

*Ancram
Comprehensive
Plan*

**Survey
Summary**

January 2008

How the Survey was Developed

The 21 key issues around which the survey was built were developed by over 200 residents during the Community Planning Workshops in the fall of 2007. The survey asked about 150 detailed questions on these issues.

Survey Response and Reliability

1550 questionnaires were mailed, and 434 were completed. This 28% response rate is typical for surveys of this type. Respondents were evenly spread through the town. 68% are full time residents, and 32% part-time residents.

Our response rate provides a 95% confidence level with a 4% margin of error. The 95% confidence level means that if we redid the survey 100 times, we should expect to get the same answers on 95 of them. The 4% margin of error means that if 75% of respondents agreed on something, the "real" number could be between 71% and 79%.

How We Use the Survey Information

By using the survey results to formulate the Comprehensive Plan, we guarantee that the opinions and assumptions are clear and understandable to everyone. This is the only way to build a Plan that reflects the thoughts and concerns of the people of the Town.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Ancram Survey, Jan 2008

Q.1 Location of Residence: Residents and landowners are spread fairly evenly over town: about 1/3 from the hamlet areas, 1/3 from the central portion, and 1/3 from the eastern area from State Route 82/County Route 3 east.

Q.2 Length of Residence: Respondents split into thirds: up to 10 years, 11-30 years, and more than 30 years.

Q.3 Full Time Residents: about 68% were full time, 32 % part time.

Q.4 Part Time Residents: 40% are planning on living in Ancram full time, 38% will continue part-time, and 19% don't know. Only 3% are planning to move away.

Q.5 Home Owners: 97% own their homes.

Q.6 Land owned: About 37% own 3 or fewer acres. 47% own 3-50 acres. 16% are large landowners with over 50 acres.

Q.7 Farming: 26% of landowners rent their land to farmers or farm it themselves. Average acreage farmed was about 100 acres, ranging from 1 to 700 acres; median 40.

Q.8 Place of work: More than a third work outside of Columbia County but still in NY. 18% work from their homes, while 26% are retired or do not work. Only 7% work in Ancram.

Q.9 Occupations: 8% work in agriculture, 10% in construction and the building trades. About a quarter said their occupation was in administrative, business or legal areas, while over a third listed "Other". Only 7 respondents, 2% of the sample, work at the Ancram Mill.

Q.10 Age: 62% were aged 41 to 65. 30% were over 65, and 8% were between 21 and 40. There were no participants under 21 years; for that reason, a separate workshop was conducted among young people.

Q.11 Children: About 20% of participants indicated they had children under 18 living with them. Of these, the majority had one or two children.

21 Issues in rank order by importance to Townspeople...

12. The following issues were identified by over 200 Ancram residents during the Planning Workshops and committee meetings as important to them. Please tell us how important these issues are to you:			
	Important	Not Important	No Opinion
Protecting ground water (for drinking)	94%	3%	3%
Protecting streams, ponds, wetlands	92%	4%	4%
Maintaining open space	90%	4%	6%
Encouraging agriculture	90%	3%	7%
Protecting woodlands	84%	10%	6%
Using alternative forms of energy	79%	12%	9%
Promoting a sense of community	78%	11%	11%
Improving Town Government	77%	12%	11%
Protecting ridge tops from development	76%	14%	10%
Preserving of historic sites	74%	19%	7%
Improving town roads	71%	21%	8%
Providing senior citizen services	68%	22%	10%
Improving the town centers	66%	25%	9%
Improving traffic safety	64%	25%	11%
Expanding youth activities and services	60%	24%	16%
Expanding recreation & parks	60%	30%	10%
Supporting affordable housing	58%	30%	12%
Attracting business and jobs	56%	35%	9%
Supporting hunting and fishing	55%	34%	11%
Gravel Mining	47%	40%	13%
Encouraging residential development	27%	63%	10%

ANCRAM PLANNING INITIATIVES:

Agriculture & Environment

Community

Development & Infrastructure

Agriculture and the Environment are the top priorities for Ancram townspeople...

Top 4 of 21 Issues:

	Importance
Protecting ground water for drinking	94%
Protecting streams, ponds, wetlands	92%
Encouraging agriculture	90%
Maintaining open space	90%

77% say improving Town Government is important...

General Services are mostly well regarded, but Townspeople were not satisfied with communications from Town Hall...

36. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of Town Government:	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Fire Protection	97%	3%
Rescue Squad/Ambulance	90%	10%
Snow removal	83%	17%
Police/Law Enforcement	70%	30%
Ease of access to Town officials and employees	68%	32%
Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals	64%	36%
Hours of Town Hall operation	63%	37%
Responsiveness of Town officials to your concerns	63%	37%
Road Maintenance	56%	44%
Building permit process	40%	60%
Information about what is going on in the community	38%	62%
Building & Zoning Code Enforcement process	38%	62%
Property Tax Assessment process	32%	68%
Communications about what is going on in Town Hall	30%	70%



60% feel Town Centers should be improved, specifically...

Ancram	60%
Ancramdale	30%
Boston Corners	10%

35. If you answered yes to question 33 check all the ways we should try to improve the Town Centers:	Percent of Completed Answers
Attract shops, stores, small businesses and jobs to the Town	50%
Provide incentives to owners for improving properties	48%
Impose penalties on owners who permit properties to deteriorate	45%
Expand the use of Town owned-land around the new Town Hall	41%
Improve traffic flow/safety in Ancram, Ancramdale, Boston Corners	39%
Establish visual appearance guidelines and standards for building exteriors	30%
Make the Town centers more pedestrian friendly by adding sidewalks, curbs, street lights	28%
Develop better parking	25%
Move the Fire House out of the center of Ancram	13%
Provide municipal sewer service in one or more of the hamlets	12%
Expand the size of the existing hamlets, or establish new hamlets	12%
Provide a municipal water supply in one or more of the hamlets	11%

63% thought the Town should have programs to attract businesses...

Most preferred small businesses like retail stores, restaurants, at-home businesses, and service businesses like banks, insurance agencies.

26b. If you said yes to question 25, should Ancram develop programs to attract jobs and businesses to town, check all of the following ideas you think would be appropriate:	Percent of Completed Answers	Number of Responses
Attract small retail stores and restaurants	55%	238
Encourage working-from-home businesses	39%	170
Restrict commercial activities to defined commercial zones	38%	163
Attract service businesses (e.g.insurance agencies, banks, etc)	36%	157
Attract light industry and manufacturing	26%	113
Encourage multi-use residential and commercial buildings	25%	107
Expand the size of existing commercial districts, or establish new commercial districts	21%	91
Keep residential and commercial activities in separate buildings	12%	52
Encourage commercial activities and development in all parts of Town	7%	32
Attract large retail stores	4%	18

60% felt the Town should expand recreation, especially scenic activities...

30. Which of the following recreational activities or facilities are you in favor of having in Ancram?	Yes	No	No Opinion
Hiking trails	81%	8%	11%
Athletic Fields (baseball, softball, soccer)	79%	7%	14%
Bike paths	79%	11%	10%
Walking/running paths	75%	12%	13%
Playgrounds with equipment	72%	11%	17%
Public swimming pool	66%	16%	18%
Community center for all ages	64%	18%	18%
Public picnic areas	55%	24%	21%
Public hunting and fishing areas	49%	34%	17%
Tennis courts	45%	31%	24%
Camping areas	37%	41%	22%
Ice skating rink	33%	41%	26%
Snowmobiling trails	23%	63%	14%

Scenic **Community**

61% see need for more Affordable Housing...

Changing lot size zoning could be one way to promote Affordable Housing, but Townspeople said there is no pressing need to change current lot sizes:

	In the Hamlets 1-2 acres	Outside the Hamlets 3 acre minimum
Need larger lot size than specified in zoning?	66% No	54% No
Need smaller lot size than specified in zoning?	56% No	69% No

Townspeople prefer “lower density” residential development, except for senior citizens...

19. How do you feel about the following types of residential development in Ancram?	OK with me	Not desirable	No Opinion
Single family housing	95%	3%	2%
Residential development designed to protect open space	84%	11%	5%
Senior Citizen housing	70%	17%	13%
Assisted living/continuous care facilities	66%	22%	12%
Additional dwelling units in existing buildings ✓	57%	34%	9%
Combined residential/commercial buildings ✓	47%	42%	11%
“Clustered” subdivisions (like Long Lake)	42%	46%	12%
Duplexes	41%	48%	11%
Single mobile homes on individual lots	37%	56%	7%
Townhouses	35%	55%	10%
Small (3-6 unit) apartment buildings	34%	57%	9%
Mobile home parks	12%	83%	5%
Large (over 6 unit) apartment buildings	7%	90%	3%
Large (over 25 unit) residential subdivisions	6%	90%	4%

✓ types of affordable housing preferred

Lower Density	Higher Density
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Ancram wants slow or no growth...

Population: 74% want the Town the same or only slightly bigger...

Q17. The Census reports Ancram's population of full-time residents grew from 1,215 to 1,513 between 1970 and 2000, and is estimated to be about 1650 today. How much do you want to see the full time population of the Town of Ancram change over the next 15 years?

Stay about the same	Increase slightly	Increase moderately	Increase a lot
40%	34%	24%	2%

Housing: 81% want the number of new homes to be the same or fewer:

Q18. There are about 1000 houses in Ancram. About 200 new homes have been built during the past 15 years. Over the next 15 years, how many more new homes do you want to see built?

About the same as over the last 15 years	Slightly more	A lot more	Not as many
37%	17%	2%	44%

Residents view Agriculture & Environment as top priorities...

37. Which of the following programs or activities do you think the Town should pursue?	Yes	No	No Opinion
Programs to preserve farms, farmland and open spaces	91%	4%	5%
Programs to preserve forestlands/wildlife habitats	86%	7%	7%
Protecting scenic views and landscapes	83%	9%	8%
Protecting wetlands	82%	7%	11%
Protecting sensitive environmental sites	81%	9%	10%
Protecting historical sites and cemeteries	75%	11%	14%
Better communications about what is going on	73%	6%	21%
Using alternative forms of energy in Town facilities	72%	12%	16%
Providing access to cell service	68%	19%	13%
Providing additional senior services	59%	17%	24%
Town Center Improvement programs	58%	24%	18%
Programs to attract businesses and jobs	57%	32%	11%
Providing public parks and playgrounds	56%	20%	24%
Supporting and promoting hunting and fishing	52%	32%	16%
Programs to provide affordable housing	51%	31%	18%
More community activities and events	42%	25%	33%
Providing public transportation	27%	54%	19%
Building a new town garage	25%	44%	31%
Installing sidewalks, curbs, street lights	25%	59%	16%
Providing public water and/or septic services	21%	53%	26%
Programs to attract tourists	21%	61%	18%
Hiring a town policeman	20%	59%	21%
Building a new fire house	16%	53%	31%

TOWN PROGRAM PRIORITIES:

Agriculture & Environment	Community	Development & Infrastructure
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