

**TOWN OF GHENT  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE**

**30 OCTOBER 2007**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Chairman Jim Galvin. In attendance were members Larry Van Brunt, Phil Trowbridge, Aaron Groom, John Fishman, Nick Tipple, Gil Raab and Janice Fingar. Also in attendance were Town Attorney Ted Guterman, and Mike DeRusio and Ed VanOstrand of the Columbia County Department of Health. Absent were members Jonathan Walters, Frank Mendelson, Pete Nelson Sr., Jim Beal, Al Wassenhove and Kyle Wilber.

Columbia Department of Health

Messrs. DeRusio and VanOstrand, of the Columbia County Department of Health (CCHD) were in attendance, at the request of the Committee. They are specialized in evaluating potential building sites and permitting food services in commercial applications, and usually work with facilities discharging less than 1,000 gallons per day.

They noted that sites discharging between 1,000 and 10,000 gallons per day, while reviewed by the CCHD, must be permitted by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Generally speaking, any system that has surface discharge requires permitting by the DEC.

When questioned, the CCHD representatives stated that 450 gallons is the standard daily sewage discharge for a three bedroom house. Typically, sewage systems need to be placed at a depth of 4 feet, so the systems pipe is located two feet below the surface. Additionally, there normally is a 12-18 inch layer of permeable soil above the system.

A percolation test is conducted to determine what type of system (eg, sand or in-ground) will be required to determine the rate of drainage. A sand system is required for sites with shallow percolation; when more than 60 minutes is required for an inch water to drain away. These systems are typically in the \$30,000 range.

Sites such as multi-unit buildings, cluster housing or mobile home parks use a common waster water/sewage system. Any system that discharges 1,000 gallons or more daily into either surface or ground waters is governed by the DEC and requires a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit. It was also noted that common sewage systems require a substantial area of land.

Approximately 80% of new homes located within the Town of Ghent have 'fill' septic systems, rather than the 'traditional' in-ground septic system. The CCDH reps pointed out that the type of system required is based upon soil types at the site.

### Survey Results

According to Chairman Galvin, tabulations of the returned surveys won't be available until the December meeting. To date, 518 surveys have been received, which translates to a 28% return.

### Milestones

Profile and inventory documentation is being completed by the consulting firm of Community Planning & Environmental Associates. Maps and build-out analysis are currently being prepared by Don Meltz, Don Meltz Planning & GIS, and will also be available at the December meeting. Mr. Meltz is also entering the data from the surveys.

Committee members determined that focus groups should be formed after they have an opportunity to review the survey analysis. It was suggested that the Committee consider holding 2–3 focus groups/meetings be held January and February 2008, and be well-advertised so as to provide for maximum public input.

Chairman Galvin requested Committee members give some thought to possible sites where new businesses can be located. Additionally, he asked members to let him know if they would like to have other experts provide information.

### Next Meeting

Chairman Galvin will not be able to attend the Committee's next meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, 04 December 2007 and asked that Frank Mendelson be asked to stand-in.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.