

Town of Amenia
Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee
November 14, 2005

Present: Mark Doyle, Rudy Eschbach, Bill Flood, Dolores Holland,
Darlene Riemer, Tony Robustelli, Joel Russell.
George Fenn.

The meeting opened with a discussion about the parcel at the junction of Rtes 83 and 44 and it was decided to retain the HC zoning. Wetland at the rear of the property will prevent expansion and the small size will discourage the establishment of unwanted business.

J. Russell suggested to postpone any decisions regarding the Aquifer Overlays until all current information, including ordinances from the County, can be assembled and made available to the committee.

M. Doyle mentioned that he was not certain whether the preliminary decisions regarding soil mining were based on current and correct resource data. J. Russell said that, should areas of gravel be discovered outside the current overlays, the maps can be amended. The final decisions have to be based on access, the proximity to residences, scenic impact, etc.

R. Eschbach brought up the question of reclamation. J. Russell said that the town has the authority to enforce DEC permit conditions. The text refers to new mines - development in those areas require a special permit by the Town Board - no mention is made of any requirement to reclaim old mines. This is a DEC function and is unenforceable by the town.

Three new mining areas and one extension are provided for on the preliminary map overlays.

J. Russell added that, if the Town is concerned about agricultural soil being preserved, it should not allow mining in the first place as there is no guarantee that the soil will be put back after the mining operation is completed. The Town can request this but can not make it a condition of the permit. It was suggested that a land owner might voluntarily replace the soil after having made good profits with the mining operation. M. Doyle said that, while replaced soil could not be considered prime soil, it would still be suitable for agricultural use. Turning mined-out parcels into industrial zones would therefore not be the optimal solution.

J. Russell proposed RA zoning combined with CO behind a 100 ft buffer and added that the Master Plan will require site-specific language for all parcels concerned.

He will give the matter more thought and will present possible solutions in his next draft.

Scenic roads/Viewpoints Overlays:

It was decided that all County definitions (i.e. computer analysis) need to be consulted before proceeding with the mapping. R. Eschbach said that tying ridge lines into this issue presents problems and that good guidelines, intent and limits need to be established. J. Russell suggested: no clear cutting or construction above the crest line wherever it is visible from public places. Visual impact (balloon) tests should be performed to determine the exact locations. Even though there will be some case-by-case decision making, clear guidelines have to be established.

Resort Overlays:

J. Russell suggests that Resort Overlays cover the entire parcels of Silo Ridge, Troutbeck as well as the adjacent golf course. M. Doyle asked what would happen, if the owners of Silo Ridge decided to sell part of the property - would the buyers be allowed to create another resort? J. Russell will work on that question but said that basically, ownership does not matter - multiple developments are possible - and probable, in a resort overlay.

Mobile Home Park Overlays:

Existing mobile home parks are grandfathered. Underlying zoning will be HR and/or SR. New parks might be encouraged as a means to create "affordable housing" where appropriate and where the right criteria are met.

J. Russell presented changes he made to the second draft based on suggestions by the committee. (Copies of these changes were sent to each committee member.)

Schedule:

July 1st was set as the goal/deadline.

J. Russell said that the first public information meeting and feedback may determine what the schedule will be - issues will come up which need to be addressed.

The zoning text and the maps should be completed before Christmas. The Comprehensive Plan could be done at the same time, if some of the more complex sections (timber harvesting and the AQO) could be left out. M. Doyle said that there should be a combined CPIC, Planning Board, Town Board and ZBA workshop (which will be open to the public) after the first public information meeting which is planned for the third week in January.

T. Robustelli suggested making a summary available to the public for

study on the town website. J. Russell felt that this could be useful and should be considered but prefers handing out a condensed version of the text, presenting key issues, at the time of the meeting and be prepared to answer questions and concerns in public. M. Doyle wants to hold two meetings, no more than two weeks apart to give people a chance to familiarize themselves with the text and to be able to ask informed questions.

The next CPIC meeting is planned for Monday, December 5th at 7:00 PM.

Submitted by Monique Montaigne
December 1st, 2005