

Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force

Minutes

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

- Present: Roberta Roll, Lenny Barham, Andy Fisher, Tom Goldsworthy, Peter Kelly and Jeanne Mettler (Town Board Liaison)
- Absent: Jenn Redman

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- Minutes of the 5/24/17 meeting were tabled until next time.
- **Copake Memorial Park Celebration Day (August 5)** - Roberta Roll reported on local businesses that will participate in special offers to celebrate the park's 35th anniversary. Participants will include Copake Front Porch Market, Church Street Deli, Copake Wine Works, and Studio 5400. From noon until 4 PM, the Copake Grange Hall will host music and an Art Show featuring local artists, organized by Slink Moss.
- **Historic District Designation** - Peter Kelly is researching information about, and possible sites that could be included in an Historic District designation. On July 6, he plans to meet with Bill Krattinger, the staff member assigned to Columbia County from the National Register Unit of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), to discuss registration requirements. Currently the Town Clock, the Methodist Church, the Grange Hall are designated buildings. We will hear what he has to say about other buildings or possible districts. Peter will also connect with Howard Blue, Copake's historian, to gather seek out information that might be helpful in regard to the Octagonal House.
- **Bike Copake** - Tom Goldsworthy reported on progress so far relating to this year's Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour, set for September 23. Registration opened effective June 15. A new website has been created at [www.roejanramble.org](http://www.roejanramble.org) about the event, which also promotes the area, and may be useful for promoting biking in Copake in general. A survey of last year's participants indicated that 22% had never or only rarely visited Copake before, and 20% had never ridden the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Roberta suggested that Bike Copake could organize "MeetUp"s to schedule informal rides through Town on an ongoing basis.
- **Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)** - In conjunction with the Task Force's efforts to build a Rail Trail "spur" from the Harlem Valley Rail Trail into the Hamlet, the State has provided a \$40,000 grant to study the project. Roberta reported that a Mr. Winship has been assigned to review the work order. When approved, we can then proceed on the steps needed for the Town to hire a planning consultant.

Separately, Jeanne Mettler reported that she and Supervisor Jeff Nayer met with three members of the NY State Department of Transportation, Lisa Mondello, Chris Leigh and Regional Director Joe Visconti, to discuss how the spur could cross State Route 22. The Task Force has proposed using an abandoned "cow tunnel" that currently exists under State Route 22. The representatives stated that the cow tunnel is not large enough to meet current state guidelines for pedestrian or bike access, and would

require expensive modifications. Jeanne will contact Doug Clark, former Copake Town Engineer to get further input on what designs would work and may cost. Andy Fisher suggested that it might be helpful if the planning consultant could identify the economic benefit that would result to the Town from the Rail Trail Spur.

**Former Roe Jan School** - Andy gave an update on his efforts to attract a developer to convert the abandoned school into a green energy or senior housing facility. He will call 2 other developers he knows and an architect who has worked on similar projects.

- **Housing & Development** - Brenda Adams, Director of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity held an informational meeting at the Copake Grange to encourage residential applications for Habitat projects. Habitat recently completed a house renovation in Ancram, and has identified the former Callan Center on the corner of Mountain View & Farm Road in Copake as its next project. It would be helpful if the Task Force could identify other properties that could be redeveloped as housing by Habitat or other developers. Tom volunteered to obtain a list of properties in foreclosure. Roberta suggested it might be helpful to have a local real estate agent meet with the Task Force to give us an overview of the market, and properties for sale that might be good candidates for redevelopment.
- **Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC)** - Roberta, Andy, Tom and Jeanne met with Director Mike Tucker, Chairman Tony Jones, and Martha Lane at the CEDC on June 15. Mike Tucker suggested that the Task Force prepare an “inventory” of buildings and land in Town that would be available for commercial use, and identify the uses that would be desirable to attract to the area. The Task Force should also try to determine the “needs” of businesses that would could be addressed to encourage further investment. Unlike other CEDC projects, there is no industrial sector in Copake, so economic development will need to take the form of agricultural or retail/ service businesses that could be developed. Mike Tucker suggested that since Copake is small, it might present an ideal “pilot case study” on how economic development could occur in a rural area. We also discussed transportation - the lack of and need for public/group transport between towns. Roberta will contact Mike to arrange a “drive around” to introduce him to Copake and educate him further.

Next meeting is scheduled for July 26 at 7:00 pm at Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Goldsworthy