

Village of Hastings on Hudson
Comprehensive Plan Committee
Meeting #18
August 13th, 2008

Attending: Kathy Sullivan, Richard Bass, Jim Metzger, Ellen Hendrickx, Lynda Merchant, Betsy Imershein, Steve Corrigan and Rebecca Strutton.

Absent: Harry Thomas and Carolyn Summers

Welcome: 8:00 PM

Roll Call: a quorum was present

Approval of Minutes.

8:05 PM Update on RFP

The RFP was reviewed by the committee and was revised using input from Richard Bass and Rebecca Strutton. It was then sent to John Dennehey for his review and to Westchester County Planning Committee. After all the comments are investigated the draft will go to Fran Froebel for his comments and then it will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees. Everyone who has looked at the RFP has spoken about how comprehensive and well done the RFP is. Thanks to the committee who worked so hard on this project.

8:15 PM Topics

Possible issues for plan:

Richard Bass spoke about the comprehensive plan being an articulation of a common vision for the village. The school district has spoken of a reduction in the number of students in the district. This will affect the pool memberships and the recreation department offerings. Jim Metzger pointed out that local stores used to hire local help that had a built in sensitivity to the village residents. He also pointed out that the residents of Hastings need to support their downtown. He pointed out that if residents have a complaint about a business they should speak to the owner. Betsy Imershein spoke about getting a dialog going about walkability in the village. She heard from a store owner that more 20 something single people have been moving into town because they are priced out of NYC and Brooklyn. They seem to be living in the downtown area and are used to walking. Kathy Sullivan pointed out that the village is important to the villagers because of a sense of community that it brings. People are looking for a good efficient downtown that will meet their needs.

Hunter survey: In the Hunter survey and report, there were similar comments that kept coming up at the small and large community meetings. Betsy I. pointed out that the committee should be careful with the ratio of 400 surveys returned, to 6000 adults who could have responded. She pointed out that the 400 who responded may have been the same people who attended the small and large meetings. Betsy also pointed out that it depends how the question was asked and what went before the question can impact the answer.

A discussion was held regarding the downtown area infrastructure and the buy-in from store owners to keep their stores clean and attractive and responsive to the needs of the residents of Hastings.

Small meetings and larger community meeting: A suggestion was made to compile and prioritize the results from the survey and the data from all the community meetings. This compilation will be available for the village residents to verify and also for the consultant to get a handle on what the priorities are for the village residents. This task could be accomplished using the committee structure already in place from our topic areas. Kathy S. will send us a reminder about what committees we were responsible for.

Kathy Sullivan pointed out that there was an elephant in the room that should be discussed. The elephant is the LWRP and the committee that is authoring the plan. It seems we have an all or nothing approach to the waterfront. Richard Bass pointed out that we have 2 parks and 2 restaurants on the water already. Maybe there are interim uses that can be implemented while we are waiting for all the legal work necessary to make the waterfront a reality. The Village should sponsor and encourage more waterfront activities where they can. Kathy reiterated that the impression she gets from village residents is that the waterfront will be a salvation for tax relief. The CPC should be aware that there does not seem to be agreement on the LWRP at this point and maybe a financial update should be done surrounding the data that is being use. We all realize that 10 years of hard work have gone into the LWRP and that it should move forward. Richard Bass suggested that the school district has more impact on the village tax burden and that no one is talking about that. Betsy I. felt that we should look beyond the 2 square miles of our village for help from the nearby school districts.

RFP

Time Frame of plan: Different departments in the village should be asked for a report about their goals and concerns that our committee should know. They should articulate their goals, what they have accomplished in 5 years and set some priorities for the next five years. Betsy will draft the format for the report.

Realistically we agree that the RFP should be in final form by September or early October. The RFP will go out to consultants to be returned by November with a decision being made by the Board of Trustees in December or January. After the plan is complete an evaluation should begin at the fifth year of the plan.

Betsy I. asked if there was any plan to replace Bob Meyer who had to resign the committee. Kathy S. will contact Jerry Quinlan.

9:20 PM No Public Comment

9:25 PM Next Meetings: September 10th, 2008- Our committee will remain at once per month until the consultant is in place. An additional meeting could be called depending on work that needs our input.

9:30 PM Adjournment