

Comprehensive Plan Committee
May 7, 2007
Regular Meeting

Present: Art Bassin Jim Bryant, Nancy Broe, Don MacLean, Kyle Lougheed, Leah Wilcox, Monica Cleveland

Committee President Art Bassin called the regular meeting of the Comprehensive Plan Committee to order at 7:37pm.

Don MacLean moved to appoint Monica Cleveland scribe for the committee. Motion carried.

Mr. Bassin asked the committee what they felt should be the scope of the plan. He asked if they should only work on the Comprehensive Plan, or also plan to revise the existing zoning ordinances after the comprehensive Plan had been adopted by the Town.

Member Jim Bryant stated that he felt that the committee would have to do both. Members Wilcox and Lougheed were in agreement.

Member MacLean suggested we focus first on the Comprehensive Plan, and once the committee feels it is well on its way, then it could look at the zoning ordinances. He felt that zoning contains a lot of details, and if we start looking at zoning issues too early in the process, the Committee's thinking could be influenced and prevent the committee from looking at the broader Comprehensive Planning issues that need to be addressed prior to tackling the zoning revisions. He also thought that the Town Board would look at the budget cycles and that it will cost more to do both.

Member Bryant felt that the board will not allow a "sky" the limit" approach to the budget, but will pay more if they feel they are getting what they ask for. Member Wilcox suggested they start with land uses and definitions. Member MacLean stated that the town may get a better deal if they have a package.

Chair Bassin summed up the discussion by stating that the committee would begin the process with the Comprehensive Plan and in the future look at the zoning with a possible second committee for that job.

RFP Process

Bassin asked if the board felt they should ask Katherine Daniels for her input on a RFP or if they felt secure enough to do write one on their own. The Committee decided to draft a RFP on their own and use input from Daniels if needed. Member Wilcox stated that Daniels will work as a consultant herself, and she also suggested several consulting firms that she felt the town should look into. Member MacLean suggested speaking to other towns and find out who they have used. Member Bryant suggested that the RFP does not have to be an elaborate document. Member MacLean asked if the committee if the Town Attorney will look at the document. Member Bassin stated that he will be at the Town Board meeting and will have the attorney look at the document.

Evaluation Process

Member Bassin suggested that the consultant have technical knowledge of the process, is able to start and finish the project within the Town's timeframe, and has good references, preferably

from towns reasonably like Ancram in size and structure. The members suggested that the consultant have availability, be capable to do both the Comp Plan and Zoning, be reasonably priced, have worked with similar towns, exhibit access to ideas that may not be common, be open to alternatives, be able to listen to the town and the committee and be responsive and have a time table for the key milestones. Member Bassin stated that the committee will not sign the contract with the consulting firm without the Town Boards approval. Member MacLean reminded the committee that they have the power to have ideas but not of making the final decision. The Town Board will have the Public Hearing and will pass or not pass the plan.

Member Bassin stated that he will start an e-mail list of people who would like to have the monthly minutes. Member MacLean stated that E-mails among members should remain administrative.

Bassin suggested a member of the Committee should always be present at the Town Board Meetings. Bassin will speak to Diane Valden of the Independent about press coverage of the Comprehensive Planning Committee's efforts.

Member Bryant will look into possibly having a web site built for the Town of Ancram. This will allow the Committee meeting minutes to be posted online, as well as any notices.

The next monthly meeting will be held June 4, 2007 at 7:30pm. A public notice will be posted for each meeting. The meetings will possibly be held the first Monday of each month. Member MacLean asked that the public notices be sensitive to language.

A motion was made by member Bryant and seconded by member MacLean to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.