

Minutes of the Comprehensive Planning Committee
March, 31, 2010, 7:00 pm
Copake Town Hall

Members Present: George Beneke, Bill Kiernan, Rus Davis, Marcia Becker, Frank Peteroy, Harvey Weber, Roberta Roll, Jeanne Mettler, Charles Dodson.

It was reported that the minutes from March 18th are not completed yet.

Mr. Dodson gave a report on his research into granting agencies. He had spoken to Margaret Irwin, who said that we should apply to four agencies to get the total sum we are looking for, as most agencies will not give the full amount requested. Mr. Dodson contacted two agencies about deadlines, as well as the topic of zoning revisions. As the CPC will request matching funds to Ag & Markets, it might be better to make our request for matching funds in May.

Ms. Mettler said she understood that we don't have to apply to the Town Board for new matching funds for the Ag. & Markets. The \$6,500 that would be required has already been distributed to us. We will ask Ag. & Markets if that can qualify. Mr. Dodson said that Rheinstrom Hill meets in May to decide on grants, so we should aim for a May 1st deadline. Ms. Mettler suggested we ask the Board to add us to their agenda for May. We also need a town resolution for the Ag. & Markets grant application.

We then discussed the Farmland Protection Strategies Report. Mr. Dodson said that since the report is by an expert intending to give us a list of possible ways to provide farmland protection, we could just accept this as a report. We can then choose what items we want to consider. Ms. Mettler said she wrote to Ms. Irwin, who said it was written as an enhanced section of the Community Profile, a consultant's report for our consideration when we move into the action part of the plan. It will become an appendix. She would like it if we were on board with it, but we should review it for blatant inaccuracies. Ms. Mettler and Mr. Kiernan reviewed and edited the first and second drafts. The first draft had a lot of editorial comment about residential development and was also critical of zoning with no references. Mr. Dodson said he would like to see more references throughout the report. He thought the strategies were excellent, but the naming of the maps was poor. He would like to see narratives about the maps. Dr. Beneke liked the concept of open farmland with parks, and keeping the corridors open. This may also be a subject for grant applications. Ms. Becker concurred, commenting on avoiding fragmentation. She also noted that the report made no mention of Camphill Village (p. 5), or conflicts with water bodies, e.g. the spreading and leaching of manure. In addition, she brought up the issue of farmers having more leeway with the use of wetlands. Dr. Beneke said that the Soil and Water Department has been providing funds to build fences to keep cattle out of wetlands and to make pathways for cattle. Both he and Mr. Kiernan noted that CAFO had guidelines, including water and air pollution, for any farm with over 700 cows. Mr. Dodson noted that the report refers to doing an inventory of farms. He would like to see the inclusion of farmland which is not in use, thus adding to active and fallow land. Ms. Becker mentioned the term "gentleman farms" and the fact that some farmland is leased. Various edits were made on the report and the grant application to Ag. & Markets. Mr. Peteroy brought up the Grange, saying it should be living up to its mission. Ms. Mettler

suggested adding it to the history section. There was some discussion of the 7,500 sq. ft. building limit (p. 11, 2nd. paragraph). Dr. Beneke and Ms. Becker interpreted it as encouraging the efficient use of farmland and density of the commercial zone. Ms. Roll agreed but thought we should ask Harry Dodson to clarify that section. Ms. Mettler read back the editorial changes and made the motion to approve the report, Dr. Beneke seconded and we approved it unanimously. We then reviewed the application to Ag. & Markets. Grammar and typo corrections will be submitted to Ms. Irwin. Ms. Becker noted that we should include the fact that we completed a groundwater study in Jan. 2009. Ms. Mettler concluded by saying that Ms. Irwin will draft a resolution for the town. We then reviewed and approved all the focus group reports except for the youth and police report, which is not complete.

We went on to discuss vision statements. Dr. Beneke read the goals and objectives from the 1972 Master Plan. Mr. Dodson asked if it was premature to do a vision statement. Ms. Roll said we need a vision in order to discuss objectives and goals. Mr. Dodson thought we had not absorbed the results of the survey enough. Ms. Roll concurred and she and Dr. Beneke said that we need to go back over the information in the survey and focus group reports to create the vision statement. Dr. Beneke suggested that communication might be something to incorporate into the vision. Ms. Roll said that people want community, a place for roots, to preserve ag., nature, open space, natural beauty. Mr. Weber mentioned being business-friendly. Ms. Roll suggested that was not exactly a vision, but perhaps the intent could be conveyed in a vision of a vibrant downtown where one could find a variety of shops to serve basic needs. Mr. Weber said that also builds community. Mr. Dodson said we ought to include the school, cooperation with the towns of Hillsdale and Ancram, strength and a sense of neighborhood. Ms. Roll added safe, friendly, and controlled growth. Dr. Beneke said that in the goals from the 1972 plan there was no mention of community. There was more divisiveness back then, but once the school was consolidated, that began to recede. However, it took many years to pass the school centralization initiative. Ms. Mettler commented that the seniors didn't want to pay. Dr. Beneke mentioned the clash between the second home owners and locals. Ms. Becker commented that another issue that caused conflict was early subdivisions. Dr. Beneke mentioned Taconic Shores. Mr. Dodson said that only 70% of towns and villages have a comp. plan. Ms. Mettler said that she would send our ideas, phrases and words to Ms. Irwin. Ms. Roll added enforced zoning and an attractive, beautiful town. Ms. Mettler said we will meet April 13th with Ms. Irwin and then on April 29th. She said we should make the CEAB part of our record. Dr. Beneke asked if it was perhaps time to go back to the survey. Mr. Dodson added the water study, and he also brought up the issue of the town code apart from zoning, saying this committee will not review zoning, but it might be helpful for the town to have a review of the whole town code. Ms. Mettler suggested we bring this up at our meeting with Ms. Irwin and ask her how much we need to know about it. Ms. Roll commented that we are not doing zoning or code now. Ms. Mettler said that most of us don't have enough knowledge about it. Mr. Peteroy suggested we might have a workshop on it. Ms. Roll asked if we really need to know the zoning for our process. Mr. Peteroy thought that if a certain type of use, e.g. business park, is suggested, we need to know about the land and the site. A proposed new business might not be described in the current list of uses. Ms. Becker added the

example of a helicopter pad, as has been proposed in Ancram. Dr. Beneke asked if we knew that there was a landing strip in Copake Lake. Mr. Peteroy said it's helpful to have as much information as possible. Ms. Mettler asked if we should give ourselves the homework of reviewing the zoning. It was generally agreed that we should begin to familiarize ourselves more with it. Other homework is to go over the surveys before our April 13th meeting. Mr. Dodson said that 3800 comments can be counted and then one can see which comments were repeated. Mr. Weber made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Mettler seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Roll