

Meeting Notes for Town Board &
 Planning & Zoning Committee March 8, 2006
 7:00 p.m., Town Hall
 Notes by Gene Moncrief

In attendance:

Town Board Members	Planning and Zoning Committee Members
Pam Duke Tony Spano	Chris Kelder, Len Bernardo, Mike Baden Donna Ragonese, Ruth Bendelius, Mel Tapper, Gordie Bell, John Dawson, Jonathan Blair, Walter Levy
Consultants	Sitting in
Peter Fairweather	Steve Fornal Robert

Supervisor Duke opened the meeting and led us in the Pledge.

Walter circulated a membership list to the participants asking them to fill in their location details and what aspect of the community they represent on the committee. The list is not going on the website, but it's to be used internally for email.

Code Task Force report:

The Code Task Force met with Tom Shepstone and began developing a list of high priority issues for Code updating and revision. A report will be distributed shortly, but these are the issues broadly. Intense discussion will be conducted later on. Issues of high priority as follows:

Need for an official town map: Barry Medenbach has provided unofficial maps. (Thank you.) John Dawson will bring an old map with all the hamlets. Last official map was from 1983. Creating an official map of the town will rely on the most current information available, especially GIS and aerial map data. Susan Blickstein will collect and coordinate mapping information for us. Brenda Striano will work on mapping public and private roads.

Examination of zone designations for efficiency and relevance; Subdivision regulations; Traffic study and public safety; Planning Board Guidelines; Storm water management and clearing standards; Water course and Wetlands management; Defining clearing limits; Cluster development; Code enforcement and administration.

Next meeting of the Code Task Force is March 20, 2006 at Town Hall.

Setting Goals for the Comprehensive Plan:

Peter Fairweather explained that we've put all the goals from past plans into this current draft. This allows us to build on what we have already done. At the April outreach meetings, we'll present the public with a revised draft of the plan and ask for input. The major areas for broad discussion are as follows:

Land Use Goals: These goals will be supplemented with ECC goals.

Community Appearance Goals: It was agreed to change the title of this section to Community Character, which will better express the sense of TOR's appeal. Comments included signage and billboards, which will be discussed in depth later on in the process.

Economic Development: It was agreed that we include a goals for the Second Home Sector, Tourism, Bed & Breakfasts, Historic preservation, and Scenic Byway.

Infrastructure: Discussion raised issues of fire safety, driveway standards, road standards, and house and lot identification. Discussion of commerce raised the following issues about Route 209, which is a State road. There was agreement that we should encourage clusters of business along 209 to help ease traffic congestion. We are in a DOT study right now, so there will be more on this at a more appropriate time. There are ways TOR can reduce traffic congestion which must be explored. One possible goal is to spread business out over the township so as to reduce congestion. Another possible goal is to discourage strip business by allowing for a set back business development. There was agreement that we should encourage the creation of business nodes rather than strips. There was no discussion of other commerce zones, though there was agreement that something needs to be done for the hamlet of Accord.

Government Services: There was concern for several elderly people who must cross busy roads in order to reach their mail boxes.

Discussion raised issues concerning the tax load for the Accord Fire District. It was suggested that a possible goal is to create a process for raising revenue by providing incentives to developers. The Fire District and TOR can benefit from a long term planning process in order to spread the tax dollar over time.

It was suggested that we encourage the practice of sharing services (among towns) in order to reduce costs and improve services.

Agriculture Goals: Agriculture goals will add to the Economic Development Section. It was agreed to discuss such goals as: affirming the "right to farm"; encouraging farm preservation; agriculture transfer of development rights; direct marketing of farming products; and promoting agri-tourism.

It was agreed that goals relating to mining need to be formulated. It was stressed that there needs to be a balance between mining and the needs of the community. Mining goals will be included in the Section for Environmental Quality.

ECC goals will be distributed throughout the Sections where appropriate.

Fairweather will revise the Draft Plan and present it again at the PZC meeting scheduled for March 22.

Outreach Meetings: One of the meetings changed. The one scheduled for April 19th is now April 24th at the Samsonville Road Firehouse. We'll send a new notice when dates are confirmed.

Planning Scenarios: Fairweather informed us that at the Public Meetings in April he will begin presenting draft planning scenarios for discussion. More on this at the next meeting.

We've put together a prototype so that you can see the scenarios. People will be asked to comment on them with sticky notes at the public meetings. It's a hands-on exercise designed to get people involved in the decision-making process. Community contribution is a most important factor in agreeing the best and more comprehensive goals for TOR.

Scenic Byway: The Scenic Byway designation is now waiting for the governor to sign. A celebration will occur. Supervisors and mayors of all these towns are the implementers and putting together committees to begin to implement what has been compiled to date. Each town is asking for 2-3 volunteers to participate on these committees: Agriculture, Tourism, Preservation, Historic Preservation and Transportation. Please consider who might be good to be on these committees. We'll solicit names and recommendations on the website as well.

Ways to get people involved in the Comprehensive Plan: Think of ways we can bring people in. We need a PR Task Force. We'll setup one at the next meeting.

Next meeting March 22, 2006 Town Hall

Meeting adjourned at 8:55