

RED HOOK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

April 17, 2008

Red Hook Town Hall – 7:30 P.M.

The Meeting was convened at 7:30 in the offices of the Chamber of Commerce.

Present: P. Fredricks, B. Mitchell, D. Moat, E. Pruitt, L. Sieverding, K. Wade and K. Zulch. Represented by a videographer was the Citizens for a Concerned Red Hook.

Doug began the meeting stressing the fact that as our preliminary work is developing some extremely sensitive and worrisome results, it is extremely important that we strive to develop all the facts possible related to each of our investigations and that the results be presented in a complete, objective and unbiased manner. In particular, he emphasized that if we are to gain the support of the Town and Village Boards and the community generally it behooves us to evaluate all recommendations thoroughly and examine all data as objectively as possible. Furthermore, while some solutions to the emerging problems seem obvious, we must make every effort to balance any recommendations with consideration for the espoused goals of others in the community.

Status Report – Commercial / Retail Development Project

Brad reported on the work of this sub-committee. Target investment objectives over a 15 year period have been developed. Also tax projections over the next five years have been completed. Both are being reviewed by Peter Fairweather's organization and will be vetted against the independent projections that the Fairweather organization are doing.

Members of the sub-committee have visited all available parcels of land zoned for commercial or light industrial development. A map showing the paucity of such space has been prepared and was reviewed. Red Hook has about 20 acres available for commercial/retail development. This compares to Rhinebeck which has a commercial tax base almost twice that of Red Hook and has approximately 200 additional acres zoned for commercial development. Clearly, without a significant change in our planning and zoning the development of any meaningful commercial/retail will be impossible. Possibly worse, we are losing land conducive to retail/commercial development no doubt because approval for such alternative uses is being given with little or no thought to the general economic needs of the community.

Brad asked members of the Committee to provide him with their thoughts about the types of commercial enterprises that would find Red Hook a desirable area for expansion and which would be acceptable additions to the community. Your suggestions should be Emailed to him at Brad@floorings.com

After extensive discussion it was agreed that we would prepare a “white paper” for the Town and Village Boards summarizing our view of the situation. This would be a prelude to a full presentation to the Board and for a communication program to inform the community generally.

Status Report - Community Communications

Kevin reported on the work of his sub-committee which is developing a program for communicating the facts and issues to the community.

Initially, the goals of the plan will be: i) To gain the support of the Town and Village Boards in recognizing the emerging tax problem and supporting recommendations for minimizing future impacts; and, ii) To increase awareness throughout the community of the emerging tax problem and encourage an objectivity in evaluating and discussing alternative responses.

In order that the widest and most effective campaign can be developed, Kevin asked the members of the Committee to provide him with the names of all organizations, groups and interested parties, with a contact name if possible, to which future material, presentations and contact might be directed. Your suggestions should be Emailed to him at Kzulchtax@hvc.rr.com

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD MAY 22.