

Attendees: Roberta Roll, Jeanne Mettler, Chris Quinby, Nancy Schultz, John Pollok

Absent: Rus Davis

Grants

First Niagara grant – Nancy is ramping up to do the final grant for the hamlet plan. Because it will be submitted by Copake Community Service Inc. it will require development of additional background information. Hopefully it will be ready for sharing with the CCS board by the 5/8 meeting.

USDA Grant – John Pollok has become aware of a new grant program for small farming communities under 20000 people. This grant supports projects for water, sewer, housing, health clinics and emergency services. There will be a presentation at the library tomorrow, April 25. John, Chris and Jeanne will attend.

Rapid Care

CMH meeting – Roberta and Jeanne met with Steve Anderson, who manages the CMH practice, (lives on Twin Bridges Road in Copake) and Vince Dingman, the CFO. We shared information and toured the two options for a rapid care center in Copake at the Fairpoint office building and the Rescue Squad. It appears their favored option is the Rescue Squad Building. The ceilings at the Fairpoint building are too low for their needs. Roberta and Jeanne discussed the plan for developing the Great Field. CMH would like more information about broadband in the area. We need them to tell us what their broadband requirements are.

Next steps: CMH will bring their architect down to look at the Rescue Squad building. It will likely be a \$500K investment despite the offer of a one year free rent. It will be several weeks before we hear back from them again.

The Great Field

Bob Bernstein, Principal, Northeast Farm Access, 603-209-2000, bob@nefarmaccess.com, www.nefarmaccess.com was present.

This group has a binder on the Great Field and is hoping to get to contract soon.

Their mission is to work with social investors to improve access to farm land for existing farmers. (Agriculturally, environmentally and socially)

Northeast Farm Access is a four month old LLC with 6 people working as consultants.

Bob has 40 years experience in this area, starting with a not for profit organization called 'Land for Good', which depended on government grants and donations.

They work with farm seekers, buy or lease land, and help farmers with succession planning. They conduct workshops with landowners on how to make their land available for farmers.

They seek equity building opportunities with a base farm augmented with additional leased properties.

A parcel the size of the Great Field creates an opportunity for a multi operator environment. The public aspect of the Great Field is very appealing to them.

They stress organic, biodynamic production like Camp Hill Village and Hawthorne Valley Farm.

Their programming includes a diversified farm operation with small amounts of various products.

Their financial needs support educational programming with agricultural tourism and lodging and potentially seasonal festivals.

They are considering a CLC conservation easement for the non-farming parts of the operation.

Their timetable is to own the property in one to two months and keep it in a cover crop for 3 years. Short term they have a contract with John Langdon for cover cropping the field for weed management. Possibly they will build a barn.

There is one investor. Bob is interested in separating off some land for expanding the hamlet but ultimately that will be the decision of the investor.

We can interact with Karen, Bob's designer, as we proceed with the hamlet plan.

Bike Copake Brochure

Expenses

\$450 Brochure

\$250 Designer

\$113 Food

\$813 Total

\$187 Remaining funds

We paid for 2500 brochures and they printed 3000.

We will save the water for our next event.

Jeanne will get more plastic holders for the brochures.

Our bike initiative was added to the web site on a tab called 'recreation'.

Bike Event

The weather wasn't ideal but we have good momentum for this first annual event. There were 12 to 15 high wheelers. A number of regular bike riders joined the ride with the antique riders. We had four volunteers and will need a lot more help next year. The antique bikers seemed to enjoy the special welcome and the organizer definitely wants to do it next year.

We will put pictures on another Copake Connection in mid May.

Other

New idea - Adult day care. John will contact the people who run adult day care in Florida to learn more.

We need signage for the north entrance. It will be part of the hamlet plan.

There is an adult learning institute program at CGCC is tomorrow, April 25, discussing small town revitalization through small town enterprises, general stores, etc.

Roberta e-mailed Fiona about the block party and has not heard back.

Roberta talked to Steve Tiger about the Hillsdale business directory. It will be published in 2 to 3 weeks. They have 62 businesses listed. The Hillsdale people haven't talked about a Roe Jan Area brochure. Roberta will talk to Ken and Kevin about a Roe Jan brochure.

John will find out who Hillsdale sent their hamlet RFP to.

Diane Wilson, of Friends of Copake is exploring what it will take to designate Copake as a historic district. When this was last discussed with NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation they were put off by all of the abandoned buildings in the hamlet and said no. She is going to try again.

At the next town board meeting they will appoint a Conservation Advisory Committee. One prong is historic preservation. We need to analyze it more but maybe the issue should be referred to the CAC.

Town government – There is discord around the planning board, zoning board and building department because some people feel they are disrespectful to the public. It is within our mission to change the mentality and perception. This hurts our efforts with CMH and other economic development efforts. Roberta suggests a retreat with a facilitator or meeting with each board. Let's brainstorm about this again in 2 weeks.

Nancy Schultz