

Village of Hastings on Hudson
Comprehensive Plan Committee
Meeting #15
June 11, 2008

Attending: Harry Thomas, Steve Corrigan, Kathy Sullivan, Jim Metzger, Ellen Hendrickx, Lynda Merchant, and Rebecca Strutton.

Absent: Bob Mayer, Richard Bass, Carolyn Summers, Betsy Imershein

Welcome: 8:00 PM

Discussion of Minutes: There will be a delay in getting the minutes in a form where they can be approved from the last meeting. These minutes were transcribed and require a bit of clarification. It was felt that because we have a video of the exact proceedings of the meeting that we do not need to have an exact transcription for our minutes and that summary minutes would be sufficient. Thank you to Rebecca Strutton's brother for allowing us to see what a direct transcription of our meeting would look like. The idea of sharing the taking of minutes at the meeting would also be a good way to go.

Planning Consultant: Ellen will set up a meeting with the consultant committee and will have a report at our last meeting in June. Harry believed that we need to decide what big jobs we want the consultant to do. That would help the committee decide on which consultant might meet our needs best. He gave examples

- Give specific ideas for how the Village and School district can save money on operations
- Give specific examples of how the Village can improve the downtown business district
- Give specific ideas on generating housing in HOH for frail or new senior citizens
- Do a n analysis of the waterfront concepts in the LWRP for feasibility and cost benefit.

Kathy spoke about how these questions could be used to vet a consultant. Each member of the CPC should think about some broader topics for this committee. Ellen said that the consultant committee will come back with some more questions.

Banner for June Meeting: Jim stated that thanks to Susan Maggiotto and Joe Rodriguez banner maker for the village was able to get the banner done and it will be put up tomorrow.

8:30 PM Topics

Discussion on small meetings: The small meetings are finished and the data will be compiled and used in a later meeting. Steve C. mentioned that he would like to send a follow up email or letter as the case may be thanking the participants and including the data gathered from the particular meeting. This would help the accuracy of our data as well as letting the participants know that we did indeed listen. After a brief discussion

regarding procedure, it was decided that an email or letter would be sent thanking the participants and letting them know that we will be compiling the data and that this data would be available on the CPC website as well as a hard copy. Jim M stated that for an email message we should use BCC, so that individual emails are not available to the whole list. Each committee member should send the data to Harry Thomas and Kathy Sullivan so they can compile the information. A tentative date is set for the month of October for a small meeting to happen with the High School Contemporary Politics classes. Ellen volunteered to go with Lynda and/or Kathy to this meeting. As the dates is confirmed a decision will be made about who should attend.

A discussion was held about the big meeting on June 18th procedure. We should use the question we posed to the small meetings about what is working and what is not working in Hastings. Jim spoke about how many people do not seem to know what is going on with the waterfront. They wonder why nothing has happened. Village residents don't even know that the property is privately owned. One other message from the small meetings was on communication. Harry spoke about the good job the Village does to keep people informed, but obviously more could be done. Jim spoke about the amount of information that is disseminated by the Village is wonderful, more than any other village he knows of. Ellen brought up the idea of a hot line where people can call and ask specific questions when they need it. Fred Yeager, Arco Public Relations mentioned that Arco is sending out a newsletter and he would be glad to insert a flyer with vital information from the village at no additional charge to the village. Kathy S thanked him and fielded the opportunity to Susan Maggiotto as this committee has no control over the information. He also pointed out that Con Edison, the telephone company and the post office may be willing to get information out at no cost as well. Steve asked if anyone knew if they had anyone in attendance at the small meetings that represent the various boards and commissions in the village. Jim mentioned that there is a fine line for some of these people to attend. When they speak it may be interpreted that they are commenting for the committee they are on. Kathy said that we have reached out to the residents in a variety of ways. Small meeting were an experiment that seemed to work. People came who would not come to a large forum.

The large meeting discussion was continued. Rebecca wanted the large meeting format to be changed to deal with more about our committee and less to do with the greenway etc. The legal importance of the CPC plan can be used by a judge to guide development. It should also be stressed that a lot of other villages have a comprehensive plan and we don't/ Hastings is behind the curve. Kathy spoke about the procedure as an introduction of what our committee has been charged with and a brief presentation of the greenway, then break out groups for round table discussions with one committee member at each table to monitor the discussion. And then a presentation of each groups discussion. We should have available contact information on a handout that can be taken away. Jim will put that together. Rebecca also asked that we have one question regarding what the residents think the comprehensive plan should deal with in case we have missed something important. Let's ask what is on the minds of the residents of Hastings. We should have a script for the round table. The first question should be what is working and what isn't and the second question should be something like "What would you like

Hastings to be in five or ten years?" Kathy will share our thoughts with John Dennehey at the greenway and come up with a plan for the meeting.

Advertising: We have some volunteer (children) to hand out flyers at the train station for the meeting. The banner will be up. Kathy will distribute the flyer to all of us on the committee to be distributed to people in town that we know personally. Jim will do an additional flyer to be posted in town. The meeting is in the events portion of the Enterprise and the Village email list will be used again. Thanks to Raf for help with this.

Kathy did some work on a fact sheet that was shared with the committee. It is a work in progress, but gives general ideas about what is going on in the village about specific topics. It is in draft form but reveals that a lot of work has been done since 2000 that was very complicated.

Public Comment:

David Skolnik has a list of questions the committee should think about.

- Survey

Any further surveys planned?

How are student survey (and Comp Plan) being utilized?

What is your assessment of the student effort?

How have Comp plans adopted by other villages fared?

- community involvement in process

- acceptance

- impact upon government and development processes

How do you envision using people that indicate desire to help?

Some subcommittee should examine (track) development decisions (past and present) made by the various village agencies (Trustees, Planning, Zoning, etc.) to gauge what the impact of a comprehensive plan might have been. Also, what current Village issues are likely to slip through in the absence of an adopted plan?

Meetings - big/small

Where (in your sense of the community thinking) do you think you'll be, compared to where you are now?

I'm still not sure objectives of meeting are clear. Why and who are the people coming? Are they well or ill-informed? How much of the available information have they accessed? Are they coming to hear from you or offer their opinions? If the latter, why haven't they already provided this to you? Also, if for this purpose, why would you adopt a meeting model that seems to cater to a reluctance to speak before a larger group? Based upon my limited experience with the break-out model (transportation workshops), I am not so enamored of/with it. I found it subject to direction by the leader, and at times, frustrating in,

seemingly arbitrarily, proscribing who, at this ostensibly large meeting, you may interact with. It's also not clear how you plan to create these smaller groups. Whatever seeming consensus you might arrive at in this particular setting should, in no way, be taken as indicative of a similar village-wide agreement.

I don't think one meeting can effectively cover all the bases (information in, information out, well-informed, un-informed) without frustrating many. I think you might find time well spent by clarifying the process and issues, as well as defining how interested people can continue to help the effort. Your mission is complicated and contains the basic dilemma of democratic government. Are you trying to accurately express the will of the people (majority, consensus) or are you trying, as a selected body, to do what you think is best for that community? It's not necessarily the same thing. Maybe the best thing that you could do to ensure that the two will be close would be to educate, so that more of the responses you get represent an awareness of the challenges, not just an uninformed wish list. What the comprehensive plan is, and is *not*. i.e. the LWRP, Development Council. Chamber of Commerce, developer, etc. Two of Jim's comments reflect the seeming contradiction: he "wants the community to tell *us*" what it wants, but also expressed surprise that many people he spoke with were unaware of what was being done.

A compilation of the various current village issues and links to background info might be a very effective tool that you can delegate to someone to create.

Rebecca said she thought the idea was to educate the community and that we will take away a wealth of information and a mandate or scope for the comprehensive plan. It is a bigger venue with a broader sense of information gathered.

Harry spoke about our mandate to make a plan with the wishes of the community in mind and that we have gathered information in a number of ways such as the Hunter students survey, small meetings, and larger meetings planned to more completely understand the wishes of the residents of HOH.

Jim spoke about our not missing something in our thinking.. In the small meetings the participants were very committed to being there. At the big meeting we will get another constituency.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM

Action Points

- ✓ Minutes of previous meeting to be clarified
- ✓ RFP Committee will reconvene and give a report at next meeting
- ✓ Kathy Sullivan will talk with John Dennehey about meeting on June 18th
- ✓ Kathy will send a flyer for the June 18th meeting to all committee members so we can in turn send personal invitations.

Approved June 25, 2008