

**SUMMARY OF 11-10-09 SESSION WITH HOSPITALITY-TOURISM  
FOCUS GROUP**

Members of the Hospitality and Tourism Focus Group: Bill Gilbert, Catamount; Don Edwards, Catamount; David Valden, Church St. Deli; Adam Reenikoff, business consulting; Marcia Peteroy, Sunrise/Sunset B&B, Vincent Celleri and Julie Ann Mazzone, leasing the Underhill Inn; Sonia Colon, owner of Underhill Inn.

**Catamount**

Built in 1939 by Jack Fisher; Closed 1941-45; most snow, natural then; 9 rope tows. Made snow in 1953 (Gilbert and Edwards first year), 2nd public area to do so. Don and Bill took over in 1973--36 yrs of continuous operation. Best yr: 2008.

Tried summer operations: concerts, skiing, mountain biking -- did not attract enough people. Now have a ropes course with 120 items - did very well - 95% of people said they would return. 100,000 people come per yr., 12,000 in summer; 75-80% from NYS; 20%, NJ, Conn and Mass. 10-15% are weekenders.

200 employees in winter (6 months). Plan another chair lift. Hotel/Condo complex has been approved - not sure when construction will begin.

**Areas of Concern for the Future**

No signage directs people to Copake. No attractions here: theater, antiques, etc. Do citizens want people to come here?

Although 4-4.5 years required to get approval for Condo/Hotel complex, Board was supportive; process needs improvement.

Focus on the assets in Copake: golf course, Copake Lake although people have no access to the lake.

Need activities for kids along Routes 22 and 7: amusement park, go-kart park, water park. Expect more Inns, restaurants over next 15 years. Need more housing.

Car lots on south end of town are depressing.

What about farm tours? Consider ways to get people off the TSP into Copake.

Advertising for what is here needs improvement. Catamount would sponsor a bike race that ended in downtown Copake.

Pursue alternative energy sources.

**Church St. Deli**

David Valden has owned Church St. Deli for 13 yrs. Fire in 2005; reopened in 2007. Serves 3 meals/day, 7 days/week. 20 employees in summer; 12 in winter.

**Areas of Concern for the Future**

Street lighting is a problem. 7/7A is a confusing situation. better business signage would be helpful. More restaurants would help. Grocery store would be good. Doesn't want "smokestack" businesses here. Wants thriving downtown. Government may not be the entity to do "promotion" of the town.

### Underhill Inn

Sonia Colon bought Underhill Inn in 2004; considerable renovation done. Mr. Celleri and Ms. Mazzoni (Poughkeepsie) now operating on weekends and featuring Spanish food. Response has been good - expect to expand beyond current 28 seats.

#### Areas of Concern for the Future

Street lighting is a problem. Perceives that people here do not want more business and tourism.

Improved cell service, internet service. A drive-in somewhere.

### Sunset/Sunrise B&B

More than 40 B&Bs in Columbia County (Marcia Peteroy). Has been open 9-10 yrs. No skiers for past 3 years. Starting in August, 2008 economy hurting B&Bs. Does get some summer people who use Catamount.

Guests comment about Copake being depressed because of closed Roe-Jan School and "Stop Housing Project" signs. Guests go to Hudson and GB for theater and restaurants.

Promote local cheeses and wines. Farmer's market, wine tasting.

#### Areas of Concern for the Future

Cyclists should be encouraged. Develop a theater. Capitalize on Copake's natural surroundings.

Invite Chamber of Commerce and Columbia Council on the Arts to comment.

### Common areas of interest for the Future

Would more interaction among existing businesses be helpful?

Not sure people of Copake want growth in business and tourism.

Many comments imply a lack of vitality in Copake.

Suggested many possible new businesses keyed toward children and tourism.