

**Town of Red Hook Zoning Review Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Michael Carr, Chairman

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present** - Michael Carr, Esq.-Chairman-Zoning Review Committee;  
Sue Crane-Town Board Liaison; Steve Cole-Zoning Enforcement Officer;  
Robert McKeon-Chairman-Agriculture & Open Space Committee;  
Linda Page-Economic Development Committee;  
Sam Phelan-Planning Board; Brenda Cagle-Chairperson-Conservation Advisory  
Committee; Chuck Simmons; Susan Simon

**Members Absent** - John Douglas-Zoning Appeals Board

**Guest** – Brent Kovalchik – Village Trustee

The minutes of the July meeting were reviewed and changes made. Linda Page made a motion to approve the July Minutes – seconded by Sue Crane – All agreed. Minutes accepted and approved as amended.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**143.88 Conference Centers**

Sue Crane heard from Doug Moat who met together with Harold Ramsey and Leon Botstein and Doug felt after the meeting that Leon was very supportive of having a Conference Center at Bard College, on Bard College land, or in the Bard College area and understood full well that it would have to be a taxable entity which was the concern of everyone. Sue asked Doug if Leon had discussed the subject with Demetri Papadimitriou or Jim Brudvig or any of the other people who may be taking it forward to an attorney and Doug said “no”, he sensed that this was Leon’s take on it. Sue’s question is how likely it will be that legally we could be located on not-for-profit land and charge a tax.

Sue requested Michael Carr look into this tax matter and find out if you can have a “For-profit” operation on a property that is not taxed. Sam commented that it may be a matter of who owns the buildings.

Linda Page raised the question of what would happen if they allocated a parcel of property and then leased it. What would happen if there was a land lease to a profit corporation?

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Michael said that it may be a State issue and he suspects that it if is operated by them for profit, he does not think that it makes a difference who operates it.

Sue Crane got the impression that Doug is willing to entertain the idea that some major company, i.e. a Hyatt, would come in, build a Conference Center and a Hotel and that it would be a taxable entity even though it were on Bard property. The impression was that they seemed to like that idea.

Linda Page received a letter as a member of the Economic Development Committee which Doug Moat drafted to go to Leon and it would appear to Linda that the path they were taking was that Bard would provide some land but a developer or private entity/corporation would come in, build it and run it – Bard would not be involved in the construction or operations.

Michael asked what the issue of concern is. Sue advised that the issue is the legality of it. Red Hook is not interested in doing this unless it is taxable—we are not interested in supporting it on Bard property unless we generate some tax income from it.

Sam Phelan informed the committee that this can be dealt with via this becoming a condition of the Planning Board approval.

### **Brent Kovalchik – Village Trustee**

Brent was invited to this meeting to share the Village's position in regards to Hotel/Conference Center. The ZRC would like to know if the Village had anything they could share with the committee about any knowledge that the Village has regarding any site that the Village is looking at that they would deem to be ideal or preferred.

Brent responded that the Village has been approached by some citizens of the Town of Red Hook, perhaps as a nostalgic feeling but also a very realistic proposal, the site of the former Red Hook Hotel. The serious problem that the Village has is the lack of a central sewage system which they are aggressively trying to get with the Town. Brent added that parking is also an issue at that site so they started looking at the Cookingham Property which they have proposed on the North side of the Village that would include a mixed use entity both residential and commercial and they thought that this would be a good location for a hotel of 60-80 rooms and perhaps a conference center there.

The Village considered this location:

- 1 - To minimize the amount of traffic to and from the Village to the hotel as opposed to a hotel near Hannaford where people would have to drive;
- 2 - The Village is very concerned in keeping their general business district or at least helping it out quite a bit by having an anchor in the Village so it would become a destination as opposed to just a crossroads.

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Brent stated that this location would also be a good spot for Bard because it is closer to the campus, plus the traffic would be mitigated because one would not have to go through the four corners of the village.

The Village has just started looking at plans with John Clarke and they just filed for a Greenway Grant so they could get their zoning in place. John is currently working on several scenarios for the hotel. The hotel the Village had in mind would be a campus-style plan—the scale would be small to fit in with a residential neighborhood. They are trying to encourage people to walk and patronize the Village businesses and that is why they are pushing for a hotel where it would provide numerable benefits to our general business district.

Dave Seymour, our DC Legislator, is currently working with the Cookingshams-nothing has been settled but talks are progressing. Brent feels that immediately it would be difficult but at some point in time the possibility is greater and that is what the Village is basing their T&D on at this point.

The Village invited a developer from Rhinebeck in and she felt that the former hotel site would be best served for more general retail/commercial type businesses. Brent said that the nostalgic feeling is that a lot of residents in the Village would *love* to see that hotel back. Brent added that if it were to be built at the former hotel site, he would like to align the bottom at street side with retail and then set back or up above put the hotel so that you could possibly have two stories with rooms and then the bottom would be retail or conference space. As far as a Conference Center, that space is very limited and would not be a possibility unless we did some major urban renewal in the Village which is off the table. Parking was also considered behind that site and a pocket park was included next to the Key Bank and the possibility of incorporating the Key Bank into that hotel site. Brent added that this the “*dream scheme*” and the Village has to look at the responsible, realistic scheme that a hotel in the Village of Red Hook is highly unlikely **but** they Village would love it. The Village is looking at a realistic site. The Village is restricted in such a way that the central sewer is of utmost importance—they cannot do anything in the Village without that—they cannot expand anywhere. This is what the Village needs to do and it is high priority for them at this time. They are trying to get the language in place on the T&D to give them more opportunity to seek further grants for the central sewer. They are very seriously pursuing the central sewer system.

Sue Simon did some research on Conference Centers and found a website set up by Michigan State University which is a planning and zoning center and there are web links to over 500 local government master plans and zoning ordinances. This website gives an opportunity for a Town such as ours an opportunity to reference those types of questions that we are asking regarding how other people dealt with the zoning of Conference Centers/Hotels. There were a couple of towns where they have a whole proposal for a Conference Center, minutes of their meeting and what discussions were taking place. The website is: [PZCENTER@MSU.EDU](mailto:PZCENTER@MSU.EDU). MSU’s library is entitled: The Master Plan & Zoning Ordinance Library.

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### **Acreege for Hotel/Motel/Conference Center**

Sue Crane feels that we need to settle this issue and recalls the committee all agreeing that 50 acres is too much for a Hotel/Motel. We need enough acreage for a Hotel/Motel, including parking, consisting of 80 rooms in the allowable districts, which as of right now is at Bard College and along Route 9G West. For a Conference Center, the acreage **must** be 50 acres. Michael Carr made the recommendation that more research be done on this subject. Chuck Simmons is going to get in touch with the Civil Engineers at Bard and find out what the formula is for this type of project. Zoning Board approvals and definitions are going to be a large factor in this planning.

Brenda Cagle asked what impact these changes would have on what the Intermunicipal Task Force would like to see happen and would this change discourage their work ? What does this do to the Office Industrial Plan for the Hotel to be located near Hannaford? Brenda informed the committee that the Task Force is trying to direct things in that direction and be sensitive to the Village's desires and if we are trying to change this code, she feels that everyone should be working together.

### **Scenic Roads**

Brenda Cagle informed the Committee on how the Scenic Roads designation came to be. The local scenic roads designations were taken from the Master Plan from State designation, additions from CAC and a calling of resources. The CAC presented it to the Planning Board, the Planning Board edited it and a final Designation of Scenic Roads document was adopted.

The CAC made sure each scenic road was described, which had not been done previously. Sam commented that the Planning Board liked the description of the attributes of the roads, which then gives the Planning Board guidance as to how to treat development on that road. The intent of the CAC was when the Planning Board is reviewing something involving a scenic road, they can preserve that which makes the road scenic per these descriptions. Brenda stated that there was some Code that went along with these designations and there was consideration of revisions to the code but this became very long and involved. Sam advised that as of right now the way the Zoning Ordinance is written, it is essentially a paragraph that gives the Planning Board the responsibility to preserve the Scenic Road and then outlines mitigating measures and they felt that that was sufficient for this designation. The descriptions are not in the former Scenic Roads

Designation and would have to be constructed - the descriptions are only in the additions and descriptions would have to be incorporated into the Ordinance.

After more discussion and review, the Committee decided that the Scenic Roads Map and Descriptions is not ready to be submitted to the Town. Brenda Cagle will e-mail the complete definitions/descriptions to the Committee prior to the next meeting and an e-mail vote will take place.

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### **Adult Entertainment**

The Adult Entertainment “sub-committee” met and agreed that when referring to Adult Entertainment that we should use maximum square footage allowed rather than gross income because gross income is not always accurate. Window usage should also be defined in the square footage. The sub-committee spoke about obtaining a moratorium on Adult Entertainment so they are prepared if a request for an entity arises. Sue Crane recommended that Christine Chale attend a meeting to educate the Committee on the Adult Entertainment subject. Michael Carr will contact Christine and schedule her to attend a meeting.

### **Parking Standards**

Sue Crane raised the question to Sam Phelan on the parking standards in commercial districts. Sue sensed that the Planning Board felt that it would be helpful if there were a draft. The Greenway has some standards and Sam will contact Michelle Grieg and work with her regarding parking stipulations.

**NEXT MEETING – October 11, 2007 -7:30 p.m.**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Michael Carr made a motion for adjournment, seconded by Steve Cole - all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Michael Carr  
Chairman – Zoning Review Committee

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