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Even as this began, as was often the pattern in rural upstate New York villages, urban industrialization and westward movement drew people from older agricultural areas in the northeastern United States.

While the population of the Town of Roseboom was 1,887 in 1850, by 1980 it was 663, revealing that Roseboom had lost nearly two-thirds of its population in the past century and a half. This decline is most pointed in agricultural areas; the hamlet of Roseboom remains similar in population to the two hundred or so of the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It continues to offer some services locally: a diner, a general store, a post office, and a church. Moreover, it retains virtually the entire domestic streetscape visible in the late 1800s. A comparison with the 1903 map shows that fewer than five dwellings have disappeared; one has been replaced with a modern pre-fabricated house (#3194 NY 166). An early twentieth century dwelling occupies a lot still open in 1903 (#127 NY 165)

and a modern house has been added on Beaver Street (#106). The hotel, the blacksmith's shop, and the Elwell mill represent sizable losses in Roseboom's streetscape, but even so, the hamlet retains a high degree of historic integrity.

### **3.3 Population and Housing**

Population:

As of the census of 2000, there were 684 people, 267 households, and 191 families residing in the town. The population density was 20.7 people per square mile (8.0/km). The racial makeup of the town was 98.39% White, 0.15% African American, 0.88% Asian, 0.15% from other races, and 0.44% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 0.75% of the population.

Housing: (From 2011 Assessor's Report, Appendix page 6)

1 family residences: 207  
2 family residences: 2  
Rural residences: 83  
Rural residential & agricultural: 2  
Seasonal residences: 29  
Manufactured housing: 58  
Manufactured housings: 2  
Resident multiple: 4  
Multiple residences: 1

### **3.4 Existing Land Use Patterns**

The Town of Roseboom is approximately 33.2 square miles, containing 21,248 acres with 818 parcels. The hamlets are: Pleasant Brook, Roseboom, and South Valley.

At present day the three hamlets of South Valley, Pleasant Brook and Roseboom retain their historic nature.

**South Valley** includes: The First Christian Church of South Valley; the Women's Community Club (formerly the Methodist-Protestant Church; the

Corner Store (formerly Snyder's); while the rest of the hamlet is primarily comprised of residential homes.

**Pleasant Brook** includes: The Pleasant Brook Hotel; Alpha Tech Repair Shop; and is primarily comprised of residential homes.

**Roseboom includes:** Bob's Country Store; Roseboom Methodist Church; Roseboom Historical Society; The Roseboom Grange Hall; The Red Hen Café; while it also is primarily comprised of residential homes.

Specific patterns of residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial development within the township can be located on the Property Use Map in folder 16 of the Appendix.

### **3.5 Cultural, Recreational and Historic Resources**

#### 3.5.1 Cultural Resources

The Town's major cultural asset is the Roseboom Historical Society (the former Baptist Church) which has held community breakfasts, art exhibits, photo exhibits, tractor shows, yoga classes, and others.

An additional major cultural asset is Roseboom Antique Power Days held during one weekend in August. Tractors and small engines are brought from all over and vendors sell to the public. A tractor parade sponsored by the Roseboom Historical Society is a featured event.

#### 3.5.2. Historic Resources

The South Valley Women's Club holds community suppers by donation monthly in season. This club is on the National Historic Register and received the Otsego 2000 award in 1999. The "Hall" is also used for private and community events.

Many cemeteries are on small family plots scattered throughout the town. The two main cemeteries are the South Valley-Pleasant Brook Cemetery and the Roseboom Cemetery. Both are maintained through private associations; the South Valley-Pleasant Brook Cemetery Association and Roseboom Cemetery Association which also maintains the Baptist Cemetery.

## **Historical Register – South Valley Women’s Community Club**

The Women’s Community Club of South Valley is significant in the Town of Roseboom’s social history because of its long and important role in the community life of the small hamlet of South Valley. The former Methodist Protestant church, built in 1846, is the meeting hall for the Women’s Club. It has been listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Landmarks in honor of its association with this group of remarkable women who are responsible not only for saving the building, but the spirit of the community as well. The church structure received the Otsego 2000 Historic Preservation Award under the nomination category of *Stewardship* in 1999. A history of “the Hall” was compiled by Allegra Schecter and Jean Roy as part of the award application. (See Appendix folder 20.) This recognition was due to the efforts of the Club, formerly the Ladies Missionary Aid Society, who for more than seventy years has supported the area in very positive ways. The South Valley Women’s Club still puts on monthly “by donation” suppers for the community from May to November. Its members welcome new babies with small gifts, reward local high school graduates, provide food and loving care for families during periods of illness and grief and provide a place for celebrating weddings, birthdays and reunions. Christmas cheer baskets have been shared with the sick and elderly for over fifty years. These women work hard to make this part of Otsego County a good place to live.

In the late 19th century, the hamlet of South Valley relied primarily on agriculture for its existence – as it still does today. Small dairy farms surrounded the village, producing not only milk, but hops and maple syrup, as well. The farm families depended on services provided in the hamlet, which included a grange hall, a coffin factory, three glove factories, a two-room schoolhouse and three churches, Christian, Methodist Protestant, and Methodist Episcopal. Today, only two church buildings remain. One is an active worshiping congregation, the First Christian Church of South Valley, and the other, the former Methodist Protestant, is the meeting hall for the Women’s Club.

## **Roseboom Historical Association**

Roseboom Historical Association is a non-profit organization (501C3) dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of the Town of Roseboom, New York. The Association is housed in a restored Baptist

Church which was constructed in 1844. Located centrally on State Highway 165 in the farming hamlet and designated historic district of Roseboom.

RHA serves as a cultural and community center where residents and members participate in a variety of activities: art exhibits, concerts, historical talks, celebrations of local history, yoga and art classes, potluck suppers and pancake breakfasts. Not constrained with a strictly “historical” context, the Association serves as a central meeting place for the community-at-large. RHA is financially supported by 85 dues paying individuals and households.

### 3.5.3 Recreational Resources

Roseboom residents can enjoy a variety of recreational resources within the township. There is cross country skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing and horseback riding available in the countryside. A bicycle rally is held on the country roads once a year.

Antique Power Days is an annual event held during one weekend in August. Tractors and small engines are brought from all over, vendors come to sell to the public, and a tractor parade is a featured event.

Propers’ Annual Tractor Pull on Honey Hill Road for the benefit of the Middlefield Fire Department.

The Women’s Community Club of South Valley holds a dinner every month from May through October; the proceeds are for upkeep of the hall and the community. It also annually holds a Christmas Party, Mother’s Day dinner, and Halloween Party.

The South Valley Christian Church has a week Vacation Bible School every summer.

## **3.6 Environmental & Natural Resources**

Bear Swamp off Buttermilk Hill Road in South Valley, partially in the Town of Roseboom, has environmental significance for the Township. It, as well as other areas in the Town, house a variety of wildlife including those on the endangered and threatened list put out by the NYS Department of

Environmental Conservation Section 182.2(g) of 6NYCRR Part 182. Additionally, there are whitetail deer, turkeys and fishing. (Appendix Folder 4). Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium van-bruntiae*), a globally rare plant, is located within Lordsland Conservancy, a nature preserve in Roseboom.

### 3.6.1 Water Resources

The Town lies within the Susquehanna River Basin and watershed. A watershed is a geographic area that is drained by, or contributing to, a stream, lake, or other primary body of water. Roseboom is located at the headwaters of the Cherry Valley Creek, which flows into the Susquehanna River. The Town's eastern streams flow to the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation classifies all fresh waters as either "AA, "A", "B", "C", or "D." Classes AA through B are regulated by the state. The highest classifications, AA or A, are assigned to protect waters for uses that include swimming and other recreational uses, but not for drinking. Class C and D waters are not regulated and include uses such as fishing. Waters classified as A, B or C can each have an added standard of (T) or (TS). The (T) indicates the waters support or have the potential to support a trout population and (TS) means it supports or has the potential to support trout spawning. All waters that have a (T) or (TS) designation are regulated including those with a classification of C. (Town of Roseboom Water Resources Map, Appendix Folder 15)

Approximately 26.25 miles of protected trout stream runs through the Town of Roseboom. These waters are classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as A, B, or C, each with an added (T) designation.

### 3.6.2 Floodplains

Floodplains are the lands adjacent to a waterway where floodwaters spill out of the banks of a creek or stream. Floodplains are characterized as either 100-year floodplains or 500-year floodplains. A 100-year floodplain has a one in one hundred (1%) chance of flooding in any one year while a 500-year floodplain has a one in five hundred (0.5%) chance of flooding in any one year. Both zones in the town are depicted on the Water Resources Map on page 15 of the Appendix.

The Otsego County Flood Map shows that those portions of Roseboom that are not located on steep slopes are typically situated in 100 and 500 year flood plain areas. As the Flood Map depicts, the Town faces challenges to development.

Floodplains, nevertheless, provide many beneficial functions including reducing the severity of a flood, handling severe storm water runoff, filtering nutrients and impurities, controlling sedimentation and creating rich alluvial soils. They offer diverse habitat areas for fish and wildlife by serving as feeding and breeding grounds and many wetlands are found in floodplains. Floodplain areas provide ideal opportunities for agriculture, parks, trails, bikeways, and areas for wildlife conservation. Development should avoid encroaching upon floodplains due to the loss of beneficial functions and resulting adverse impacts.

### 3.6.3 Terrain & Slopes

Based on review of the Otsego County Flood Map, those portions of Roseboom that are not within the steep slopes (75% approximated above), are typically associated 100 and 500 year flood plain areas. Resultant from this is a Town largely compromised in its development potential....where it's not steep, it floods.

Topography describes the vertical configuration of the land surface and its relation to the features in the landscape, both natural and man-made. Slope is a measure of topography that describes elevation change over a given horizontal distance. Slopes are typically described in percentages, i.e. a 15 percent slope indicates that the ground rises 15 feet in elevation for every 100 feet in horizontal distance.

The Town of Roseboom consists of hills and valleys with streams flowing through the area and large fields that are dedicated to agriculture. Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 9%. Approximately 50% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 12%.

(Town of Roseboom Soil Map, Appendix Folder 13. Town of Roseboom Slope and Topography Map, Appendix Folder 14.)

### 3.6.4 Vegetative Cover

The predominate vegetative cover types are agricultural, deciduous forest, evergreen forest, and wetlands.

Timber stands are prominent in the:

- Honey Hill State Forest, Thompson Hill Road/LaFieur Road
- R. Milton Hick Memorial State Forest, Perry Hill Road
- 1293 Acres – State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation
- Roseboom Nordic Ski trail – 4 miles of designated trail on Jocelyn Hill Road.
- State-funded Snowmobile Trails throughout the Township

### 3.6.5 Wind Resources

According to the US Department of Energy New York State Wind Map and Resource Potential website, portions of the town have wind speeds up to 80 meters per second.

### 3.6.6 Soils

The soils in the Town of Roseboom are clay, rock, slate, shale, and prime farmland soil. (Town of Roseboom Soil Map, Appendix Folder 13)

- Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town are “partially hydric” or “all hydric” soils: typically indicative of wetlands.
- Approximately 75% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 9%.
- Approximately 60% of the soils within the Town have slopes in excess of 12%.

### 3.6.7 Visual Resources

A well known scenic vista is at the top of Jocelyn Hill Tower Road showing rolling hills, woodlands, fields, and scenic valley views. On top of County Route 39, known as Tower Hill Road, has a panoramic view of valleys and woodlands. Honey Hill Road’s viewshed is full of hilltops, rolling fields, and lush woodlands. Adair Road also has a similar valley viewshed. There are many scenic views throughout the Township.

### 3.6.8 Natural Gas

The Marcellus Shale and the Utica Shale, as well as others shown on the Bedrock Geology Map on page 18 of the Appendix, underlie the Town of Roseboom. The following natural gas leases, as depicted on the Bedrock Geology Map as of July, 2011, currently exist.

Leases in Town: 32 (as of 7/2011)  
Number of Acres leased: 1,964.47  
Number of Parcels (Town) 828  
Percentage of Leased Parcels 3.91%  
Percentage of Leased Acres 9.25%

## **3.7 AGRICULTURE**

Approximately 65 parcels, nearly 1,300 acres in the Town, are actively used for some type of agricultural activity that is encompassed in three Agricultural Districts, No. 2, 4 and 11.

The following types of agricultural operations take place within the Town of Roseboom:

Dairy farms: 10  
Livestock farms: 18  
Fallow deer: 1  
Elk: 1  
Beefalo: 1  
Maple syrup: 4  
Hobby farms: 6  
Bee: 1  
Cattle: 2

(Property Classification Summary, page 5 of Appendix, and Agricultural Land Use Map, page 12 of Appendix.)

## **3.8 Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure**

### 3.8.1 Community Facilities & Services

- The Town Hall and Highway Garage is located at County Route 50, Cherry Valley.

- The Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services is contracted through the Cherry Valley Joint Fire District.
- The Honey Hill Food Pantry is located on Hansen Hill Road in South Valley.
- Post Office is located at Bob's Country Store.
- Tri-county Bookmobile - stops at the South Valley Church
- Women's Community Club of South Valley
- First Christian Church of South Valley
- Vacation Bible School
- Roseboom Methodist Church

### 3.8.2 Transportation Infrastructure

There are 11.46 miles of state highways, 9.42 miles of county highways, and paved 7.5 miles, gravel 19.89 miles, dirt .73 miles, and 9.3 miles of seasonal roads within the Town.

The Otsego Bus Service makes pick ups in South Valley, Pleasant Brook and Roseboom to Oneonta and Cooperstown.

### 3.8.3 Water and Sewer Infrastructure

There are no municipal water resources in Roseboom. Private wells and springs are our water sources. Approximately 4.6 sq miles of the town contains an extent of unconfined aquifer capable of 10 – 100 gallons per minute.

## **3.9 Economic Development**

Business in the Town of Roseboom is located throughout the area. Local businesses include:

Alpha Tech Automotive  
 Bob's Country Store  
 Rodney's Electric and Plumbing  
 Rodney's Hunting Guide Service  
 Rosebrook Elk Farm  
 Beezy Acres Maple Farm  
 Brodie's Sugar Bush  
 Stannard's Maple Farm

Belvedere Lake & Campsites  
Pleasant Brook Hotel and Tavern  
G & G Drywall  
R & R Builders  
Jim Doherty's Electric  
Prill Crest Farm  
Steve Gridley Excavation  
Mark Mabie Contracting  
The Red Hen Café

### **3.8 Local Government**

The Town of Roseboom's Local Government is comprised of the following:

**Town Supervisor:** Michael Stannard

**Highway Superintendent:** Michael Mabie

**Town Board:** Tim Hotaling, Robert Norton, Frank Proper, Barry  
Webster

**Town Clerk:** Beth Rosenthal

**Assessor:** Douglas Ghode

**Code Enforcement Officer:** Lloyd Stannard

**Planning Board:** Chair - Debra Anderson; Patricia Duncan, Kim  
Gray, Larry Lamb, Gary Shaffer, Londa Webster, Sheila  
Farrell, and Lucy A. Proper - alternate.

**Tax Collector:** Mary Stannard

**Historian:** Patricia Mabie

**Dog Warden:** Bob Jorgensen (contracted by the Town)

**Health Officer:** Dr. Doug DeLong

**Board of Assessment Review:** Chair - Norma VanBuren; Richard  
Hansen, and Patricia Mabie

## **SECTION 4: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS**

### 4.1 Strengths

Rural character  
Low taxes  
Desire of citizens to maintain and improve community  
Adequately maintained roads and thoroughfares  
Potential for positive growth and access to public funding  
Healthy and clean natural environment  
Local fresh water supply

### 4.2 Weaknesses

Lack of telecommunications and global access  
    i.e. cell phones and internet service  
Decline in property values  
Lack of civic duty and participation in Local Government  
Lack of employment opportunities

### 4.3 Opportunities

The residents in the Town of Roseboom not only have several opportunities within the Town, but additionally have reasonable access to a variety of cultural, educational, and recreational resources not in the Township:

- Cultural enjoyment – Glimmerglass Opera within a few miles, Cooperstown museums
- Shopping is close by in Cooperstown, Cobleskill and Oneonta, food stores, banks
- Recreational enjoyment – hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, horseback riding, skiing, swimming and fitness facilities

### 4.4 Threats

Steady decline in quality of hamlets  
Lack of protective regulations  
Apathy

## **SECTION 5: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**5.1 - GOAL 1** - It is the goal of the town to protect its natural resources in an effort to assure their sustainability and availability by preventing irreplaceable loss, misuse and/or degradation.

- Objective 1.1: The conservation, maintenance and protection of environmentally sensitive areas including aquatic and terrestrial resources that include, but are not limited to, wetlands, floodplains, surface and groundwater resources, geologic features, prime and unique soils, steep slopes, woodlands, wildlife habitats, air and sound quality, and scenic views; and public and private land.
- Objective 1.2: Activities and practices that avoid and/or minimize excessive: grading and excavation, vegetative removal; clear-cutting of forested public and private areas; destruction of natural habitats, energy consumption; and waste generation.
- Objective 1.3: The use of renewable energy resources such as wind, solar, and hydroelectric that is consistent to the protection of public health, safety and well-being of the community and is at a scale consistent with the goals and objectives in this plan
- Objective 1.4: Foster and encourage additional agriculture.

**5.2 - Goal 2** - To effectively plan for and manage future changes in land use that allows development while preventing the loss of natural and cultural resources.

- Objective 2.1 - Enact a Right to Farm Law
- Objective 2.2 - Encourage property owners to put abandoned agriculture property into productive use.
- Objective 2.3 - Agricultural practices in areas having prime soils and/or natural resources that will ensure productivity and competitiveness.
- Objective 2.4 - Preservation of forested and vacant lands to provide for active and passive recreational opportunities, maintain open space, and contribute to the Town's aesthetic character and healthy natural ecosystems and wildlife.

### **Recommendations:**

- Enforce legislation prohibiting clear-cutting of anymore than two acres of woodland.
- Enforce legislation prohibiting the extraction of natural resources without proper permits (thus requiring permits for traffic, driveways, etc.)

5.3 - GOAL 3 - Maintain and restore community character to encourage high quality diversified housing that meets the needs of all age and income groups resulting in neighborhoods that are safe, clean, and promote increased residency.

Objective 3.1 – Enforcement of codes in effect by New York State

- Enforce New York State codes regarding standards/specifications for (potential) nuisance uses such as junk yards and abandoned vehicles.
- Housing development that fosters a sense of community and neighborliness, encourages long-term home ownership, and creates pride in one's property.

Objective 3.2 - Consolidating and preservation of the Town's historical records

## BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.4 - GOAL 4 - Promote small business growth in the area to increase the tax base and encourage families to move to and stay in the area.

Objective 4.1 – Acquire higher speed internet services

Objective 4.2 - Actively pursue a cell tower installation

Objective 4.3 - Actively pursue telecommunication service improvement and access.

## TRANSPORTATION

5.5 – GOAL 5 - Maintenance and protection of our town's roads and bridges. Minimizing hazards and congestion of roads within the township.

- Objective 5.1 - Development that considers and respects existing local roadway capacities and does not require or add to the need to make significant upgrades to local road networks
- Objective 5.2 - A transportation network that discourages the use of large trucks, heavy vehicles and other similar vehicles on local roads when those vehicles may be detrimental to the public safety, structural conditions and capacities of local roads and infrastructure
- Objective 5.3 - Prevention and remediation of damage to roads from logging and extractive operations
- Objective 5.4. - Limits on heavy truck traffic on roads in the township particularly as it impacts the farming hamlet and designated historic district of Roseboom, as well as the safety of the residents.
- Objective 5.5 - Minimization of erosion and sedimentation relating to streams and waterways.
- Objective 5.6 - Minimization of impact of road salt on streams, groundwater, wetlands, and vegetation, as well as cars, roads and bridges.
- Objective 5.7 – Establishment of weight levels and exclusionary permits.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

5.6 - GOAL 6 - Protection of water resources, flood plains and wetlands in an effort to assure their sustainability by preventing irreplaceable loss, misuse, and/or degradation.

- Objective 6.1 - Need to adequately protect prime and productive agricultural soils from indiscriminate or inappropriate development
- Objective 6.2 - Need to provide local standards in order to protect sensitive, environmental resources as well as the scenic landscape and historical resources
- Objective 6.3 - Need to establish a procedure to review land use so that incompatible or conflicting uses will be identified and land values and quality of life considerations will be secured

- Objective 6.4 - Need to prevent the lack of local control of potentially high impact industrial/commercial facilities
- Objective 6.5 - Need to prevent Inappropriately located or designed residential development
- Objective 6.6 - Encourage the use of renewable energy such as wind, solar, and hydroelectric that is consistent and appropriate to the protection of public health, safety and the well-being of the community and is on a scale consistent with the goals and objectives in this plan.

## HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.7 - GOAL 7 - To identify, protect, and preserve significant historical, archeological and other cultural resources of importance to the community, state and nation. Protect, preserve and as appropriate, the adaptive reuse of historic properties.

- Objective 7.1 - Promoting the protection of local historic and cultural resources for the benefit of future generations
- Objective 7.2 - The rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures consistent with local, regional statewide and national historic preservation goals and guidelines

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

5.8 - GOAL 8 - Encourage the creation and maintenance of high quality diversified housing that meets the needs of all age and income groups resulting in neighborhoods that are safe, clean, friendly, and conveniently accessible to community services and public facilities

- Objective 8.1 - Housing development that fosters a sense of community and neighborliness, and encourages long-term home ownership, and creates pride in one's property
- Objective 8.2 – Restore and improve the character of the town by enforcing codes in effect concerning junkyards, condemned buildings, deteriorated structures, and abandoned vehicles.

The maximum intervals for Review of Comprehensive Plan (required under TL Section 272-a) will be five years.

**Town of Roseboom  
Comprehensive Plan Draft  
Action Plan**







**TOWN OF ROSEBOOM  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DRAFT**

**APPENDIX  
INVENTORY**

Otsego County Snowmobile Trails Map 2009-2010.....1  
Mapped by Mohawk Valley Geographic Information Systems  
PO Box 525, Herkimer, NY 13350, (315) 866-2746  
www. Mohawkvalleygis.com

Otsego County Trails Map 2001.....2  
Available from Otsego County Planning Department  
197 Main Street, Cooperstown, New York 13326

Cemeteries of Otsego County.....3  
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Town of Roseboom Agriculture District Map.....11  
Prepared by P. Wyckoff, Otsego County Planning  
Department, 197 Main Street, Cooperstown, NY 13326

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