

**Town of Ancram  
Comprehensive Plan Committee  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
August 6, 2007**

**Present: Art Bassin, Jim Bryant, Barry Chase, Kyle Lougheed, Don MacLean, Leah Wilcox; Absent: Nancy Broe, Monica Cleveland**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM

Chair Bassin opened the meeting by introducing consultants Nan Stolzenburg and Don Meltz, the principals from Community Planning and Environmental Associates. Ms Stolzenburg provided an overview of the Comprehensive Planning process for the Committee and the 20 members of the community who attended the Committee Meeting. She said the Planning Process was divided into three phases.

Phase 1 would be learning as much about Ancram as possible through information collection, mapping, personal interviews, focus groups, collecting and analyzing demographic data, collecting financial, property and development information for the past 5-10 years. The objective of Phase 1 is to describe Ancram as best we can, and to give everyone a common starting point for understanding “where we are”. Phase 1 could take 6-9 months.

Phase 2 would be to create a vision and set of goals which define where the Community “wants to be” in 15-20 years. This Phase will take 3-4 months and will be based on Community input through “visioning workshops” and focus groups.

Phase 3 would be defining how to implement the vision and goals, describing “how we intend to get there” through a series of strategies, action plans and tactics.

Ms. Stolzenburg said that once the Comprehensive Plan Committee had completed the “Plan” in a year or so, it would formally present it to a public meeting for review and comment, and then to the Town Board, which would also present the Draft Comprehensive Plan to a public meeting and then to the County Planning Board for review and approval.

Following Ms. Stolzenburg’s remarks, Chair Bassin asked the Committee and members of the community attending the meeting for questions and comments. The questions and comments centered on how to create community awareness of the Planning Process, and participation in the process. Suggestions were made to provide newsletters, to post meeting notices in a variety of locations in the Town, to advertise meeting notices in the papers serving the community, holding weekend meetings so weekend residents could attend, and moving the site of the meeting to other parts of town to attract different groups. A question was asked about why the Town Board approved the Comprehensive Plan, instead of the Plan being approved by a referendum. The response was that NYS

Law required the Town Board to approve the Comprehensive Plan, and that Town Boards did not even have the discretion to permit a public referendum on the Plan.

Following Ms. Stolzenburg's comments, Chair Bassin asked for a motion on the prior minutes and the Agenda. A motion was made by Mr. Chase and seconded by Mr. Bryant to accept the prior meeting minutes from July 23 as read, subject to corrections, and the proposed Agenda for the 8/6 meeting. Motion carried.

Chair Bassin then announced that the contract language issues in the CPEA agreement had been worked out, and the contract had been approved by the Town Attorney. Mr. Bassin said he hoped to have the contract signed by Acting Town Supervisor Jerry Roberts this week.

The Committee then turned its focus to the "First Meeting Agenda" which had been received from Ms. Stolzenburg several weeks ago, to resolve any open issues on how we were going to move ahead with coordinating matters such as Committee-Consultant activities, preparing and managing the community survey and the survey mailing lists.

The Committee decided that emails between the Consultants and the Committee should be direct, and not go through the Committee Chair, and that any Press Releases or items that were to be posted on the website should be approved by the entire Committee.

The Committee decided that all Ancram residents will receive a written survey by mail, and will have the option to submit the survey online. Any adult in a household will be eligible to complete the community survey, and if the individual is not on either the voter records or the property owner data base, he will be able to request a survey from the Town Clerk. The Committee plans to integrate the Board of Elections voter list with the Real Property list to develop as complete a list of Ancram residents as possible. Ms. Stlozenburg reminded the Committee that regardless of which lists we used, it was likely that some people will not be on the list, and will have to be contacted directly if identified.

Ms. Stolzenburg will consult with the mailing house which will manage the survey process to determine how to prevent survey "fraud", and will circulate to the committee sample surveys so the Committee can begin the process of selecting questions for the survey.

The Committee decided that the first public workshop should precede the survey, and be used to describe the Comprehensive Planning process, lay out the events which are going to unfold over the next year, solicit the Community's opinions and respond to questions. The Committee decided that the build out analysis should also be done after the initial public workshop.

Based on suggestions from community members in the audience, the Committee decided to communicate information to the Community about the Comprehensive Planning

process through the Independent, the Register-Star, a periodic newsletter/calendar of events and posters in public places including the Fire House, the Taverns, the delis and restaurants in Ancram and Copake, at the Under Mountain Golf Course, at the Citgo on Route 3 and at the Copake Pharmacy.

The Committee then turned to the Town Data Collection Profile list, and reviewed where we are with assembling the information needed to write a Community Description and Profile. Committee members reported on their progress, and delivered the information they had collected. The Committee plans to complete the data gathering process by the end of August.

The Committee then focused on the next steps. The first major “next step” is the first Public Workshop, which the Committee needs to schedule and secure a location for. It is likely that the Ancram Fire House will be the appropriate location for that event. The committee concluded it was a good idea to hold the first public workshop once during the week and once on a weekend, so weekend residents and anyone who could not make the weekday event could participate in the second workshop.

The Committee then briefly discussed the proposal from the NYS Rural Water Association which had been previously discussed at the last meeting, and concluded that it was essential to conduct the ‘water study’ as presented.

The Committee discussed the need to coordinate a communications piece which distinguished between the Comprehensive Plan and the revaluation. Mr. Bryant commented he was scheduling some time with Bob Podris and Ken Leggett to focus on this issue, and hoped to have it sorted out by the end of the month.

The Committee touched on the Fiscal Impact Analysis paper Ms. Stolzenburg had circulated, and concluded there was nothing more that needed to be done at this stage with the FIA.

Chair Bassin commented he had received lists of “key people” who should be interviewed in person or in focus groups from all Committee Members, and said that the Committee would review the lists at the next meeting before deciding on the next steps in the interview process.

Mr. Bryant commented on the newsletter/calendar, indicating the upcoming meeting with Mr. Podris and Mr. Leggett it would be a critical next step in the development of the newsletter/calendar.

Mr. Bassin indicated he had received several more suggested additions to the Planning issues List, which would be included in the next version of the List. Mr. MacLean commented that the Planning List had been a convenient way to capture all the issues that had been raised over the past few months, many of which were really not “planning issues” and asked how the List could be used in the Planning process. Ms. Stolzenburg suggested it would be a useful inventory, and would allow us to compare the feedback

from the planned public workshops and surveys with the Planning List issues to see if there is overlap.

Mr. Bryant reported that the Town Website contract would be issued shortly and that the Town may have a website in a matter of weeks.

Under “new business” Mr. Bassin mentioned he had received contracts from the NYS Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Sharing Cooperative which would give Ancram the ability to access the NYS mapping data bases, which are crucial in developing the mapping information we will need for the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Bassin said he would ask Acting Town Supervisor Roberts to sign he contracts this week.

Chair Bassin announced that Committee Member Nancy Broe had submitted her resignation from the Committee because the demands of her business activities did not allow her the time to actively participate on the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Mr. Bassin said he would discuss Ms. Broe’s replacement with the Town Supervisor and Town Board, and suggested that Committee members also think about possible successors.

Mr. Bassin suggested the committee plan to meet again on 8/13, 8/20 and 8/27, and suggested Ms. Stolzenburg join the Committee the first Monday of each Month. Since the first Monday in September is Labor, Ms. Stolzenburg was going to check here calendar for later in September and in late August to determine when she would be able to join the Committee again. We tentatively scheduled 9/17 as the next meeting with Ms. Stolzenburg. (Note: After the meeting adjourned, it was decided that Ms. Stolzenburg would participate in the 8/20 meeting, which would be the “getting to know you” session.

A motion made by Mr. Lougheed, seconded by Mr. Chase to adjourn the meeting at 8.50.