

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, October 28, 2020

Present: Kristina Dousharm (Chair), Chris Klose (Secretary), Amanda Bodian, Dan Budd, Maarty Reilingh, Vanessa Shafer, George Verrilli, members; Ed Blundell (Mayor, Village of Red Hook), Kim McGrath (Red Hook Area Chamber of Commerce), Emily Sachar (IMBY)

Call to Order: With a quorum present, Chair Dousharm called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Minutes: On a motion by Dr. Verrilli and second by Ms. Bodian, the Minutes of the Meetings of September 30 and October 21, 2020, as corrected, were unanimously approved.

Old Business:

- **Comprehensive Plan** – KD: member comments in re: parts that are relevant and those needing updating; goal is to aid the discussion of the Town Board;

AB: very good overall; para. 6 re: economic development needs to be updated to fit with the Internet world and Red Hook *does* seek to be a tourist destination;

KD: where are the jobs coming from? Most people employed by Bard, RHCS, local businesses and service organizations, so what's keeping the villages vibrant, such as restaurants, and how to support them? Tourism is a key part and should be emphasized now as opposed to the 1993 environment reflected in the Comprehensive Plan.

GV: We have a new development (109 units) whose people should shop locally; tourists and visitors tend to congregate in Rhinebeck, so concentrate our efforts on our residents; we can't say were touristy – don't even have a hotel.

EB: Comp Plan written during IBM peak of well-paid jobs; not going to have that again but were not going to attract similar large businesses; plan is an ongoing process, so let's acknowledge the need to update and emphasize tourism;

VS: We don't want to become a huge tourist mecca but we do need to embrace agro-tourism, which is most important today; "accommodate" change as we grow to be compatible with the plan's vision of "maintaining Red Hook's rural character." All of para: 6 needs updating; also, section 1

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is too restrictive/doesn't foster creativity; need to envision what our community should be; KD: amazing how relevant the plan still is in terms of its vision; GV: Red Hook wonderful place to come home to – quiet, good neighbors – but put in some attractants for residents; our economy should support residency; KD: Red Hook village businesses always struggling so could benefit from a more vibrant economic core, such as tourism;

EB: real world concerns: should retail spaces be taken over by service businesses? Why did Coldwell-Banker move into the old Enchanted Café space? MR: C-B = regional franchise covering the Hudson Valley down to New Paltz;

DB: 1st: plan is anti-growth (we don't want you here message); curtails strip development, so need to promote Red Hook social, small town experience; they want the unique village-surrounded-by-farms-hamlets experience (by activities, such as Hardscrabble Day, and a “rewards” system that entices peoples' return business; we have to sell our small town charm.

ES: notion we need to protect certain zoning districts; also, is there some commercial (new business) core we should work with? EB: Firehouse Productions = good example of an “unknown” business, so enticed them to participate with us on Hardscrabble Day and this has enabled us to attract world-class music to Red Hook; pandemic has hit FP hard, though, but they have rebounded despite;

KD: town zoning limits industry to certain, small areas; is this appropriate? Village has designated industrial areas, too; VS: rezoning Upper Red Hook to Highway Business Zone = restrictive; KD: what do we need to support our businesses to support our lifestyle; DB: 30%=Bard, rest is RHCS and small businesses; balance of services = critically important;

KD: As plan is written, the focus is on local population supporting local businesses, so do we need to envision new kinds of businesses, such as furniture making, and accommodate them through zoning changes (there's not enough space now for new businesses); GV: chocolate factory is an incubator for businesses, which grow and move out to... where?

KMcG: we have to update the plan strategically (EDC, especially) but figure out what we want, not that we don't; ES: people visiting here want to feel part of the community but not anchored to it because they are attracted by our regional points of interest and activities; EB: how about

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the EDC letter to Town Board urging review of the Comp Plan, and working with Bard to reopen their campus and Montgomery Place to visitors, so work your Bard contacts to support reopening;

ES: STR = do we want to do the opposite of what Hudson/Rhinebeck doing? KD: NDA breakfast meeting made it clear that the Host Compliance platform is the County's monitor of STRs/legislation; KMcG: what is being done about STR guidelines is town-by-town, so its important to look at what's being done, so we don't want to copycat; VS: ES picked up on the historic tussle between Rhinebeck and Red Hook; we all hope retail and small businesses will proliferate, as opposed to Rhinebeck Village which has become a new "Gilded Age" tourism destination;

KD: Continue discussion next week.

Next Meeting: 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, November 4, 2020 via Zoom.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Christopher Klose, Secretary