

Minutes of the Comprehensive Planning Committee
April 29, 2010 7:00pm
Copake Town Hall

Members Present: Charles Dodson, Roberta Roll, Bill Kiernan, Frank Peteroy, George Beneke, Jeanne Mettler, Rus Davis

Members Absent: Marcia Becker, Dan Haas

The minutes from Jan. 12, Mar. 31 and April 13th (with correction of a typo) were approved.

We noted that we need a revised task timeline from Margaret Irwin.

Ms. Mettler reported that the Ag. & Markets grant application was submitted. She talked to Supervisor Crowley, who contacted Senators Molinaro and Saland to obtain a letter from them in support of the grant application.

Mr. Dodson reported that the CPC grants subcommittee completed their grant applications with enthusiasm and vigor. Both were submitted and the Town Board passed the resolution required for the Greenway application. Greenway subsequently called and said they would not accept our application because the Town already had received a grant which was not closed out - vouchers had not been submitted. The Town clerk said she would send the vouchers; if they are submitted by May 6, our application will be reopened. Mr. Weber said that the vouchers were never received originally and that more had been sent by Greenway. (This grant was for \$2,400 for the groundwater study). Mr. Dodson had some thoughts about the duties of the grants committee, saying that it will research and submit grants, but someone has to administer them (write reports, follow-up, etc). Ms. Mettler said that she has been getting the calls from Ag. & Markets, Mr. Dodson has been getting the calls from Greenway, and that, perhaps, after we receive the funds we can set up the administration. Dr. Beneke reported that he had spent about 45 minutes with Ed Herrington, who said he had been approached a couple of times about the land in Copake currently owned by Housing Resources. They discussed the natural beauty of the area, the eyesores in some of the hamlets, including Copake, and the need to clean them up. He gave Mr. Herrington a copy of the Amenia plan with maps and spoke about getting sites shovel-ready in order to aid business. Regarding the Housing Resources land, Dr. Beneke reported that he and Mr. Herrington spoke about the possibilities of having some houses on that land, a street and bike path to connect the hamlet with the park and Town Hall. They also discussed farming, mentioning an organic farm on John Brusie's land in Boston Corners which yields \$35-40,000 per acre. Greenhouses might work on the land in Copake as well. Dr. Beneke was impressed with how well versed Mr. Herrington was about Copake.

Mr. Weber spoke about attending the movie "Fresh," which tells about organic vegetable and animal farming in Hardwick, VT. He plans to order the movie and have a showing in Copake. Dr. Beneke said that there are some corporate farms producing organic greens. Ms. Roll said that in contacting vendors for the farmers market in Copake, she has discovered that many towns in this area are initiating farmers markets, but that many of the local farmers and vendors either do not have the manpower or

enough product to provide all the venues. There is a big market for organic produce and meat, but more farms and more production are needed.

Mr. Dodson reported that he has been asking Steve Winkley for the raw data for the maps he produced, in order to have it for the archives for the GIS system. Also, he, Ms. Becker and Mr. Peteroy were at a presentation on the groundwater in C.C. given by Groundwater Resources and Local Planning in Columbia County. The groundwater report is fundamental to the CPC in regard to zoning. Knowing what the geology, water flow and replenishment rates are is essential for planning and development. He suggested that Mr. Winkley be asked to come give our committee a report, and said that he had told Mr. Winkley that May 20 would work, pending the committee's decision. We agreed to this date. Mr. Weber said that we are missing an aquifer study. Mr. Reynolds of the U.S. Geological Survey did an aquifer study of northern C.C. Mr. Dodson said that Russell Mead has been hired by Dutchess County as an expert on aquifers and groundwater. This will give towns alternative ways of thinking about growth and preservation based on geology. Any town in D.C. can apply for a free study. Mr. Mead is very knowledgeable and is available for consultations, but we don't have county funds for this. Mr. Peteroy suggested we write a letter to Supervisor Crowley asking how we could obtain funds. Mr. Weber suggested that Mr. Reynolds might come down for a specific purpose. Mr. Peteroy said that the philosophies are very different - Mr. Reynolds has a different kind of advice from Mr. Mead, who advises on how soil and water conditions impact zoning. Mr. Weber said the C.C. Environmental Council is trying to get an aquifer study for southern C.C. Ms. Mettler said she would invite Mr. Winkley for May 20 and asked if an hour would be adequate. Mr. Dodson said he told him 40 minutes, but we should plan on an hour. Ms. Mettler asked if we should invite Mr. Mead and Mr. Reynolds. Mr. Weber suggested we invite both, and he asked if we have Mr. Winkley's paper. Mr. Dodson said he would not give out the raw data, because his funds for the NYS Rural Water Assoc. come from the EPA, which has in-house rules about data sharing. Mr. Weber also mentioned the name of Roland Vosbergh at Environmental Management. Ms. Mettler said that it seemed that we could use all this information to make recommendations to the groundwater committee, which would then inform the implementation of the CPC. Mr. Dodson concurred, saying it will create a structure and rationale for development and density planning. He also anticipated using it as a goal or instruction for the zoning committee. Ms. Roll mentioned the maps that were created by Amenia for areas of future development. These maps were created after the CPC.

Ms. Mettler asked if we should meet with Mr. Winkley and wait on the others. Dr. Beneke said we need to stay on track and not get bogged down with two or three meetings with more experts. Mr. Peteroy said that we could get the ball rolling by writing a letter to Supervisor Crowley about obtaining funds [mentioned above]. Mr. Weber said he thought Karen Hallenbeck worked for the water dept. in Dutchess County. He will inquire about the water study program.

Ms. Mettler said our next meeting with Margaret Irwin will involve discussing the action plan. We scheduled this for May 25. Our other meetings will be May 11 and 20. We reviewed the recently received police dept. data. Mr. Peteroy handed out preliminary planning maps from the ATC - these are works in progress.

We then discussed our vision statements and the compilation that Ms. Irwin had made from each of our statements. We chose sentences we all liked in each category of planning; Ms. Mettler will send these to Ms. Irwin, who will refine them into a draft of our vision statement. Ms. Roll commented that it was enlightening and helpful to have read through all the comments in the survey. Mr. Beneke said that having done the above process, it felt like a path had opened up.

Ms. Mettler announced a meeting on climate change and action at Albany Law School for town officials. She said she would forward the notice to us and to the members of the Town Board.

Ms. Mettler made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Weber seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Roll