

**TOWN OF GHENT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

05 JUNE 2007

Chairman Galvin opened the meeting at 7:05 pm. In attendance were Committee members Nick Tipple, Pete Nelson Jr., Gil Raab, Aaron Groom, Jim Beal, Phil Trowbridge, Mark Clarke, John Fishman, Frank Mendelson, Al Wassenhove and Chairman Jim Galvin. Also in attendance were Town Attorney Ted Guterman and Nan Stolzenburg of Community Planning and Environmental Association (CPEA). Absent were Janice Fingar, Larry VanBrunt, Jonathan Walters and Kyle Wilber.

Mr. Galvin provided Ms Stolzenburg with a copy of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan inventory, as compiled by Committee member Jonathan Walters.

Mr. Wassenhove made a motion to approve the Minutes of the May 2007 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fishman and unanimously approved.

Mr. Wassenhove questioned why the Committee's June meeting had not been listed in local newspapers' community calendars. Mr. Mendelson offered to ensure that the coming month's meeting will be included in the calendars. Chairman Galvin requested a Committee member volunteer to handle publicity. Mr. Mendelson agreed to prepare the press release for the July meeting. Chairman Galvin will then be responsible for issuing monthly press releases.

Attorney Guterman suggested that the press release might include a status report on the recently held workshops. He also commented on the need to encourage younger members of the public to participate in future events and surveys: the Comprehensive Plan is ultimately for their benefit.

Ms Stolzenburg provided attending members with copies of the second half of the collected workshop data. She reported that CPEA associate Don Meltz is in the process of compiling data from the workshop table maps.

The attending Committee members reviewed the workshop summary materials. Mr. Groom queried the methodology used to prioritize the data and its relationship to the proposed survey questions.

A general discussion of the workshops and survey questions began. Chairman Galvin noted that there is 'lots of incorrect information out there.' Ms Stolzenburg offered that the Committee needs to acknowledge the issues raised at the workshops, and address any existing mistruths/misconceptions through development of the survey materials and education of the public. She suggested the Committee consider issuing 'myth buster' press releases.

Mr. Raab noted that many workshop comments were not germane to proposals the Committee can suggest the Town implement. As an example, he pointed out that

'affordable housing' is directly dependent upon environmental issues such as available water resources and sewage disposal. These issues are out of the realm of the Committee's charge. Chairman Galvin will arrange for an expert in the field of 'affordable housing' to make a presentation on the subject at the next Committee meeting. In addition, Mr. Galvin will contact the Columbia County Department of Health and request input on the subject of the role of the environment in the development of housing in Columbia County, specifically, the Town of Ghent.

The survey was reviewed from beginning to end. The inclusion of question 34, relating to the rail trail was vociferously questioned by Messrs. Wassenhove and Clarke. A motion, to include rail trail subject matter in the survey, was made by Mr. Fishman and seconded by Mr. Tipple. The motion was passed 7-4, with Messrs. Clarke, Wassenhove, Groom and Raab in the minority. Town Attorney Guterman abstained.

Ms Stolzenburg suggested the number one issue to be addressed at next month's meeting should be the review of the survey's logistics. While she will not be able to attend next month's meeting, she will provide the Committee with materials relating to this topic.

It was noted that the first Tuesday of the coming month is the day before the 4th of July national holiday. It was agreed to hold the July meeting on Tuesday, 10 July 2007, seven o'clock at the Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.