

Town of Red Hook

Agriculture and Open Space Committee

Minutes of June 25, 2012

Attendance: Chairperson Pete Hubbell, Mary Ann Johnson, Michael Grady Robertson, John Hardeman (7:11 pm), Richard Biezyński (7:18 pm), Ken Migliorelli (7:23 pm), Town Board Councilman William O’Neill (liaison) (8:03 pm), and Secretary Linda Keeling

Absent: Norman Greig, Marina Michahelles, and James Stagias

Guests: Art Collins of Dutchess Land Conservancy, Larry Thetford, Bicentennial Committee (8:11 pm)

Meeting Opened: As there was a quorum, Chairperson Pete Hubbell opened the meeting at 7:06 pm.

Minutes: Note there was no meeting for May of 2012 due to the Memorial Day weekend celebration.

MOTION: Mary Ann Johnson *motioned to accept the 4/23/12 minutes as is and John Hardeman, seconded, all agreed.*

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Ag Newsletter from Maine:** Chairman Pete Hubbell referred to an Ag Newsletter from Maine. State level ordinances wouldn’t apply regarding, for example, milk, if selling directly to the public locally. He sent a copy to Rep. Didi Barrett for her input. The information is entitled “Some Towns Try to Loosen Reins on Food Producers by Clarke Canfield, June 22, 2012 and can be found at <http://www.businessweek.com/printer/articles/35928?type=ap> Mary Ann Johnson felt the legal perspective does not supersede State and Federal Regulations. Pete also referred to the emails he forwarded to the group from Cari Watkins-Bates with attachments.

2. **Bicentennial Celebration Participation Plans:** It was agreed that we would reproduce the Red Hook Farm List as a giveaway. Linda Keeling will get this reproduced. John Hardeman offered his tent for the day. There was some discussion about coupons that Marina Michahelles was investigating. Larry Thetford indicated the event is from 10-4 on Sat. July 14th. John Hardeman and Ken Migliorelli volunteered for the morning and Pete Hubbell and Mike Robertson for the afternoon. Larry will make a sign for our booth area. There was some discussion about pressing cider and/or selling food. It was decided we would not offer any food or drink items.

3. **Economic Development Report:** Ken Migliorelli said he missed the last meeting but the main discussion has been on what to do about the former IGA building. Some want a food store or a 3 story hotel-restaurant with catering downstairs, for example Marriot. Also, the corner Mobil lot has been discussed. The EDC would like input from Bard College. Rich Biezyński said the 2.2 acre lot has value but the back portion of the structure is not good. The building is at 35% coverage. No one seems to be willing to pay the asking price.

4. **Red Hook Farmers’ Market:** Rich Biezyński said it has been in operation at the Village parking lot on three Saturdays. The growth is slow so far.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Kalina and J. Greig properties, PDR proposal:** Art Collins of the Dutchess Land Conservancy presented color maps of the two properties for consideration. Kalina Farm is located at the intersection of Rokeby and Benner Rd. has about 150 acres with both prime and State wide significant soils. It is farmed by Frank Vosburgh. A survey has not been done yet. The James Greig's Farm, comprised of 156 acres is located on Rockefeller Lane and has about 92% prime soils suitable for vegetable crops which Ken Migliorelli is farming presently. Art discussed the funding for the proposal with 50% coming from the USDA Farm Ranchland program. They do not pay for acquisition cost or surveys. Waterhouse did appraisals on the properties. Greig was \$6069 per acre for a total of \$949,798 and \$5400 per acre for Kalina's for a total of \$810,000. Scenic Hudson would put up 25% amounting to \$202,500 and the Feds \$474,899. The Town of Red Hook's Community Preservation Fund would put in \$237,449.

Art explained there are 4 tax parcels, one land locked. There would be 2 farmstead options but the Feds may not agree. The Dutchess Land Conservancy prefers all on the same tax parcel. The written proposal includes the soccer field but there is the possibility of it moving to the new Recreational Facility property to avoid the high rental cost.

There were specific questions from the Committee regarding the land contour for locating a farmstead, soils, residence location as a disruptive factor for tilling. DLC would hold the easement and if the two farmstead parcels pass the Feds, they could not be sold separately. Chairman Pete Hubbell had questions about the future sale of the property. Art explained that the one acre farmstead is an either or but not both. If there was a future sale it would be the whole 156 acres. John Hardeman suggested combining the 4 tax parcels into one to avoid any future problems.

John Hardeman was in favor of protecting these farmlands. Mary Ann Johnson mentioned that bond money is available. (The \$3 million town bond money is available until 2013.) Pete Hubbell thought the overall plan was good. He felt that due to the recession the farm values are lower now.

Chairman Pete Hubbell suggested the Committee take a vote. All Committee members were in favor of supporting these two projects to protect the land. The group has some concerns about the location of the farmstead on the Greig property.

MOTION: *John Hardeman motioned to adjourn the meeting, Rich Biezyński seconded and all agreed.*

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, June 23, 2012, 7:00 pm, town hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Keeling, Secretary

Approved 11/26/12