

TOWN OF ROCHESTER

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Town Clerk 626-7384
Supervisor 626-3043
Highway Dept 626-7221
Assessor 626-0920
Transfer Station 626-5273



Code Enforcement 626-2433
Planning Board 626-2434
Zoning Board 626-2434
Court House 626-2522
Youth Commission 626-2115

August 6, 2007

Pam Duke, Supervisor
Town of Rochester

RE: Report from Code Task Force

Supervisor Duke and Councilmen Gray, Miller, Santosky, and Spano:

The Code Task Force is pleased to issue our report relating to the Codes of the Town of Rochester.

The Task Force was created first as a Subcommittee to the Planning and Zoning Committee in March 2006. After adoption by the Town Board of the Comprehensive Plan, the Task Force was created by resolution of the Town Board in December 2006. Shepstone Management Company and Chazen Associates were retained as consultants to the committee

Appointed were:

Michael Baden, chair	member of the Planning/Zoning Committee
John Dawson, co-chair	member of the Planning/Zoning Committee
Steven Fornal, co-chair	Planning Board Chair
Albert "Jerry" Davis	Code Enforcement Officer
William DeGraw	Town alternate representative Ulster County Planning Board
Marijane Knudsen	ZBA Chair
Beverly Schoonmaker	retired Planning Board and ZBA secretary
Brenda Striano	Code Enforcement office secretary

The Task Force began a preliminary review process of Chapter 125 and Chapter 140 of the Code of the Town of Rochester specifically as well as additional Codes. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Task Force began a more thorough and detailed review of the Code and Zoning Map. During the 17 month period that has elapsed, the Task Force has held 37 public workshop meetings totalling over 100 meeting hours. Each workshop meeting allowed and encouraged public participation. In addition, two public information meetings were held in April 2007 and two public information meetings were held in July 2007 to present the draft laws and zoning map and to gather questions and comments from residents. The Code Task Force met in 2006 and again in 2007 with Dennis Doyle, Ulster County Planning Director. In coordinating the review, the Task Force took into account the visions of the Imagine Rochester workshop, the Comprehensive Plans of 1969 and 2006, a 2006 study and report from the New York Rural Water Association, modern common planning and zoning practices, DEC regulations and practices, County and State regulations and practices, the experience of its members and consultants, as well as many, many comments, concerns, and questions from Rochester residents. Our report is not merely a template or form code with Town of Rochester inserted, but rather the result of careful, detailed, realistic study of the Town..

The Task Force would like to acknowledge all who assisted us in our endeavour:

The Highway Superintendent, Assessor's office, Town Clerk's office, Supervisor's office, Code Enforcement office, Planning and Zoning office, and the ECC all of whom supplied assistance or information along the course of our review.

Our consultant, Tom Shepstone, for his expertise, knowledge, humor, wit, and patience.

And especially to the people of Rochester.
Thank You!

By unanimous agreement the Code Task Force submits these specific recommendations to the Town Board

1. The Town Board repeal Chapters 125 (Subdivision), 130 (Telecommunications), and 140 (Zoning) of the Code of the Town of Rochester.
2. The Town Board repeal the Zoning Map of the Town of Rochester.
3. The Town Board create new Chapters 125 (Subdivision) and 140 (Zoning) of the Code of the Town of Rochester using the submitted text.
4. The Town Board establish a new Zoning Map using the submitted mapping.
5. The Town Board, after discussion and consultation with the Planning Board, Chazen Associates, and Shepstone Management Company, create a Subdivision checklist, Site Plan checklist, and Special Use Permit checklist to aid both the applicant and the Planning Board in the review process. This should be reviewed and updated periodically.
6. The Town Board, after discussion and consultation with the Planning Board, Chazen Associates, and Shepstone Management Company, establish thresholds as to when the Town Planner and/or Engineer be utilized to review Planning Board applications. It is important that the Planning Board be able to request this whenever they feel the need. These thresholds should be reviewed and updated periodically.
7. The Town Board, upon adoption of these sections, schedule training session(s) for the Code Enforcement Office, Planning Board, ZBA, the Planning Board and ZBA secretary, a representative from Chazen Associates, and any others the Town Board feels would benefit from this training. We would recommend Shepstone Management Company provide this training and that the Ulster County Planning Director be invited to attend.
8. The Town Board continue the Code Task Force. Our review of the Town Codes and public comments and questions, have revealed other areas which we feel warrant further review and discussion. Issues such as wetlands, outdoor wood furnaces, noise, junk and trash, road specifications, child safety zones, and others require more review and consideration before any recommendations can be made. The Task Force would like to take a short recess after our 17 months of effort and continue these discussions at a later time.

Michael Baden, chair
Code Task Force