

Notes from

September 27, 2017

Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

Present: Sandra Riker, Donna Beretta, Justin Steinbach Ron Smith, Dave Parsons, Carla Jordan, Bob Green, Sharon Lilla, Nicole Cleary, and Kris Monzel

Absent: Joann Rogers, Cat Cohen, and Liz Smith

Minutes: The minutes of August 16, 2017 were reviewed and approved as written to post on the Town Webpage.

Committee Meeting/Workshop:

Sharon and Nicole have provided us with a policy framework to work with to provide a unified format to be used by all sub committees. The group present has agreed to use the format presented. Carla asked if when the work is submitted would Barton & Loguidice review the work, and Sharon replied they would be acting as an objective third party and provide feedback to the group. Kris asked if the objective items section should be expanded to include detail. Sharon said no this section should be kept simple so it flows and leads the reader to more detail later in the document. She also mentioned the need for an Executive Summary providing the reader an easy format to interest them in reading further in the document.

To Do List

Sandy work on History

Sub-committees continue on topics and develop policy framework

Sub-committees provide drafts of already completed work to both Base Camp and Sharon for review prior to next meeting

Next Meeting: October 18th at 6:00 pm

Major topics: Assigned to them so far have been the following:

1. Environmental & Natural Resources-Liz, Ron, Carla, Kris and Cat
2. Agriculture-Justin, Carla, Dave, and Joann
3. Recreational Resources –Joann, Donna, and Kris
4. Infrastructure-Carla, Dave and Ron
5. Economic Development –Kris, Cat, Liz and Ron
6. Community Character, Facilities, and Services-Liz, Kris, and Cat

Nicole asked how the work was preceding in the sub groups. It was agreed that for some it has been a slow go what with summer activities, other commitments, and family. It was suggested going forward that all groups when meeting provide all members of the full panel the opportunity to join in and assist with the sub groups' work.

Nicole and Sharon asked that the information gathered to date be provided for their review and formatting into a master document that will be constantly changing as new work comes in for each topic. At that point the draft master document can be reviewed by the group as a whole and provide the opportunity for meaningful discussion regarding all issues found in each section. The comment was made a strong facilitator will be necessary for those meetings and Nicole and Sharon agreed to provide this service.

Review of draft format suggestions: Executive Summary can be used as a marketing document to encourage the reader to learn more about the Comprehensive Plan, its goal, objectives and priorities to be implemented. Priorities could be categorized by importance, urgency and time frames for completion. If done right the document will not sit on a shelf gathering dust but become a tool for the Planning, Zoning and Town Board as well as residents, perspective residents and communities around us. It would be good if the sub groups follow the proposed arrangement of topics.

Other Topics of discussion:

Kris suggested open space planning should be included under environmental and natural resources and inquired as to what is the difference between a conservation easement and PDR (Property Development Rights):

Conservation Easement-as defined by the Nature Conservancy on their website:

“A CONSERVATION EASEMENT IS A RESTRICTION PLACED ON A PIECE OF PROPERTY TO PROTECT ITS ASSOCIATED RESOURCES.

The easement is either voluntarily donated or sold by the landowner and constitutes a legally binding agreement that limits certain types of uses or prevents development from taking place on the land in perpetuity while the land remains in private hands.

Conservation easements protect land for future generations while allowing owners to retain many private property rights and to live on and use their land, at the same time potentially providing them with tax benefits.

In a conservation easement, a landowner voluntarily agrees to sell or donate certain rights associated with his or her property – often the right to subdivide or develop – and a private organization or public agency agrees to hold the right to enforce the landowner's promise not to exercise those rights. In essence, the rights are forfeited and no longer exist.

An easement selectively targets only those rights necessary to protect specific conservation values, such as water quality or migration routes, and is individually tailored to meet a landowner's needs. Because the land remains in private ownership, with the remainder of the rights intact, an easement property continues to provide economic benefits for the area in the form of jobs, economic activity and property taxes.

A conservation easement is legally binding, whether the property is sold or passed on to heirs. Because use is permanently restricted, land subject to a conservation easement may be worth less on the open market than comparable unrestricted and developable parcels. Sometimes conservation easements will enable the landowner to qualify for tax benefits in compliance with Internal Revenue Service rules.”

An example of this in the town of Bristol is lands owned by Joe Green sold to the Archeological Conservancy Group in 2015 on Tilton Road at the corner of County Road 2.

PDR (Property Development Right) excerpt taken from Planner’s Web article written January 2004:

“PDR programs are becoming increasingly popular because they offer substantial benefits to both communities and landowners. Many agricultural landowners are cash-poor: that is, they have a great deal of equity in land, but little income. By selling only their development rights, owners can convert some of the wealth tied up in their land into cash, without relinquishing ownership of the land or use of its productive capacity.

Landowners may use proceeds from a sale of development rights in any way they choose -- purchasing additional acreage, upgrading equipment, paying taxes, or investing for retirement. While proceeds of a PDR sale are taxable, depending upon state tax laws, selling development rights may offer significant tax savings by reducing the taxable value of the land, or by reducing future inheritance taxes.

For communities, PDR programs are a means to manage growth and provide the benefits of open space without the expense of purchasing, maintaining, and policing publicly-owned land. Preserving land can also save communities money in the long run, since development often costs more in public infrastructure and community services than the tax revenue realized by the growth.

PDR programs recognize that owners of undeveloped land provide valuable amenities to the community. Buying development rights from willing landowners provides a market-driven and compensatory approach to preserving those amenities, and an attractive option or addition to other forms of land management, such as zoning.”

Carla said that the lands involved in any agricultural PDR application must be reviewed by the County’s Agricultural Enhancement Board to determine alignment with the County’s Ag Enhancement Plan and objectives. This topic could be included under agriculture as an implementation action to protect sensitive lands in the town.

Dr, Gilman: Terry Saxby of the County Planning Department informed Carla that Dr. Gilman has been out doing his field research for the land use/land cover study for the town.

Park Grant-Supervisor Green said Tom Stevens has been putting in long hours on his SAMS Grant. The project started when Senator Funke suggested there might be money available for the town to refurbish Levi Corser Park. Tom went ahead and got estimates for work on the tennis court, track, and improving the 2 open pavilions. The estimates came in at \$65,000, or \$15,000 more than the SAMS money would provide. In order to go ahead with this project the town must pay for the improvements as approved by the State on their own and then apply for reimbursement from the State. The additional \$15,000 will need to come from other sources-Tom has suggested we could do fundraisers in the Park, as well as the Town Board finding some of the monies needed in the budget. In an effort to start this funding Tom is donating the second ½ of his yearly Town Councilman salary amounting to \$1400.

Unified Solar Permit-Supervisor Green said the \$2500. Stipend for completing the action amount under Cleaner Green Communities has been received as a result of Sandra Riker’s work to get the permit approved by the Town and then submitting the application in a timely fashion for payment through NYSERDA. She has asked that the monies go to help pay for the Comprehensive Group to have Barton and Loguidice act as consultants.

Next Group Meeting: will be on October 18th, 6:00 pm in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Riker

