

## **Summary of 8-20-2009 Focus Group with Elected and Appointed Government Officials**

Town Government Members Present: Daniel Tompkin, Town Council; Larry Proper, Highway Dept.; Gray Davis, Planning Board; Gloria Lyons, Town Historian; Chris Quinby, Economic Advisory Board; Linda Gabaccia, Town Council; Bob Sacks, Town Council; Krista Goodacre, Park Commission; Ralph Platt, Park Commission; Mac Simms, former member of Zoning Board; Marcia Peteroy, Economic Advisory Board; Karen Hallenback, Ombudsman; Reggie Crowley, Supervisor/Town Council.

### Current Governmental Situation

High taxes without corresponding services

Scenic overlay is not business friendly

Zoning is too restrictive

Copake can no longer afford to resurface roads; no local gravel banks available

Copake, Ancram, and Hillsdale consolidate their highway equipment and expenditures.

Copake also cooperates with Taconic Hills and BOCES for equipment

### The General Situation

Too few jobs, too few bike trails

Many places are accessible from Copake

Seniors and young people are leaving because they cannot afford to live here anymore

lack public transportation

### Areas of Concern for Future Government

Need to improve Copake's grant writing/receipt record

Need to be more business friendly

Officials and citizens need better understanding of Copake's resources.

Tax incentives for business

What types of consolidation would be appropriate for us to consider?

Should talk with County Highway department to understand their plans for redoing roads, sidewalks, etc. in the downtown area.

need to implement GIS

Use Columbia County Land Conservancy

Use taxes to purchase land for conservation, to revitalize downtown

Study land trusts

Wind turbines would be helpful

Controlling outdoor wood-burning furnaces

### Areas of Concern for the General Situation

revitalize downtown

Increase tourism

Visitors are put off by the Housing Resources signs

Farmer's market

School should be used more

Newspaper, improve cell service

Use existing buildings for housing needs before building new ones