

**Town of Ancram**  
**Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting**  
**April 14, 2008**

**Present:** Art Bassin, Barry Chase, Gene Aleinikoff, Bonnie Hundt, Don MacLean, Chris Sommerhoff, Leah Wilcox

**Absent:** Jim Bryant, Kyle Lougheed

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The Comp Plan Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Art Bassin at 7 PM.

The revised minutes for the 3/24 meeting and the minutes of the 3/31 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Mr. Bassin reminded the Committee that it had an 8.15 PM meeting scheduled with the Ancram Fire Company at the Fire House.

**1. Draft Vision/Goals** -- Mr. Bassin reported that the drafts of the Vision and Goals had been revised extensively based on comments made by Committee members at the 3/31 meeting, had been re circulated to all Committee members during the first week in April, and had been “finalized” in draft form, allowing the 4/26 town meeting to proceed as planned.

**2. 4/26 Town Meeting:** The Committee discussed the planned 4/26 Town meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to bring the town up to date on Comp Plan progress, describe the major planning activities that have taken place, and to seek reactions to the draft Vision and Goals. Mr. Bassin indicated invitations to the 4/26 meeting along with a copy of the Vision Statement and Goals document had been mailed to all households and businesses in Ancram the prior week, and should have arrived by 4/12. The Committee agreed to finalize details for the 4/26 Town meeting at the next Committee meeting on 4/21.

**3. 4/11 Mill Committee** -- Mr. Bassin reported he had attended a meeting of the Mill Committee on 4/11, at which the Town and the Mill agreed to explore the possibility of the Mill buying Blass Memorial Park if all the details and issues on both sides could be worked out. The Mill would be interested in establishing a small pulp operation in Ancram to support its cigar paper business, and needs additional land to do this. The Town would require that the town pool and the playing fields in the Park be relocated to another location (perhaps around the Town Hall) as part of the deal, at no incremental cost to the Town. The Mill will start an engineering study on 4/24 to determine the feasibility of the project from their point of view, and a second meeting between the Town and the Mill will be held following the completion of the engineering study. The Comp Plan Committee has been asked to name a member to this Mill Committee. Mr. Bassin reported that Mr. Lougheed has expressed interest, and will explore this possibility with him when he returns.

**4. Community Contacts** – Mr. Bassin reported he had met with Neighbors Helping Neighbors and reviewed progress on the comp planning process, and had also met with the Copake Comprehensive Planning Committee to review Ancram’s approach and experience during the past year.

**5. Additional Planned Outreach Activities** – The Committee reaffirmed its intent to meet with DEC about gravel and the recently uncovered septage dumping problem on Sawchuck Road, and with the NYS Department of Transportation about speed limits and traffic safety issues. Ms. Wilcox will provide the contact information for DEC, and Mr. Bryant will provide the name of someone from DOT to contact. In addition, the Committee discussed plans to meet with farmers and large landowners, with the Long Lake and Rhoda Lake homeowners associations and with town officials (the Planning Board, ZBA, Highway Department, Building Department and Tax Assessors department). The Committee also discussed holding a meeting with residents of Boston Corners in Boston Corners. Mr. Bassin will explore that possibility and report back to the Committee next week.

**6. Next Committee Meeting:** There will be a regular committee meeting on 4/21. Nan Stolzenburg will be joining us. The Committee will focus on finalizing the 4/26 Town meeting agenda, reviewing the build out analysis, the strengths/weaknesses/challenges document and the draft of the Profile/Inventory document. If there are any additional cross tabs we feel are necessary, the 4/21 meeting would be the time to request them.

**7. Grants** – Mr. Bassin reported that we had not yet heard about either the Economic Development grant (\$21,000) or the Farmland Protection Planning Grant (\$25,000), but indicated we expected to hear by the end of the month assuming the state budget gets passed. (Note: On 4/16/08 the Committee received word that Ancram had been awarded the \$21,000 Economic Development Grant).

**8. Training** -- Mr. Bassin mentioned there were three training opportunities available for Committee members -- a 4 day Pace land use program, a Cornell biking and walking seminar and a main Street economic development seminar -- and solicited interest. No members were available to take advantage of the training.

The Committee adjourned at 7.40 PM.

**9. Fire Company Meeting** – Six members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee met with the Ancram Fire Company at 8.15 pm on 4/14. Comp Plan Committee Chair Art Bassin outlined the comp planning process and summarized the activities that had taken place over the past year. Mr. Bassin said that the information on which the plan was based came from the people of Ancram through the workshops, the survey and community meetings like this one with the fire company. Mr. Bassin said there was a lot of agreement among the people who responded to the surveys that protecting and preserving the environment and agriculture was very important to the future of Ancram, and most people wanted Ancram to stay pretty much as it was over the next 20 years, with some of the obvious problems fixed. The draft of the Vision and Goals which had

been mailed to everyone last week were based on the results of the workshops and the survey. Mr. Bassin asked if anyone had any comments or questions about the Vision and Goals, and asked if they made sense. Mr. Bassin also said that the Comp Plan Committee planned to adjust the Vision and Goals based on the feedback from the community meetings it was holding, and after the 4/26 Town meeting would start to develop strategies and action plans to implement the revised Vision and Goals.

Mr. Bryant commented that the last time a Comp Plan had been done in Ancram was in 1972, and also mentioned the Ancram effort was moving along at a fairly rapid pace compared to some towns around us, who have taken three or four years to do what Ancram has done in one year.

Questions and comments from fire company members indicated a general agreement with the Vision and Goals. Specific comments indicated support for affordable housing and economic development which could provide jobs and allow the next generation to continue to live and work in Ancram. Many of the specific questions from the fire company about what zoning changes might be enacted were deferred, as the Comp Plan Committee has not yet focused on the recommendations it will make regarding zoning changes. In addition, after the Comp Plan is completed, a “zoning commission” will be appointed by the Town board to do the actual review and revision of the town’s zoning and land use laws, to bring them into line with the new Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wilcox commented that the Comp Plan was important to have in place as a framework to legally support any changes to the town’s zoning that were necessary.