

Full Environmental Assessment Form
Part 3 - Evaluation of the Magnitude and Importance of Project Impacts
and
Determination of Significance

Part 3 provides the reasons in support of the determination of significance. The lead agency must complete Part 3 for every question in Part 2 where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.

Based on the analysis in Part 3, the lead agency must decide whether to require an environmental impact statement to further assess the proposed action or whether available information is sufficient for the lead agency to conclude the proposed action will not have a significant adverse environmental impact. By completing the certification on the next page, the lead agency can complete its determination of significance.

Reasons Supporting This Determination:

To complete this section:

- Identify the impact based on the Part 2 responses and describe its magnitude. Magnitude considers factors such as severity, size, or extent of an impact.
- Assess the importance of the impact. Importance relates to the geographic scope, duration, probability of the impact occurring, number of people affected by the impact, and any additional environmental consequences if the impact were to occur.
- The assessment should take into consideration any design element or project changes.
- Repeat this process for each Part 2 question where the impact has been identified as potentially moderate to large or where there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action will not, or may, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.
- Provide the reason(s) why the impact may, or will not, result in a significant adverse environmental impact.
- For Conditional Negative Declarations identify the specific condition(s) imposed that will modify the proposed action so that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result.
- Attach additional sheets, as needed.

See Attached Sheet

Determination of Significance - Type 1 and Unlisted Actions

SEQR Status: ☒ Type 1 ☐ Unlisted

Identify portions of EAF completed for this Project: ☒ Part 1 ☒ Part 2 ☒ Part 3

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF, as noted, plus this additional support information
Town water study, NRI, CAP, and other county-level plans (such as the hosing study), data from NYS
DEC, US Census Bureau

and considering both the magnitude and importance of each identified potential impact, it is the conclusion of the _____ as lead agency that:

☒ A. This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the environment, and, therefore, an environmental impact statement need not be prepared. Accordingly, this negative declaration is issued.

☐ B. Although this project could have a significant adverse impact on the environment, that impact will be avoided or substantially mitigated because of the following conditions that will be required by the lead agency:

There will, therefore, be no significant adverse impacts from the project as conditioned, and, therefore, this conditioned negative declaration is issued. A conditioned negative declaration may be used only for UNLISTED actions (see 6 NYCRR 617.7(d)).

☐ C. This Project may result in one or more significant adverse impacts on the environment and an environmental impact statement must be prepared to further assess the impact(s) and possible mitigation and to explore alternatives to avoid or reduce those impacts. Accordingly, this positive declaration is issued.

Name of Action: Adoption of Comprehensive Plan

Name of Lead Agency: Town Board of the Town of Canaan

Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency: Brenda Adams

Title of Responsible Officer: Supervisor

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency:

Date:

Signature of Preparer (if different from Responsible Officer)

Date:

For Further Information:

Contact Person:

Address:

Telephone Number:

E-mail:

For Type 1 Actions and Conditioned Negative Declarations, a copy of this Notice is sent to:

Chief Executive Officer of the political subdivision in which the action will be principally located (e.g., Town / City / Village of)

Other involved agencies (if any)

Applicant (if any)

Environmental Notice Bulletin: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/enb/enb.html>

FEAF Part 3 SEQRA Findings Statement

Adoption of the Town of Canaan Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Canaan developed a comprehensive plan pursuant to Town Law §272-a that included an 18 month planning process, extensive public input, data collection and town-wide mapping, culminating in duly noticed public hearings. As a result of public input, the draft Plan presented in December 2025 was updated and a second duly noticed public hearing was held.

The proposed changes substantially strengthen the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on environmental protection, rural character preservation, and resource-based planning. The revisions add additional discussion of Canaan's Natural Resource Inventory and Source Water Protection Plan, highlighting sensitive groundwater, wetlands, streams, forests, wildlife habitat, steep slopes, and hydrologically sensitive areas. New language also adds additional recommendations on protecting Queechey Lake, preserving farmland and forests, and addressing environmental threats. The updated draft adds additional emphasis on conservation measures within future land use regulations that can address the Town's needs. Additionally, the plan's vision, goals, SWOT analysis, and community profile were clarified to prioritize environmental stewardship, climate resilience, and protection of natural resources among other elements.

Pursuant to Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law (State Environmental Quality Review Act—SEQRA) and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617, the Town of Canaan Town Board, as Lead Agency, has completed its environmental review of the proposed adoption of the Town of Canaan Comprehensive Plan.

1. Description of the Action

The action under consideration is the adoption of the Town of Canaan Comprehensive Plan, which establishes a long-range framework of community-driven vision, goals, and implementation strategies to instruct future land use, environmental protection, community character, housing, economic development, and infrastructure discussions within the Town.

The Plan reflects extensive public engagement, including community survey input, stakeholder discussions, and visioning exercises, and is organized around key themes, including:

- Community Character and Rural Landscape
- Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
- Land Use and Development Patterns
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Economic Development and Working Lands
- Infrastructure and Services
- Implementation and Action Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy and advisory document intended to inform future decision-making. It does not:

- Amend zoning or other land use regulations;
- Approve or authorize any site-specific development;
- Commit the Town to any capital improvement project; or
- Result in any immediate physical alteration of land, water, or natural resources.

2. Nature of Environmental Review

The Town Board evaluated the potential environmental impacts of adopting the Comprehensive Plan in accordance with SEQRA using the FEAF Parts 1, 2, and 3. This review considered the Plan's goals, objectives, and recommended actions, including those related to:

- Protection of Queechy Lake and its watershed, groundwater resources, and water quality;
- Conservation of farmland, forests, scenic viewsheds, and rural landscapes;
- Identification of environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands, streams, steep slopes, and ridgelines;
- Direction of future growth toward appropriate locations consistent with existing settlement patterns;
- Promotion of housing options compatible with community character; and
- Use of land use tools and regulatory strategies to better manage growth and resource protection.
- Potential future regulatory and infrastructure actions.

The Town recognizes that the Comprehensive Plan is conceptual and programmatic, and that many recommendations require subsequent discretionary actions subject to separate SEQRA review.

3. Determination of Environmental Impacts

Based on its SEQRA review, the Town Board finds that no Moderate to Large environmental impacts will occur in connection with adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Town Board further finds that adoption of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Will not result in any direct physical alteration of land, water, or ecological systems;
- Does not authorize development or regulatory changes that would independently generate environmental impacts;
- Establishes a framework that reinforces Canaan's rural character, including preservation of open space, scenic landscapes, and agricultural land;
- Promotes protection of critical natural resources, including wetlands, streams, aquifers, steep slopes, and ridgelines;
- Supports water resource protection, including policies specifically addressing Queechy Lake and its contributing watershed;
- Encourages context-sensitive development patterns, including maintaining low-density rural areas while supporting appropriate, small-scale development consistent with existing settlement patterns; and
- Recommends future land use and regulatory tools that, if implemented, would be more protective of environmental resources than what is currently provided in the Town Zoning Code.

Any potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Plan are indirect, conceptual, and not site-specific, and therefore cannot be meaningfully assessed until future actions are actually developed.

4. Consideration of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS)

The Town Board considered whether preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) was warranted pursuant to 6 NYCRR §617.10.

The Town Board finds that a GEIS is not warranted at this time because:

- The Comprehensive Plan does not propose or approve specific development projects, and rather offers recommendations for zoning changes that could be considered in the future;
- The Plan's recommendations are flexible and subject to future legislative and discretionary review; and
- Environmental impacts associated with any future actions can be more accurately and effectively evaluated at the time those actions are developed, when sufficient detail, such as density of development, bulk dimensions, allowable uses, and development standards are available.
- The Plan does not commit the Town to a definite course of action with predictable environmental impacts;
- The Town Board is enacting a moratorium on development within the Town in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan in order to maintain and protect the Town's current environmental resources while it updates the Town's zoning and land use regulations and conducts the necessary SEQRA review related to such legislative changes;

5. Future Environmental Review and Implementation

The Town Board further finds that the Plan's Implementation Section outlines a range of potential actions, including:

- Updates to zoning and land use regulations;
- Consideration of conservation subdivision design and resource-based planning tools;
- Development of natural resource protection strategies and overlays;
- Infrastructure planning and investment decisions; and
- Continued coordination with regional and State programs.

Each such action, if undertaken, will be subject to separate SEQRA review, ensuring that:

- Site-specific environmental impacts are fully evaluated;
- Appropriate mitigation measures are identified; and
- Cumulative effects are considered in context.

And that:

- Any future implementation measures, including zoning amendments, subdivision regulations, infrastructure improvements, or site-specific development proposals, will be subject to independent SEQRA review;
- Such future reviews will evaluate site-specific, cumulative, and potential adverse environmental impacts, with appropriate mitigation measures identified as necessary; and
- The Comprehensive Plan will serve as a framework to guide environmentally responsible decision-making, including the use of land use tools such as conservation subdivision design, natural resource protection overlays, and context-sensitive development standards.

6. Environmental Benefits of the Plan

The Town Board finds that the Comprehensive Plan has the potential to result in environmental benefits, including:

- Enhanced protection of farmland and open space;
- Improved safeguarding of water resources, including Queechy Lake and its watershed, through the use of a conservation overlay district;
- Reduced development pressure on environmentally sensitive lands as shown on the environmental sensitivities map shown in the Plan;
- More efficient land use patterns that support hamlet vitality while preserving rural landscapes; and
- Increased integration of environmental considerations into future land use and infrastructure decisions.

7. SEQRA Determination

Based on the foregoing, the Town Board determines that the adoption of the Town of Canaan Comprehensive Plan will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts.

Accordingly, a Negative Declaration is hereby issued, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

The Town Board further finds that the Comprehensive Plan provides a proactive framework to guide future actions in a manner that avoids or minimizes environmental impacts, thereby supporting the goals and intent of SEQRA.