



SUSSEX PRESERVATION COALITION

Educate ~ Advocate ~ Impact

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Livable Communities protect the vulnerable, provide for the health, safety and well-being of all community members, address current problems and prepare for the future.

Livable Communities are not a luxury for the privileged few but a strategy created and used by inhabitants to increase equity in jobs, education, housing, health-care and life-enhancing pursuits; to preserve and protect the natural world; and to demonstrate respect for every community member.

Past decisions about growth in Sussex County have undermined livability by allowing dramatic loss of open spaces, forested land, and wetlands; by contributing to traffic congestion, stresses on emergency services, overburdened health facilities, crowded schools and frequent flooding: and by failing to provide affordable housing.

We call upon all those who hold or seek elected office to endorse this agenda for livable communities and, while in office, to adopt the actions necessary to secure and enforce the agenda.

THE AGENDA FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Conserve Open Spaces and Forested Land

For flood mitigation, biodiversity, cooling, recreation.

Protect wetlands, bays, ponds, streams and rivers

For biodiversity, flood mitigation, clean water.

Provide adequate infrastructure

For transportation, health care, education and housing.

Infrastructure growth must be concurrent with residential growth

Create, Implement and Enforce a Sussex County conservation plan
For minimal disruption to the natural environment supporting biodiversity and for maximum open space for recreation and protection of native flora and fauna.

Develop affordable housing and mixed-use communities
For equitable access to work, recreation, a healthy environment, and education.

Actions Necessary to Achieve, Implement and Maintain the Agenda For Livable Communities In Sussex County.

Develop a strong working partnership between county and state officials and offices.

Governments at all levels are responsible for clean air, clean water, good transportation, biodiversity, sustainability, resilience and personal freedoms. A strong working relationship across all levels is necessary for livable communities to flourish.

Expand and Preserve avenues for public engagement.

Policies governing livable communities must be based on the fullest possible citizen participation. Pro forma opportunities for public participation make a mockery of open government. Notices of public meeting should be hard to miss - not hard to find, and opportunities for speaking at public hearings should be accessible - not limited to the well-connected.

Ensure development does not outpace infrastructure.

“Build it and the rest shall follow” MUST be replaced by “Plan - Prepare - Build.” Or “Don’t build it if you can’t support it.”

Balance personal property rights with community rights.

Livable communities require public policies that protect the rights of the many, not policies that privilege the few over the many.