

**Village of Chatham
2013 Comprehensive Plan**

NOTES

Meeting #4

July 10th, 7:00 p.m. Tracy Memorial Hall

Attending: K.Ellis, K.Kaczmar, L.Locke, M.Sarris, T. Curran

Absent: A. Gaylord, J. DelRossi

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- No comments on June 26th Meeting Notes.
 - Update since last meeting:
 - Zoning:
 - Lael, Ellen and Tom met with Jonathan Walters, Ghent Planning Board chairman, to discuss zoning in the Route 66 corridor. Ghent may be revising their zoning there, depending upon election outcomes in the fall. The concern is that the current commercial zoning only encourages permanent conversion of residences to commercial use, rather than retaining mixed uses. There are also common drainage concerns between the two municipalities.
 - This led to a discussion about the Historic Overzone, which extends to Blue Seal and other non-historic properties like Herringtons. Kevin points out that zoning should reflect the goals for the Village, as buildings change or come down. The overzone limits need not just reflect existing conditions.
 - Water:
 - Steve Winkley of the New York Rural Water Association will attend a meeting here next week with Lael, Ellen, Jonathan, and Tom. NYRWA has done water resource studies for many County towns, mostly with outside funding. He has funding now that would allow him to work in Chatham. We'll discuss issues that he can help with including wellhead protection.
 - Wendy Carroll has pointed us to water resource maps provided to the Town of Chatham through a Habitat Summary produced for them by the Hudson River Estuary Program.
 - "Main street" issues:
 - Lael and Ellen had a conference call with Norman Mintz, a planner known for his work on downtown revitalization. See [Project for Public Spaces | "Doctor Downtown" Norman Mintz to Rejoin the Staff of PPS](#) and [Project for Public Spaces | Norman Mintz](#) for information on his background. We

hope that he can attend and assist with a public meeting in the fall (October?) to focus on the business district, or “main street” kinds of issues. Norman feels the village has many advantages and that focusing on the “positives” is very important for taking action to improve conditions. The first meeting would call on public to discuss the village business district. We could employ the process known as “SWOT,” whereby you identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We need to involve CABA in the meeting and would like more participation from CABA members on this committee -- if not through additional members, at least through the committee’s efforts to communicate with CABA business owners.

- Before such a public meeting, the committee needs to do homework and gather more information about the village business district – facts and figures about business owners, building owners, rents and whether they are reasonable, what businesses are leaving, why businesses have left or will do so. Towards Norman Mintz’s point about emphasizing the positive, Ellen recommends the committee ask business owners to identify one or two loyal customers and ask them why DO support local businesses. Some people will always go to big box stores; we need to live with both realities. Hudson has competition from the strip malls but also supports “main street” businesses. There are other villages that are good examples to look at: e.g. Valatie. Also Millerton, which has experienced benefits from the Harlem Valley Rail Trail.
- The comprehensive plan committee membership is not yet stable. We need a committed group. Then it can be the role of committee members to involve other resource people or “stakeholders” on an ad hoc basis.
 - For example, Lael has reached out about the reuse of the school as a potential arts center. Melissa can do the leg work, speaking with Tom Chulak, Cheryl Nuciforo and others to brainstorm about an idea like this.
 - Each committee member can find an area that interests them, that they are passionate about, and/or have expertise in order to bring that information back to the committee. Karen can do this with CABA. Kevin could look at “green” zoning. We should discuss what outreach other members can undertake.
 - Some stakeholders or resource people mentioned: Rich Kraham, Parry Teasdale, Walter Simonsmeier, Cheryl Nuciforo, Muriel Faxon, the Patels, and Charron’s owners; senior citizens in re “aging-in-place” issues; Jonathan Walters, Rita Van Alstyne, Judy Rundell, Judy Grunberg. We should speak with the Town of Chatham re: parking, Crellin Park/Shari Franks, roads. Scott Wood; small, home-based business owners; big businesses like Sonoco Crellin.

- We need to understand more about the trend (a national one, but with local impact) of losing child-bearing age residents; the fire department is losing members; etc.
 - Should speak with the agricultural society about its role in the Village. Can more events assist the Village? Can we learn anything from Rhinebeck?
 - Are there more Village events we can do to animate it?
 - Parking: how real are the parking issues? Do we really know if it's the amount or the perception of lack of parking (a common occurrence)? Is enforcement a problem? Business owners using spaces?
 - Ellen points out that as open-ended or "murky" as this process has been so far, we are finding big headline issues that are emerging for the committee to focus upon: Business District; Route 66 Corridor zoning; water issues; school re-use/arts & culture.
- Next assignments: Karen, Melissa and Lael will gather information, per the meeting discussion. Kevin can look at zoning related to "green village" issues or define other areas of interest.
 - All members should consider what areas they specifically wish to work on, and come to the next meeting prepared to commit to that.
 - All members should continue to annotate the assignments to update 1995 goals and public improvements sections, if they have not already done it to confirm with Lael's example (sent to all by email.) We need Aaron's and Leo's assignments.
 - The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 7th, 7:00 p.m.
 - Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by E. Jouret-Epstein, July 11, 2013