

Town of Red Hook

Agriculture and Open Space Committee

Minutes of October 24, 2011

Attendance: Co-chairperson Norman Greig, Michael Grady Robertson, Richard Biezynski, Ken Migliorelli, James Stagias (7:30 pm) and Secretary Linda Keeling,

Absent: Co-chairperson Pete Hubbell, Mary Ann Johnson, Marina Michahelles, Town Board Councilman William O’Neill (liaison)

Guests: none

Meeting Opened: There was some internal confusion about the meeting date as there was an extra Monday this month. The group is normally scheduled for the fourth Monday not the fifth which would have been Halloween, a night when most of the members were not willing to meet.

Most of the attendees were present at 7:00 but due to not having a quorum to accept the minutes, Co-chairman Norman Greig called members in order to get a quorum. Jim Stagias agreed to come and a quorum was met. The meeting was opened at 7:30 pm. Members reviewed the 7-25 and 9-26 draft minutes.

Motion: Ken Migliorelli motioned to accept the minutes with minor corrections from 7-25-11 and Mike Robertson seconded, all agreed.

Motion: Ken Migliorelli motioned to accept the 9-26-11 minutes, Jim Stagias seconded, all agreed.

Discussions:

Old Business:

1. **Member Vacancy:** As Lindsey Shute submitted her resignation, an opening is available. Discussion focused on what farmer might be interested. It was decided to ask John Hardeman as he is no longer serving on the Planning Board. Ken Migliorelli called John Hardeman and he agreed to serve. Linda Keeling agreed to compose a short letter to the Supervisor for Norman Greig to send out requesting the Town Board endorse this newest member.

2. **Bucky Coons’ Issue:** That has been resolved as he is now in the ABD.

New Business:

2. Key to Town Hall: There was some difficulty entering the building as Co-chairman Pete Hubbell had the only key. Co-chairman Norman Greig thought it might be better for the secretary to have the key, all agreed. The secretary will secure a key for the next meeting.

3. Local Crime Increasing: It was mentioned that Robert McKeon had a goat stolen. Jim Stagias commented that he had a Mantis Rototiller stolen out of his parked car at his farm. Norman Greig noted he has had small item taken from his farm. Also, in Hyde Park a \$37,000 tractor was stolen. The poor economy is fostering more thieveries and everyone should be alert and take precautions by locking their cars and keeping valuables out of sight.

4. Agricultural Issues: Jim Stagias discussed the potential uses of his property according to the new zoning. Co-chairperson Norman Greig will get a copy of the final Zoning Law. There was some discussion on density and dividing the land. Norman indicated it is a work on progress.

Jim Stagias felt that tents and cabins should be allowed for a campground but RV's and pop-up tents are currently not allowed according to the zoning law. He felt that they should be allowed as these people buy things locally.

Norman Greig indicated that the zoning allows for a tent tax for a wedding.

Jim Stagias feels overall the zoning is beneficial for the town, especially the ABD, however, he feels RV's and pop-up tents should be allowed for a campground.

Norman posed the question of how we can get it changed.

Rich Biezynski encouraged making a suggestion. He understands the possible impact on adjoining neighbors so perhaps the recreational facility should be a certain distance away.

Norman Greig will get a copy of the final law so the group can review and add to it to make it farming friendly for people.

Jim Stagias believes the intent of the ABD is to promote agriculture and would like to see the town promote this through advertizing.

Many felt it is difficult to do business with Hannaford's corporate policies.

Jim Stagias noted that a golf course can expand if there is one. He questioned why that is written in the law.

Mike Robertson noted that agri-tourism allows for a bed and breakfast so a campground should also be allowed.

Norman Greig explained that the intent of the law is so multiple RV's don't come in one after the other and disturb the quietness.

Jim Stagias stated that recreation cabins should be allowed according to the law; it's a solid source of income.

Rich Biezynski said it is an expensive trailer versus a cheap tent.

Norman Greig suggested they look to the Vermont PDR model.

Ken Migliorelli thought Marina Michahelles could enlighten the group more at the next meeting.

Norman Greig commented on how development rights become an estate issue. The land value is reduced from 90% to 50% by promoting open space but is not farmer friendly as it expensive for a new farmer to purchase land.

5. Scenic Hudson: There was some general discussion about Scenic Hudson. Rich Biezynski commented that conservation easements limit the number of people one can sell to. He mentioned that the Buckley Farm recently sold for \$1.2 million. Norman felt that with more options comes a better discussion.

6. Parker Product Distribution Model: Discussion focused on the Parker distribution cooperative efforts to the NYC market. It is wholesale and depends on a focused market. Rich Biezynski suggested developing a Red Hook label. However, a UPC label is needed to match the product to the source. It was felt this option is labor intensive to get it to work properly.

Next meeting is **November 28th, 7:00 pm at the town hall.**

Motion: Jim Stagias motioned to adjourn the meeting and Rich Biezynski seconded, all agreed.

Chairperson Norman Greig adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Keeling, secretary

Approved 11/28/11