

Minutes

Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force

Wednesday, March 27, 2019 7pm

Copake Town Hall

Attending: Roberta Roll, Alan Friedman, Andy Fisher, Peter Kelly, Tom Goldsworthy, Jeanne Mettler (Town Board Liaison). Absent: Lenny Barham

Minutes from the meeting of February 13, 2019 were approved with minor modifications.

Local Waterfront Revitalization Project (LWRP) - Roberta Roll reported that the Town had received the final version of the contract for receiving the New York State \$40,000 study grant. It has been executed by the Town, and we are awaiting counter-signature by the NY Department of State. Once received, the Town may hire a planning consultant to develop a waterfront revitalization plan for areas along the Roe Jan Kill. The Town has identified three experienced consultants who will be invited to bid on formulating the plan.

Proposed Brewery - The new brewery proposed by Frank Schroeder has yet to identify a location for the project. Roberta suggested both the Langdonhurst Farm and the vacant Copake railroad depot (at South Main Street and State Route 22), as available. Mr. Schroeder is in the process of raising funding for his project.

Copake Business Association - Roberta reported that Jill Sims-Elster, manager of the Bank of Greene County branch in Copake, is interested in advancing the formation of a local Business Association. She expects to arrange an afternoon meeting on a Tuesday or Wednesday at the end of April. To generate interest, Roberta or Jeanne Mettler will show a powerpoint presentation which mocks up a new website to promote the Business Association. Roberta will also arrange for Bob Haight to speak about the hamlet road improvements that are planned by the County Department of Public Works to begin in the next two years.

Historic District Designation - After prior talks with Bill Krattinger of the NYS Department of Historic Preservation, the Task Force agreed that Main Street in the Hamlet from the Clock to Farm Road may have historic district potential. If so, certain tax benefits may be available. Tom Goldsworthy will assemble some general background information about historic districts, their benefits and requirements, so that an information brochure may be distributed to property owners and a conversation begun about potential next steps.

Columbia Economic Development Corp (CEDC) - Andy Fisher reported after consultation with the CEDC, he feels that the focus of most of the CEDC's work is on industrial and commercial development that is not really applicable to Copake. He suggested that

rather than wait for CEDC to bring us projects, it would be best for the Task Force to initiate and pursue its own projects, and if appropriate contact CEDC at a later date.

Local Economic Development Funding - The Task Force brainstormed on ways that private funds could be generated to invest in local economic development projects, including ways to attract new businesses to the Town. The discussion debated the pros and cons of for-profit investment funds, vs the formation of non-profit community betterment organizations. Such investments would need to appeal to local funding sources who would likely have an emotional attachment to seeing Copake thrive. Jeanne suggested that the Task Force focus on a specific project that would make it easier for interested parties to appreciate the need, and whatever vehicle is set up for this purpose may be expanded for future projects if successful. It was agreed that the vacant Copake Railroad Depot (at South Main Street and State Route 22) would be an ideal candidate for an economic development project because (a) it is a part of Copake history in need of preservation, (b) it is a unique property, (c) it has a visible location at the entrance to Town from Route 22, (d) it has 8 acres and therefore room for expansion, (e) it is currently for sale for \$49,000. Task Force members will start to consider what type of project should be initiated here, as well as begin to identify people who might be interested in helping fund it.

The next meeting of the Task Force will be held on April 24, 2019, at 7:00 PM at Copake Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Goldsworthy