

Village of Hastings on Hudson
Comprehensive Plan Committee
Meeting #14
May 23, 2008

Attending:, Richard Bass, Jim Metzger, Ellen Hendrickx, Lynda Merchant, Steve Corrigan, Rebecca Strutton, , Kathy Sullivan Carolyn Summers and Harry Thomas
Absent: Betsy Imershein

Welcome: 8:00 PM

Roll Call: a quorum was present

1. Approval of Minutes.

2. Meeting will be transcribed as an experiment.

(10/16/08- Meeting has been available on WHOH since May 08. These written notes were posted much later due to time required to prepare from recording.)

3. Susan Maggiotto will be our village contact. She distributed copies of Hunter survey and comprehensive plan.

4. Televising meetings- follow up from last meeting. Jim contacted the Fran Frobels, Village Manager, to review the requirements regarding televising meetings. Fran said that there is no obligation to televise a meeting. Meeting must be noticed and be open to public; the committee can choose which ones to televise. After discussion regarding pros and cons, committee decided to reserve the right to have part of meetings untelevised. Committee agreed that the agenda will note that there will be an untelevised discussion; indicate the topic and the time during the meeting when not televised. The meeting minutes will then document the conversation. The committee postponed the decision regarding the process for agreeing to when to go off camera to when such potential issues arise.

5. Planning Consultant RFP- Excellent outline distributed. Betsy Imershein will join RFP subcommittee. They looked at a number of RFP's from other communities. They suggested that the committee will ask John Dennehey/Hudson Valley Greenway to review the RFP. After the Community Planning Meeting, CPC will discuss the scope of the RFP and how to integrate the Hunter work and the CPC's work to date.

6. Committee thanked Richard Bass for his hard work as the instructor of the Hunter Studio, the excellent Hunter Study Presentation and the studio's work. Richard was pleased and thinks the report will be a head start for consultant and that the students came up with interesting ideas for the Business District, to increase density, and economic and parking issues.

7. School Board Meeting, Jim, Lynda, Ellen, Rebecca and Kathy attended.

Jim discussed how the board finds their strategic plan useful and that they review it regularly for guidance. Lynda found it difficult to have a conversation when part of the board meeting. Eric Sweeting/School Board had requested that the first meeting be with the full board; the expectation is that further meetings can be held in different ways and places. Discussed school enrollment and future projections. Board finds it difficult to establish maximum enrollment number. Many factors come into play; general classrooms have been renovated into special use rooms like computer labs and there are community expectations for small class sizes. Discussion about how the district can handle typically enrollment increases if not clustered in a single grade. Rebecca

discussed how the school board uses census/demographic information and the expected future demographics. Committee looks forward to further conversations.

School board did express that they would like to work more closely with village. Richard feels that with their taxing power and size of employees greatly influence the financial future of the village. The village may face in the future the issue of declining school enrollment and increasing costs. In other communities, the school district can be pressured to use school land as development source.

8. Senior Council Meeting, Ellen, Jim and Kathy

Ellen discussed the presentation on the Beacon Hill Village model for aging in place. Jim discussed what Robert Walman from CAPS outlined regarding a Connecticut tax model for seniors which delays taxes and then paid at settling of the estate with interest. Possible way for seniors to stay in homes on a fixed income. Ellen discussed how the community can provide services for seniors. There is also an aspect where there is a membership that provides access to services to stay in home.

Jim noted that “economy of scale” is a common topic, school board and the village mentioned the need to do so for greater purchasing power. Hudson Valley Greenway also empathizes this.

9. Small Meeting Update and discussion

Attendance has been less than hoped for at the small meetings to date. Discussion followed; hard to engage people and need to publicize better for more effective outreach. There are three more small meetings planned; Uniontown, the Senior Meeting and Spring Fling. Noted that people need factual information on key topics in the village. Perhaps this is also needed for the June meeting. Need a brochure where to go for information. Getting contact information is important for follow up as well. Telephone interviews were discussed. Discussion on the goals of the small meetings and the large meeting. The large meeting is seen as the first in a series, committee will look to the consultant to aid with these future meetings. The committee will look into hanging a banner at Five Points. Lynda has followed up regarding a small meeting in a high school government class in the fall. Will try to increase outreach by posting signs and using the village email for advertize for the Uniontown Meeting.

10. Hunter Presentation Impressions

Lynda: impressed that the students were so engaged through out the course and were so visible in the town. Presentation was to the point and insightful. Ellen: students were knowledgeable and though in research. Enjoyed presentation and handled the QA so well. Jim: professional and well prepared presentation and QA. Carolyn echoed. Kathy: appreciated their attitude of “just do it.” A motto for our plan. Rebecca: saw students took to heart the survey responses and it shown in their presentation. Harry; appreciated that they made a number of the suggestions. Steve: they listened to the survey responded for example the deer problem was their first point. Just do something. Afterwards, he was part of conversations with the students and some village leaders where the village leaders were skeptical of accomplishing some of the suggestions. He would like to approach change with a more positive attitude. Good energy. Richard: students were engaged because this was a real planning exercise. One student who read all the plans, remarked that HOH was a place that was not in crisis, so do not need to choose. Wanted them to be more radical. Drown in all the info that we had. Need to not miss opportunities and need to challenge things. Carolyn; need to perhaps filter the info so our consultants don’t drown.

11. Public Comment David Skolnik: What would be a good percentage for response from the village? Is goal to transmit information to the community or receive information?

Richard; this is a political answer not planning answer. Different from community to community. What kind of response do we get? More ideas we get the better. Our obligation to plan however. Hope that we wouldn't plan in a vacuum. Planning consultants will look through data quickly.

Susan Maggiotto added that the committee was selected to have a broad base in the community.

Adjournment