

Wappingers Falls EDC Committee
2/28/2013

Member Attendance: Mike Kocan, Rob Alfonso, Scott Davis, Ronnie Komornik, Don McCormick, Sandra Vacchio, Alex Reese, Peg O'Leary, Kathy Rutledge, Kristin Catalano, Cindy Latino

Absent: Don Swartz

Public Attendance: Mary Schmalz

Meeting called to order at 7:15 PM:

The meeting began with a discussion regarding selection of a Chairman and Secretary. Scott Davis will serve as Chairman of the committee and Cindy Latino as Secretary. All future meetings will be tape recorded to facilitate accuracy of minutes.

Agenda:

Item: Review of initial WFEDC package

Scott opened discussion regarding developing a mission and/or plan of action for the WFEDC committee. He asked membership if they had reviewed the current numerous plans that have been developed as guidelines for growth in the Village. The WFEDC should be familiar with all these plans as we move forward. Sandra Vacchio commented that there is a tremendous amount of documentation to review. She suggested that individual committee members could select a plan and develop a short summary of the plan to be presented to the entire group. This would cut down on the workload. All present were in favor of this idea and the following breakdown was established;

Comprehensive Plan: Cindy Latino

Elan/Zoning Plan: Mike Kocan

West Main Street Revitalization Plan: Rob Alfonso

Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Sandy Vacchio

Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan: Matt Alexander

Remaining plans not assigned are mostly self explanatory. Cindy suggested that a short write up of each plan be made available for committee members to reference as needed.

The committee then returned to discussion of our purpose and direction. Alex Reese suggested having a meeting with several developers and having a conversation with them to understand what their needs are to invest in the Village. Rob Alfonso and Scott Davis both shared information about a prospective developer for corner of Market & East Main Street. He has expressed concerns about parking, empty storefronts & buildings, and zoning enforcement. Peg O'Leary passed out pictures that she had taken concerning these issues. Further discussion about the pictures was tabled until later in the meeting.

Scott Davis brought up that Marc Molinaro would like to discuss using the Village as a pilot program for a facade grant. Scott asked for feedback and pros and cons. Cindy brought up the facade grant that the WFBPA (Business Association) had been

awarded in the early 1990. We have members on the WFEDC committee that were very involved - Peg O'Leary, Don Swartz, to name a few. Peg remarked that the WFBPA grant was a 50/50 match of up to \$15000.00 for each business. All agreed that this seems like a project we could pull together quickly. Peg & Cindy will look for paperwork on the grant. Cindy remarked that the WFBPA's grant was restricted to the Central Business District. And any future facade grants should be more inclusive. The Village grant writer will be brought in to assist in developing a plan.

Discussion continued on many different areas that the WFEDC could look to address. Below are some of the topics that were touched upon:

- What type of amenities would be good to have in the Village.
- What type of businesses would we look to attract.
- Can planning & zoning processes be streamlined.
- Create an inventory of available properties & real estate in the Village.
- Address the costs involved in application to planning, zoning, etc. - particular discussion about recreation fees.
- Moving head quickly when investors come for approvals on ready-to-go projects
- Write letters to DEC to push Phase II of the Bleachery cleanup -
- Look to capitalize on tourism as a means to bring people into the Village.
- Utilize Mesier Park as the main attraction to enticing people to frequent Main Street by hosting events year round, weekly during warmer weather.
- Do not rely on recreation to stage events but invite other groups to participate.
- Look at feasibility of a Street Fair in the Central Business District.
- Shuttle from Village to New Hamburg Train Station

The idea of creating a survey for Village residents and businesses was brought up. Peg O'Leary suggested putting it into the SD News. The WFBPA recently did one to their membership at the request of Tom Morris, Planning Board Chair. WFBPA and Tom are having a follow up meeting to discuss recommendations that WFBPA has made following their survey. Kristin Catalano suggested focusing on the positive about the Village, highlighting what are it's assets and what type of events would you like to see. Cindy will use the WFBPA survey as a start and create a survey. We will discuss at next meeting.

Mike Kocan brought up the idea of writing a letter to the Village Board to adopt changes to the current sign ordinance, in particular lighted signs in business windows. Committee gave Mike approval to do this on our behalf.

Item: Review of 2012 Goring Hall Collapse

Scott opened discussion of the building collapse and its aftermath. In general everyone was pleased with how the safety and securing of the building was handled. Problem issues generally were directed at lack of communication, impact of street closure on all businesses, etc. Kathy Rutledge addressed questions about the involvement of County Exec. Molinaro and Charlie North of the Chamber. The reopening ribbon cutting was quickly pulled together and had both a positive and negative reaction from many. Cindy remarked that she was disappointed at the slow response from the WFBPA to provide support to the many businesses involved. Once the WFBPA became involved

they were able to provide support to the Village and businesses. In general there needs to be an emergency disaster plan in place. It was decided that the WFEDC committee would take the lead to establish protocol and assume leadership for coordinating all groups involved in any disaster.

Meeting adjourned

Next Meeting: MARCH 28th @ 7:30 PM - Legion Hall

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Latino