

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman Jim Galvin. In attendance were members Larry VanBrunt, Nick Tipple, Janice Fingar, Jonathan Walters, Gil Raab, Frank Mendelson, John Fishman and Al Wassenhove. Also in attendance were Town Attorney Guterman, and Nan Stolzenburg, Community Planning & Environment Associates. Members Jim Beal, Pete Nelson Sr., Mark Clarke, Aaron Groom, Phil Trowbridge and Kyle Wilber were not present.

MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes from the 07 August 2007 meeting, conditional upon the inclusion of details of comments offered by attending members of the Public was made by Mr. VanBrunt, seconded by Mr. Walters. There were 8 yeas and 1 nay; the motion was carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Galvin suggested that the Committee hear public comments at the beginning of meetings, as is the norm for many other board and committee meetings.

Mr. Wassenhove suggested Public Comment should occur at both the beginning and end of the Committee meeting. With 2 yeas and 7 nays, Mr. Wassenhove's suggestion was voted down. Public Comment will take place at the beginning of Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings. Mr. Louis Snow spoke to the Board, questioning why the Town's survey was including the Rail Association which he stated is a private organization. He also spoke about the lack of locations for motorized vehicles. Mr. Sam Mottoshiski also spoke about the lack of sites for snowmobile trails. Mr. Alan Colwell asked if the 'rail trail' question is being removed from the survey. He questioned the effect of the 'rail trail' question on the survey. Mr. John Stark expressed concern about a 'rail trail' being in place as he is presently using the land for corn seeding, etcetera. He also asked why there are two rail trails.

STATUS OF INFORMATION GATHERING

Ms Stolzenburg reviewed items still requiring attention, such as police and fire coverage, duties of the Ghent Planning Board, availability of historical photos, county roads and water districts. She expects to have an updated profile available for the next meeting of the Committee.

FINALIZE SURVEY

Committee members reviewed the questions in numerical order. It was agreed to reword Questions 5, 9 and 14. Mr. Wassenhove also suggested that a question relating to the requirement of a licensed survey prior to any planning, zoning or building applications being made, should be included. It was agreed that Ms Stolzenburg will include such a question in the survey.

At Question 38, Mr. VanBrunt observed that at the 16 August 2007 Town Board meeting, it was the consensus of the members that concern and/or focus by the Comprehensive Plan Committee could be seen as validation by the Committee. He requested that there not be a separate Question 38; that Question 36 covers the material.

The question of re-opening discussion of Question 38, as it is presently written, was raised. There was a brief discussion. The Committee voted whether to re-open the Question, to drop or change it, or to leave it place as is. Six members voted to have Question 38 remain and 4 members voted to re-open the question. Question 38, relating to 'rail trails' will remain. Mr. Wassenhove removed himself from the meeting.

Town Attorney Guterman said that it's time for the Committee to move on, to set aside each other's opinions. Town Supervisor Larry Andrews, who was listening to the proceedings, stated that the rail trail question had been brought to the attention of the Town Board; that any discussion was not to be considered as a dictate from the Town Board. Messrs. Fishman and Mendelson stated their appreciation to Mr. Andrews for his input. Committee member VanBrunt said that the Town Board was neither pro nor con on the issue of the 'rail trail' question.

COMMUNITY DAY

Chairman Galvin informed the meeting that Ghent Community Day is being held Saturday, 29 September 2007. He would like to have the Comprehensive Plan Committee represented; to be available to answer questions, especially as the residents will have received the survey days before the event.

SURVEY

Per the August 2007 minutes, the survey will be mailed to Ghent residents, based upon the tax assessment roll. It was agreed the surveys will be sequentially numbered. Each mailing will contain a cover letter, one (1) numbered copy of the survey and a return envelope (without postage). A maximum of five (5) copies per household may be requested by calling the Ghent Town Clerk. People may either return the survey to the Town Clerk by mail, or a drop-off box at the Town Hall. The unopened, returned surveys will be forwarded to Ms Stolzenburg, for tabulation of the data.

Ms Barrie and Mr. Walters will review the cover letter, and the 'corrected' survey will be e-mailed to Committee members for immediate review, so to meet the timetable spoken about at the August meeting. Ms. Stolzenburg will cover immediate costs of printing and postage, with the understanding that she will be reimbursed in a timely fashion.

Mr. Mendelson will prepare a press release to be placed in local newspapers when the surveys are mailed.

EXPERT PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Galvin inquired if Committee members would be interested in 'expert presentations' being made at future meetings. Members requested additional information on public and private water and sewage issues, in terms of engineering requirements, environmental concerns, housing, public utility bonds, possible grants and cost effectiveness. Mr. Mendelson suggested the Committee might invite individuals who have 'gone through' the process of putting a comprehensive plan into action, to offer their suggestions.

Ms Stolzenburg said that the Committee should expect to hold a minimum of two (2) public hearing meetings. It is her experience that many residents will arrive with questions, and requesting information; that might be a time to invite 'experts' to speak.

NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, 02 October 2007, at the Ghent Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.