

**Village of Brewster, NY**  
**Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement**  
**For the**  
**2015 Update to the Comprehensive Plan,**  
**Related Zoning Amendments and Urban**  
**Renewal Actions**



**June 2015**

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Village of Brewster would like to thank the Comprehensive Plan Committee for their efforts in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and this Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement. The Village would also like to recognize the assistance it received throughout the process from Putnam County Department of Planning & Development; Putnam County Economic Development Corporation; Pace Land Use Law Center; Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress; VHB Engineering, Surveying, and Landscape Architects, P.C.; J. Robert Folchetti & Associates LLC; Covington Development LLC; Tecton Architects, P.C.; Goman & York; and the Town of Southeast.

The Village would also like to thank its officials and employees, the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Envision Brewster Committee, local residents, business owners, agencies, and other groups and individuals who have contributed to the Plan through their comments and resources throughout the planning process. Considerable emphasis was placed on community involvement and the community responded accordingly.

### **Members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee include:**

Christine Piccini, Chairperson and Deputy Mayor  
James Schoenig, Mayor  
Tom Boissonnault, Trustee  
Mary Bryde, Trustee  
Terri Stockburger, Trustee  
Peter Hansen, Clerk/ Treasurer  
Bob Cullen, Town of Southeast Councilman  
Jack Gress, Zoning Board member; Coalition for a Better Brewster member  
Richard Ruchala, Zoning Board Chairman  
Rick Stockburger, Planning Board member  
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### **And with thanks to former members:**

Joe Czajka, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress  
Meghan Taylor, Putnam County Economic Development Corporation President

**Members of the Envision Brewster Committee include:**

James Schoenig, Mayor  
Christine Piccini, Deputy Mayor  
Tom Boissonnault, Trustee  
Mary Bryde, Trustee  
Teresa Stockburger, Trustee  
Tim Conway, Brewster School District  
Paul Hesse, Pattern for Progress  
Bob Dumont, Community Advocate  
Jack Gress, Village Consultant  
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Bruce Walker, Putnam County Deputy County Executive  
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**And former members:**

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# FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

For the

## 2015 Update to the Brewster Comprehensive Plan, Related Zoning Amendments and Urban Renewal Actions

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Village of Brewster  
Town of Southeast  
Putnam County, State of New York

**LEAD AGENCY AND CONTACT:** Village of Brewster  
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Village Hall  
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Brewster, NY 10509

Contact: Mayor James J. Schoenig  
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**DATE OF ACCEPTANCE  
BY LEAD AGENCY:**

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**AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS:** This document is a complete Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS). Copies are available for public review at the offices of the Village Clerk, on the Village website at <http://brewstervillage-ny.gov/>, and at the Putnam County Planning office.

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# VILLAGE OF BREWSTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE FGEIS

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) for the 2015 Village of Brewster Comprehensive Plan Update has been prepared pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617). Under SEQRA regulations, the FGEIS serves as the basis for the Lead Agency Findings, and the Village of Brewster's Board of Trustees is the Lead Agency for this environmental review.

This FGEIS has been prepared to respond to all comments made on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). This DGEIS was accepted by Board of Trustees for circulation and comment on March 4, 2015. In accordance with Section 617.9(b)(7) of the State Environmental Quality Review regulations, this GEIS analyzes the proposed action which is the acceptance of the Update to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The proposed Update to the Comprehensive Plan, Final, June 2015, as well as the DGEIS dated March 2015, are both incorporated by reference and thereby forms part of this FGEIS.

Under SEQRA, a "Generic" EIS, or GEIS, is prepared when a proposed action represents a comprehensive program having wide application and does not involve site-specific land development projects. While the Comprehensive Plan identifies a vision for revitalization with conceptual ideas as well as goals and strategies to achieve the desired outcome, it is a village-wide plan; and therefore, more generic in nature than a site specific plan.

The public comment period on the DGEIS opened on March 4, 2015, and extended through May 8, 2015. During that period, a joint public hearing on the DGEIS and the 2015 Comprehensive Plan was held on April 8, 2015. Written comments were also received from the public and involved agencies. Copies of the written comment letters received on the DGEIS are provided in this FGEIS as Appendix A.

There were no verbal comments received at the public hearing related to the Comprehensive Plan Update. Two letters were received during the public comment period: a letter from the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP), and one from the Brewster Historian, Danielle Cylich. NYCDEP states its support for the Comprehensive Plan, and suggests some further measures to protect water quality in the NYC Watershed. These provisions will be reviewed and taken into consideration by the Board of Trustees. The second comment letter from Danielle Cylich pertains to the historic nature of several buildings in the downtown area of Brewster, and suggests adaptive re-use and preservation of these buildings along with requesting that the existing scale and character of Main Street be considered as part of any redevelopment.

## 2.0 Public Comments

### 2.1 Summary of DGEIS Comments

Two written comment letters were submitted to the Board of Trustees on the Draft GEIS. No verbal comments were made at the April 8, 2015 joint public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan Update and the DGEIS. The following section summarizes and responds to the comments. Copies of the written comments received can be found in Appendix A (Comments Received on the DGEIS).

### 2.2 Response to DGEIS Comments

There were two comment letters received on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Village of Brewster Comprehensive Plan Update. One letter dated April 16, 2015, was written by Cynthia Garcia, representing the SEQRA Coordination Section of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP). The NYCDEP comments are summarized below, along with a response.

*“Any proposed use of NYC land, such as the suggested park on the south side of Marvin Avenue, will require approval from DEP. As you are aware, Diverting Reservoir is phosphorus restricted; therefore, an assessment of water quality impacts would be necessary.”*

**Response:** Although the Village officials are well aware that any usage of NYC land requires approval, language has been added to Chapter 7, Natural Resources and Infrastructure, to further clarify this point for the public. The language added states, “This proposed park will require approval from NYCDEP, since it would be located on NYC land that is owned for watershed protection purposes.”

*“Page 20 of the document references the intent to encourage development west of the train station and at the east end of Main Street. The areas are steeply sloped and in close proximity to a watercourse that is tributary to Diverting Reservoir, respectively. Encouraging development in these areas may conflict with the Comprehensive Plan’s goal to minimize environmental impacts.”*

**Response:** The land area west of the train station is indeed environmentally constrained by steep slopes and the proximity to a NYC reservoir tributary; however, it is centrally located adjacent to the Village’s downtown center. The proximity to the train and downtown was the foundation of the recommendation as a location for potential future residential development. However, the Village did take into account the sensitive environmental nature of the area by suggesting in the Comprehensive Plan that this area in particular may be best developed through the implementation of a less intrusive development method such as clustering or a conservation subdivision. Any future development proposals in this area from private developers would be required to be analyzed for adverse environmental impacts.



*“Wastewater Treatment Facilities are discussed on page 39. While not contractually limited from connecting to the Village’s sewer system, please be reminded that the sewer connections made to properties not within the Village boundaries as of 2000 are governed by the variance granted by DEP for the reconstructed WWTP.”*

**Response:** The Village was contractually limited by the March 8, 2010 Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement between NYCDEP and the Village of Brewster Concerning the Brewster Wastewater Treatment Plant. Section (f) Paragraph 3(h) (Village Work – SPDES Permitted Flow) states “the Village agrees that the sole use of the Brewster WWTP is to collect and treat sewage generated by users within the Village, and agrees not to sell, lease, or otherwise allocate to users outside the Village boundaries.” Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan statement that only Village properties may connect to the WWTP is correct.

*“As part of the revitalization efforts, municipal street sweeping, public trash cans, maintenance and inspection of stormwater conveyance systems should be enhanced as they can be effect[ive] methods of pollutant source control.”*

**Response:** Comment noted. The Comprehensive Plan does recommend enhancing these maintenance efforts for both pollutant source control purposes as well as to beautify the Village.

The second comment letter on the DGEIS and Comprehensive Plan Update was dated May 8, 2015 from the Village Historian, Danielle Cyclich. Her comments were as follows:

*“It is significant that these documents acknowledge the character and history of the Village of Brewster as embodied in its historic buildings and it is great to see this clearly written.”*

**Response:** Comment noted.

*“As noted however, while not all buildings carry equal weight in their importance architecturally or historically, together they create a sense of place that identifies Brewster as unique. While looking to bring in a new chapter to Brewster’s development, I urge you to consider the value of preserving and incorporating the character that many of the downtown buildings embody. Several important building are specifically noted in the Comprehensive Plan and DGEIS, but there are others that also merit specific mention. The former Brewster Standard building, the Masonic Hall and the Cameo – each contribute to the fabric of our community with significant historical or architectural elements. For 116 years, The Brewster Standard, was an important local voice in the documentation and analysis of news and was led by a female publisher and editor, Marjorie Addis, for more than 60 years. The Masonic Hall and Cameo Movie Theater contain architecturally [significant]details – round brick turrets with curved stone lintels*

*on the Masonic Hall and 1930s Art Deco tiling and Marquee at the Cameo – contribute to making our Village Main Street unique.”*

**Response:** All buildings listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places as well as the State Preservation Historical Information Network Exchange (SPHINX) were described in the Comprehensive Plan. It was noted in the Comprehensive Plan that other buildings may be considered of local historical or architectural significance, but unless specifically designated on an existing registry, the Village did not feel that it was appropriate to list those buildings. Thus the statement was made in the Plan that there are many other structures that contribute to the historic and architectural character of the Village.

*“The preservation movement has shown time and time again, that reuse of our built environment is good practice from a “green” perspective (reuse of existing resources). In addition, there is significant document showing that all generations from millennials to baby boomers find value in historic preservation – they like old buildings. Thus, the scale and character of Brewster’s 20<sup>th</sup> century streetscape should be carefully considered with any new infrastructure and adaptive re-use of some of the existing buildings might add more value than if they were to be taken down.”*

**Response:** Comment noted. The Comprehensive Plan does support the adaptive reuse of existing building stock and suggests methods for preservation of the Village’s historic resources. The Plan also recommends that any new development take precautions to ensure that new land uses are compatible.

*“Regardless of the impact of future development, ensuring that the history is documented and preserved for future generations is important so that we don’t lose sight of all that is embodied in the historic fabric of our Village. Thank you for ensuring that we don’t forget our past and for your leadership in working towards a great future for the Village of Brewster.”*

**Response:** Comment noted.

## **APPENDIX A – Comment Letters Received on the DGEIS**

**APPENDIX B – Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the  
2015 Update to the Brewster Comprehensive Plan, Related Zoning  
Amendments and Urban Renewal Actions, March 2015**