



TOWN OF AMENIA

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Comp Plan Review Committee (CPRC) 6/11/2024 at 6:00 PM Town Board Meeting Room

Present:

Bill Flood, Chair
Nina Peek, Vice Chair
Michael Peek
Ken Topolsky
Terrence McCauley
Vicki Doyle, Volunteer Secretary
Members of the public: Leila Hawken, George Bistransin

Absent:

Paula Pelosi
Paul Winters, Town Board Liason

Next Meeting: Tues. June 25 (meetings are 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 6 pm at Town Hall).

Assignments: Update goals based on minutes. Review Chapter 2.

Vicki will circulate letters to Chairs of Town Committees / Boards, along with the Comp Plan with current comments from CPRC Review Committee, with deadlines for their edits. She will also send maps and Comp Plan to County Planners.

Motion to open meeting by Nina at 6:10 pm, seconded by Bill. Vote taken and passed unanimously.

Minutes: Ken moved to approve the 5/14/2024 minutes as amended. Vote taken and passed unanimously.

Nina and Ken noted that the Town and its committees and boards must follow the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan, as required by law.

Vicki and Bill met last week with Jennifer F. Cocozza, Deputy Commissioner, DC Planning and Development, plus planners Devin Rigolino and Dillon Tuttle. DC Planning and Development is updating statistics, demographics for CPRC. Vicki will send existing maps to Devin Rogolino, County Planner. Maps are included within the plan, and attached. It was noted that the County needs to update Amenia's Scenic Protection Overlay (SPO), which is outdated. County also needs to update the map with all of Amenia's conservation easements, including those held by DLC, HVA, North American Land Trust, etc.

Bill provided statistics about demographics at Webutuck School, and reviewed a letter from Judy Moran dated May 23, 2024. The letter stated her opinion on the potential impact of building affordable versus market-rate housing on the school district's finances.

According to Amenia's Building Inspector and CEO, there were 14 new houses started since January, not including those at Silo Ridge. There are 150 apartments in Amenia. Median income of residents, aging population, and gentrification need to be kept in mind when planning for the future.

Approved: 7/9/2024

Definition of affordable housing – Ken will find the reference and share it.

Chapter 1: Visions and Goals. Michael suggested keeping the vision statement the same.

The committees should suggest their comments and goals first, and CPRC can work from their recommendations. The vision statement can be relatively vague, but goals need to be achievable (not aspirational), measurable. Next will be the strategy to achieve the goals.

Goal #1 is to support economic development (NOT to establish a business-friendly atmosphere). Objective is to create stimulus to spur economic development. This goal should be sent to the Town Board to get their recommendations to this plan as the other committees / boards.

Protecting natural resources might go to several committees.

Ken made edits to first goal, with concrete, actionable items.
Balance Amenia's rural and natural character with smart growth.
Send the goals to every committee / board.

Goal #2 – Ok as is.

Goal #3 – Encourage agriculture as a profitable business. (Need actionable objectives to achieve this: tax incentives, etc). What is agriculture? Selling honey? Flowers? Milk? Is there a definition? Broaden to address food insecurity?

Preserving agriculture is still a goal. Not changing zoning, so still ways to develop property.

Goal #4 – encourage environmentally sustainable energy practices in order to plan for climate resilience. (Climate Smart Task Force, a subcommittee of the CAC, has a laundry list of sustainable actionable items. CAC will submit their updated goals and actionable items to CPRC.)

Goal #5 – Strengthen more multi-modal facilities (EV charging stations is actionable item)

Goal #6 – Protect and enhance open space (cite Rec Master Plan actionable items)

Add new goals? Address food insecurity? Broaden existing goal under agriculture.

Ensure basic needs of diverse population (seniors, food insecure residents) are met. Nina suggested addressing this in housing section and transportation sections (walkable downtown). Actionable items: bring back farmer's market. Encourage donations of food to help food-insecure population.

Public Comment – George suggested the Town up-zone minimum acreage in rural districts to protect open space. Nina noted that to follow current goals, need to balance large lot options with smaller, affordable parcels with public infrastructure. Incentives can be used to achieve goals.

Tony would like to ensure Amenia remained affordable for average person and 'mom and pop' businesses. He reviewed the attached tax records and a letter from Michael Segelken to David Behm, Mngr, Farmland Protection Program, NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets dated August 7, 2023 regarding DLC's Tenmile River Farm's Application to NYS Dept. Ag and Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Program.

Motion to adjourn by Bill, seconded by Terrence. Vote taken and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Doyle
Volunteer CPRC Secretary