

Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force
May 24, 2016

Present: Andy Fischer, Peter Kelly, Jennifer Redman, Roberta Roll

Absent: Lenny Barham, Tom Goldsworthy

Town Board Liason: Jeanne Mettler

Guest: Chris Quinby, Brenda Adams of Habitat for Humanity

Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes with changes as discussed from May 10, 2017. The minutes are approved.

Copake Memorial Park Anniversary Celebration

To mark the 35th Anniversary of the Copake Memorial Park, the Copake Parks and Recreation Commission is planning an all-day, town-wide celebration to be held on Saturday, August 5. Committee members approached local businesses regarding their participation and sponsorship in the event.

Habitat For Humanity

Brenda Adams, Executive Director of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity (“H4H”), attended the meeting to provide the committee members with an overview of H4H programs.

H4H’s primary program is the new construction of affordable homes. When building homes in the county, H4H has a goal of keeping its housing affordable in the long term by producing homes that have low energy/operating costs and low interest mortgages. Currently, H4H is building homes that use 90% less energy, which results in heating costs of less than \$300 annually. The organization’s model is to build newly constructed home and their goal is to have all future new homes be passive homes. Architect Dennis Wedlick donated his design for a prototype passive home for H4H.

Purchasers of the H4H homes must contribute 300 hours of sweat equity as their contribution to the home’s affordability. H4H also prepares its purchasers to be responsible homeowners by designating an advocate for each family. Homes are currently being built in Valatie and Ancram and applications are available for the former Callan Center in Copake.

There is no other for sale affordable housing developer in Columbia County and applications for H4H’s homes have quadrupled in seven years. Habitat builds homes in

which its out of pocket costs do not exceed \$150,000, not including donated time and materials. H4H's goal is to build 12 houses in the next 5 years. Applicants are selected based on need.

Ways that Copake could encourage future H4H building in the town include advising H4H of homes in foreclosure where the families have already vacated the home. Donations of land and other costs in a location would encourage H4H to build in a community, for example, the homes being built in Ancram are being constructed on donated land and the cost of the well and septic system.

Other than building new homes, H4H operates two other programs – Brush With Kindness and its ReStore retail store. A Brush With Kindness works with local agencies to identify senior homeowners who need help to make modest exterior repairs or accessibility improvements so they can stay in their homes safely. ReStore sells donated new and lightly-used furniture, home goods and materials at discounted prices. ReStore's proceeds support home construction programs.

Copake Business/Event Promotion

The committee discussed other events to promote businesses in Copake and also promoting those events in social media and otherwise. Members were encouraged to check out the Hillsdale Facebook page as an example. The Copake Connection, the CHRTF's email newsletter, could possibly be formatted or distributed differently.

CHRTF members will be meeting with the Columbia Economic Development Corporation on June 15th.

CHRTF Meetings

The committee has decided to change its meetings to one time per month on the 4th Wednesday of each month.

Repair Cafe

The committee discussed the purchase of materials so that a repair café could be opened in Copake. More discussion on this topic is needed to better understand how it would work and where the café could be hosted.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 28th, 2017.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Redman