

Minutes

Copake Hamlet Revitalization Task Force
Wednesday, May 13, 2020 3:30pm
via Zoom

In attendance were: Roberta Roll (Chair), Lenny Barham, Andy Fisher, Alan Friedman, Tom Goldsworthy, Peter Kelly, Richard Wolf (Town Board Liaison), and Paulette Bonnano (Guest)

Minutes from the February 26, 2020 meeting were approved as drafted.

Report on Local Waterfront Revitalization Project (LWRP)

The Town's consultants from River Street Planning & Development and Place Alliance ran a public workshop at Copake Town Hall February 22, 2020 to gather input to plan for waterfront improvements to the Bash Bish Creek, Roe Jan Kill and Taghanick Creek. It was well attended by about 70 people. An informational website is up and running at www.copakewaterfronts.org

River Street Planning & Development has donated time gratis to help us meet the State's matching funds requirement. Fred Landa is our liaison with New York State Department of State which is administering the LWRP grant. Since our first payment request was denied, River Street has offered to contribute more donated time, which will comprise most of the match. Roberta has submitted this information to the contracts office at DOS for approval before sending in a new payment request.

Because of the pandemic restrictions, there may be a delay in timing of issuing the consultant's plan, which we hope will be completed by end of year. The state grant requires work to be completed by March 2021. We have formed one volunteer community group covering 4 or 5 project topics to receive their input. The topics are environmental resilience, fishing access, bicycle and walking recreational trails, and access from the Library to the Roe Jan Kill. Once the draft plan is complete, another public meeting will be scheduled for a final round of comment or input.

Lenny will contact the Roe Jan Community Library's Librarian to get information about the Library's plans for access to the Roe Jan Kill that could be included in the LWRP.

Ancram Economic Roundtable

This meeting scheduled for March 7 was cancelled due to lack of enrollment.

Copake Economic Development Advisory Committee

In March, the Town solicited applications for members to this newly formed committee. An update on next steps is on the agenda for the next Town Board meeting.

Grange Clean-up Day

The clean up day was held on April 25, with Grange members picking up roadside trash independently, and socially distant, throughout town. It was nice show of community spirit.

Historic District Planning

Tom Goldsworthy will draft a brochure about the benefits of and FAQs about establishing historic district designations to encourage preservation of historic structures in Town. He hopes to have materials that may be distributed to property owners by Labor Day.

Copake Events

A proposed Hamlet Summer Block Party will not be held due to NY State restrictions during the pandemic. The Roe Jan Ramble Bike Tour has been scheduled for Saturday, September 12, 2020. Planning is currently on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions prohibiting large group recreational events. It will be considered when and if restrictions are scheduled to be lifted.

Vacant or For Sale Buildings

Several buildings in the center of town are vacant or listed for sale. The Task Force would like to find ways to revive these properties. They are:

- The vacant blue building (168 County Route 7A - tax map 187.1-1-42) next to Copake Inn is for sale. It sits on 0.37 acres. It might be a good site for a municipal parking lot.
- The former Kneller Insurance building (on Church Street next to the Sunoco - tax map 187.1-1-5) is vacant and available for rent.
- Copake Wine Works (69 Main Street - tax map 187.1-1-21) has rear offices that are vacant.
- The blue house at 1643 Church Street (tax map 187.1-1-7) has been foreclosed on. Peter will find out which bank owns it.
- Copake Railroad Depot on County Route 7A (tax map 187.1-2-10.100) across from High Voltage at the south entrance to town is vacant and still for sale.
- Copake Inn (170 County Route 7A - tax map 187.1-1-41), across from the General Store, did not receive a liquor license and there has been no change in status of the use of this building.

Other Business

Task Force members anecdotally observed that there appears to be a rise in real estate transactions resulting in home sales and rentals as people seek out Copake as a safe and healthy environment during the pandemic. The Task Force will seek out these new residents to connect with them and encourage them to get involved in the Town. Roberta will draft a welcome letter.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm. The next meeting will be held via Zoom on June 24 at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Goldsworthy