

Minutes of Comprehensive Planning Committee
May 12, 2009 7:30 pm
Copake Town Hall

Members Present: Frank Peteroy, George Beneke, Charles Dodson, Marcia Becker, Bill Kiernan, Russ Davis, Jeanne Mettler, Roberta Roll, Harvey Weber
Members Absent: Fiona Hutchinson

Minutes from the April 28 meeting were ammended to include the presence of Frank Peteroy, and approved.

Ms. Mettler indicated that she will talk to Ms. Hutchinson to see if she wants to continue on the committee. Mr. Dodson gave a report on the mailing procedures. Tools for identifying our target audience are the asessor and voter rolls. He noted that there are 2,173 registered voters and 2,172 parcel owners in Copake. The 2008 assessor roll is available; however, the 2009 roll will not be completely updated until July 1, 2009.

Mailworks can give us a permit number which is included in the overall price. If we do return postage, the permit costs \$180. We are set up with the artwork for the permit.

Tabulating results: The survey will be set up on Survey Monkey. We estimate 700 return responses. At 15 min. per survey, it would take six people 14.5 hours to tabulate results from 700 surveys. Students at Taconic Hills will help with the data input and be supervised by Cybil Howard at the school.

Printing folding and processing 2,600 copies and mailing 2,200 copies will cost about \$782. Postage costs will depend on zip code and will come to about \$836. The return postage permit is \$180, and the return postsage costs will be \$350 - \$420. (The posts office charges \$.75 a piece).

This brings the total costs to \$2,115 - \$2,215. It is possible that the town government could be classified as a non-profit entity by the post office; this would reduce the costs.

From the time Mailworks receives everything, it will be in the mail within five days.

Mr. Dodson went to Staples to get a second bid. They wanted \$2750 excluding all postage fees.

Mr. Davis mentioned that he had a 501C3, so the question arose as to whether we could be under that umbrella for our mailing. Ms. Becker suggested that we ask Kevin Thieman, the town attorney, and she will make the inquiry. Mr. Beneke made a motion to proceed with the mailing plan as outlined. He will research the possibility of non-profit mailing costs. Mr. Haas seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Mettler showed us the latest draft of the survey on line.

We discussed the cover letter. Mr. Dodson put forth the suggestion that we reduce the demographics and housing information to a few sentences which he composed, distilling information on: 1) population, 2) number of households, 3) median age, 4) high school diploma, 5) median house value, 6) median income. Mr. Beneke felt that the housing and demographics information is useful to show that Copake is a vital community and has the capacity to change. Mr. Haas and Ms. Roll thoughth that the occupations would be useful information. Mr. Beneke asked if information on median income was helpful. After some discussion, it was decided that we would add information on occupations, take out information on median income and keep the information on population, age, number of households, median house value and education.

We discussed and edited the cover letter, including removing Ms. Mettler's phone number and adding the website address. She will set up an email to respond to people's questions.

Mr. Peteroy suggested adding to the survey something about people's interests. After some discussion as to the importance and the question of space on the survey, we decided to add a question on this topic. We discussed the scheduling of the vision workshop - whether a weeknight or a weekend was more desirable. The possibility of having two meetings was raised. Ms. Mettler thought that it might be divisive to have two meetings, as this would make a distinction between weekenders and fulltime residents.

Some thought that there would be different visions coming out of the two groups, and others suggested that perhaps they would be similar. Other ideas for meeting times were two Saturdays, or one Friday night. We clearly need to think about this more and talk with Ms. Irwin at the next meeting.

Ms. Mettler brought up the topic of grants. She has the Ag. & Markets application. We should start completing it; they have an open, rolling application process, and the next round of awards will be in January. River Street will look it over. She asked if people were willing to work on grants. Mr. Davis, Ms. Roll and Ms. Mettler volunteered.

The topic of how to reach and listen to everyone in the town as it relates to final approval of the plan was raised. Mr. Dodson described the meeting in Ancram when the passage of their comp. plan was stalled by people saying that their views weren't represented (although some had not even read the plan). Mr. Davis said that others claimed they had no time to be involved. Mr. Beneke said he had talked to people in Ancram and Amenia who thought their plans were "elitist." We all agreed that it was extremely important to seek out this "silent, disgruntled" group (that exists in every community) and make sure we listen to them. We may also see some results from the survey that let us know which groups are not wanting to be involved.

We identified focus groups: boards and committees of town, town officials (these first two are not to be interviewed first), fire and rescue, businesses, farmers, realtors, school, churches, Camphill, COARC, camps, Taconic State Park, library. We agreed that we should go to them - on their home turf.

The next meeting is May 21 at 7:30 pm Margaret Irwin will be in attendance.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Weber, seconded by Ms. Roll and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Roll