

**Town of Ancram
Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting with Town Board
April 20, 2009**

Comp Plan Committee Members present: Art Bassin, Suzanne Bressler, Barry Chase, Hugh Clark, Bonnie Hundt, Don MacLean, Jim Miller, Leah Wilcox

Others present: Sheila Clark, George Wiggers

1. Review Of 4/6 Minutes: The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes of the 4/6 meeting, deciding to incorporate Mr. Somerville's suggestions that noise and roadside trash be included in the Draft Plan.

2. Review of 4/13 Draft Minutes: The Committee reviewed and approved the 4/13 draft minutes subject to integrating them into the "official" town board minutes taken by Town Clerk Monica Cleveland.

3. Discussion of 4/13 Town Board-Comp Plan Committee Joint Meeting: The Committee discussed the following aspects of the 4/13 Town Board meeting:

- a) The Committee decided to use a one or two page "cover letter" of transmittal to the Town Board to incorporate the Board's suggestion to highlight the importance of Comp Plan implementation. Ms. Bressler suggested the Comprehensive Plan should be characterized as "A 20 year vision with a 5 year action plan". Mr. Chase and Mr. Clark both noted that the flow of the Plan worked well as it was, and it would be difficult to rearrange the document to bring the implementation section closer to the beginning without losing the logic of the flow.
- b) Mr. Chase commented that we should stress the short term, mid-term and long term implementation steps in the Plan.
- c) Ms. Bressler suggested that we continue to work with Town Board members to make sure any additional questions or concerns are identified and addressed.
- d) Mr. Miller suggested that after the Comp plan was delivered to the Board on 5/21, the Comp Plan Committee should plan support the TB in holding additional workshops and public hearings. He also noted it was time to start thinking about appointing the Zoning Revisions Committee, and working on the right to farm law. Mr. Miller indicated that call for volunteers for the ZRC Committee would be made by public notice. Mr. Bassin commented that the cost of the zoning revisions committee effort could be about \$25,000, but part of the Farmland Protection Plan grant and the CDBG grant could be used for zoning revisions, which would lower the Town's cost by \$10,000 to \$20,000.
- e) Ms. Wilcox suggested sending the Draft Plan to the NY State Department of Ag & Markets prior to 5/21, as the Columbia County Planning Board would suggest that be done. Mr. Bassin indicated he would check with John Brennan to see who in Ag &

Markets to send it to, and also suggested sending it to Marion Dunbar, the head of the Columbia County Ag Board. Ms. Wilcox also noted that while the Town Board was required by law to hold a Public Hearing within 90 days of receipt of the Comp Plan from the Comp Plan Committee, if implementation momentum was a priority, they could hold the public hearing much sooner -- on 10 days notice. Ms. Bressler suggested inserting the public notice in the new Columbia Paper.

4. Plan Opposition: Ms. Bressler reported that she had had conversations with several residents who had voiced concerns about the Comp Plan. These concerns included a) the comp plan Committee was not representative of the Community, but overrepresented large land owners and “upper class” people; b) that the Plan’s recommendations on the environment, vernal pools, protection of scenic views etc were not representative of the Community’s views; and c) that the money spent on the Comp Plan was a waste of \$60,000.

The Committee noted that these issues had come up before, and did not appear to represent the views of the majority of the Community. The Committee expressed a hope that those who oppose the Plan attend the Public Haring on 4/25 to express their views.

5. Public Hearing Procedures: The Committee discussed the agenda for the 4/25 Public Hearing and developed a set of guidelines (which are attached).

6. Draft Zoning Concept Map: The Committee reviewed the revised draft of the zoning concept map, and identified additional changes that should be made. Mr. Bassin will communicate these to Mr. Meltz. Mr. Bassin noted that he had discussed the proposed zoning changes on the western edge of the hamlet of Ancram with Mr. Sigler whose lands are impacted by the proposed changes, and Mr. Sigler was agreeable to the proposed changes. Mr. Bassin also reported he briefly discussed the proposed change on the eastern edge of the hamlet of Ancram with Keith Bendis, who indicated he and his neighbors would most likely have no objection to changing to an average lot size system from a minimum lot size, and might also be agreeable to being reclassified as agricultural and going to 3.5 acre average density from 2 acres. Mr. Bendis indicated he would review the documents and be back in touch.

7. Availability of Comp Plan: Mr. Bassin indicated he would have enough copies of the 85 page Volume 1 of the Comp Plan to hand out at the Public Hearing, but that the 300 page Volume 2 and the 27 color maps would be limited to about 6 copies that would be in the Town Hall conference room for public review. Mr. Bassin also reported several people had asked if they could buy a set of the color maps and Volume 2. The Committee agreed that after the Draft Comp Plan was finalized and presented to the Town Board in May, anyone who wanted to buy Volume 2 and the maps could put in an order, and we would get copies made.

8. Monitoring and Control of Development Rights: Mr. MacLean raised the issue of how the town would control which development rights went with which parcel when a lot was carved off which had the possibility of being further subdivided. The example Mr.

MacLean used was as follows: if a 35 acre parcel which could have 10 lots was subdivided into two 17.5 acre lots, and one of the 17.5 acre parcels was sold, who got the development rights on both parcels? The Committee concluded that the assumption would be that each 17.5 acre parcel would retain their 5 lots unless there were deed restrictions limiting development on one of the parcels, or a transfer of development rights negotiated to shift development rights to one parcel of the other. Ms Wilcox suggested that the PB would have to keep track of where the development rights go in situations like this, and commented that many Towns have had to deal with this issue, and that there had to be software available that made this less challenging than it seemed.

9. Grandfathering Existing Conditions: The Committee noted it had not dealt with grandfathering anywhere in the Plan, but assumed that would be dealt with in zoning. Mr. Bassin will check with Ms. Stolzenburg to see what kind of language, if any, should go in the Comp Plan about grandfathering.

10. Comp Plan Party: The Committee discussed the possibility of holding Comp Plan party to celebrate delivering a draft plan to the Town Board. The party will be held after 5/21, and we will arrange to do it at the Ancram Hotel, which serves the best pizza in the tri-state area. We will finalize plans for the party next time.

11. Next Meetings: The Public hearing will be on Saturday 4/25, following by a regular Comp Plan Committee meeting on 4/27.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Ancram Comprehensive Plan 4/25/09 Public Hearing Procedures

1. Notice of Public Hearing: The Public Hearing notice will be read. The Chair will comment briefly on the Comp Planning Process to date and next steps.

2. Sign In: All meeting participants will be asked to sign in as attendees. People who know they want to make comments will be also asked to sign up on the “comment sign-up sheet.” We will call on people in their order on the comment sign-up list. Anyone who decides to comment and who is not on the comment list should submit a card with his/her name on it.

3. Written Comments Anyone who does not wish to comment in person can fill out a comment card which will be read after the in-person comments have been made, or can comment by mail or email until Friday, May 8.

4. Comments From the Floor: After everyone who has signed up to comment has had a chance, the meeting will be opened up to take comments from the floor.

5. Public Hearing Rules:

- a. Comment period will be limited to 2 minutes per person;
- b. People making comments should stand up and introduce themselves with their name and address.
- c. Answers to questions may be deferred until all comments have been heard;
- d. No applause, booing, etc;

6. Recording the Public Hearing: Minutes will be taken, and the meeting will be videoed and transcribed.