

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR ZONING UPDATES
MINUTES
Thursday, 12/10/2015
7:00 p.m**

Approved: January 7, 2016

Present: Committee Chairwoman Nancy Zahler, Rod Hawkes, Darby Kiley, Sue Ritter, Elizabeth Thomas and George Tselekis; CJ Randall of Randall + West

Call to Order: 7:03 p.m.

Agenda Review; Minutes Review (11/2/15): Mr. Hawkes MADE the MOTION to approve the November 2, 2015 meeting minutes, and Ms. Ritter SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was unanimously approved, 6-0.

Public Outreach Strategy, including kick-off and focus meetings: Ms. Randall said she enhanced the public outreach strategy based on a memo from Ms. Zahler. Additions to the document include three questions to be asked of participants at the future kick-off meeting with the public and the inclusion of special stakeholder focus groups and key contact interviews. Ms. Randall also expressed an idea to include a piece about sustainable rural development during the public kick-off event and coordinate a dialogue on zoning between stakeholders, Steering Committee members and consultants. There, stakeholders could state concerns, while Committee members and Randall + West could ask questions to help guide future zoning work. Ms. Randall also suggested a brain-writing exercise for the kick-off meeting, in which public participants are given note cards to share their ideas anonymously on zoning matters. A workshop with mockups and pinups may also be a way to make zoning come alive for the public, she said. At this stage, consultants are still considering ideas for the kick-off, she said.

The next hour of discussion was devoted to reviewing the outreach strategy, determining the structure and timing of events among Committee members, stakeholders and the general public, weighing information the group hoped to convey to the stakeholders and the public, and considering key elements to include for the public kick-off event. Several town zoning matters were also discussed. Ms. Randall pointed to the question of future density in the Hamlet of Jacksonville. She informed the Committee of a housing-needs assessment, which is being conducted throughout Tompkins County, that will run through March. The assessment's focus will be on urban areas and commuters, with a piece on rural nodes, she said. It could be an excellent time to see what types of housing are in demand and write zoning around those needs, she said. Ms. Kiley informed the Committee that the Town recently applied for a grant to fund a collaboration with Cornell planning students on a project involving Jacksonville. Though Ms. Randall noted the assessment primarily dealt with housing, Ms. Zahler thought an income survey could be a valuable focus for the possible Cornell collaboration. The idea of an income survey, particularly with Jacksonville as the focus, has been discussed in past meetings, she said, since such a survey could improve the Town's ability to secure public financing for water infrastructure upgrades in the Hamlet and increase the Town's eligibility for local community

development grants. She suggested having a conversation with the County to ask if it would be possible for the Town to fund an income survey to coincide with the County's housing assessment.

On the subject of public events, Ms. Randall said there are two public meetings officially scheduled, though details need to be finalized. Her idea for the kick-off event is to include the brain-writing exercise, a discussion of rural sustainability, and then use the remaining time to meet and bounce questions off stakeholders and community members. Ms. Zahler thought that some of the key leaders and stakeholders would like a dedicated meeting, as opposed to limiting their time toward the end of the kick-off meeting. Mr. Tselekis said many of the questions pertaining to zoning have already been asked of and answered by the community within the Comprehensive Plan. In response, Ms. Randall said that posing questions could prompt useful feedback and agreed that it is not the goal to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan. The questions could be tweaked, she added.

Ms. Zahler said her intentions when suggesting the questions were to hear community concerns and ideas prior to the meetings. She raised the question of whether it might be more beneficial for the Committee to meet separately with individual stakeholders. Ms. Thomas noted the question of time; limited grant funds will guide what the Committee and its consultants can do. Ms. Zahler mentioned former Town Supervisor Roxanne Marino, who was very involved in past planning efforts and would be a valuable resource. Someone with her knowledge and expertise would like the opportunity to share her ideas, she said. One thought may be to hold a pre-meeting with individual stakeholders before the big kick-off event. Including members of the Town Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals for the pre-meeting was also proposed. Ms. Kiley mentioned her hope to invite Randall + West to a future meeting of the Planning Board to discuss the scope of the consultant's work.

Mr. Hawkes said he supports Ms. Zahler's idea. He said he envisions four groups of key stakeholders: Roxanne Marino; Phil Antwiler of the Jacksonville Community Association; a representative from the Ag community; and both the Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals. He supported Mr. Tselekis's previous thoughts commending the depth and scope of the outreach strategy.

Conversation then turned to the topic of when to hold these sessions with the stakeholder groups – before or after the public kick-off. The Committee reached a consensus to hold one session and include each of the four groups prior to a larger, preliminary meeting. The proposed sequencing might present an opportunity for each stakeholder group to drum up public interest in the kick-off event. More details were discussed later in the meeting.

Ms. Randall said the preliminary meeting and walk-through would likely be scheduled in January, in Town Hall. Committee members and stakeholders would have the chance to review the consultant's presentation and offer feedback at that time. The public kick-off would then be held in February. On the topic of location for the kick-off event, the Committee discussed Town Hall, the Jacksonville Church, or Rackers Center as possible choices. Ms. Kiley and Ms. Randall will work on finalizing a location. In closing, Ms. Randall said the public outreach document would remain a work-in-progress until the end of the January meeting.

Review Existing plans summary: Ms. Randall said many questions came up in Randall + West's review of the Town's existing plans. These questions, she added, could help their approach and philosophy on how to present these zoning ideas to the public. The existing plan review is a requirement of the NYSERDA grant and is due by the end of December, Ms. Kiley said, though the submitted document to NYSERDA could be revised after submission as more information is gathered. With the existing plan document as the starting point, a wide-ranging conversation on Town zoning ensued, including questions over the reasoning for allowing flag lots, the need to repurpose existing buildings left vacant partly because of strict zoning, and the current and future need for senior housing. Ms. Randall requested Committee members email written comments addressing whichever bullet points they feel should be addressed, expanded or clarified. She set a deadline of mid January for Committee comments. She said the document is meant to give the Committee prompts in order to better present cohesive ideas to the public.

Community septic was briefly discussed as an option to increase density in Jacksonville. A municipality outside Rochester has recently installed community septic, and the technology is being embraced in this region, Ms. Randall said. Parking alleys were also discussed as a possibility for Jacksonville.

Ms. Zahler said the Committee would provide feedback and comments with the understanding that members are focused on the Ag District and the Hamlet of Jacksonville. Ms. Randall would then prepare a draft report and share it with the Committee prior to submitting it to NYSERDA, she said.

The Committee reached consensus to hold its January 7 meeting beginning with an hour-long discussion of bullet points at 6:30 p.m. The preliminary meeting with stakeholders would then take place from 7:30 to 8:30 or 9 p.m. Ms. Kiley said she would get invites out to Roxanne Marino, Phil Antwiler and the Jacksonville Community Association, agricultural community members, and the Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals.

The Committee and Ms. Randall briefly discussed PDRs (Purchase of Development Rights) and TDRs (Transfers of Property Rights). Members also raised the question of whether or not to share the existing plans document with shareholders, if the draft were close to being finalized by January 7. Ms. Ritter suggested the Committee share the document but omit Ms. Randall's bulleted points, which will be discussion points at future meetings.

Ms. Kiley MADE the MOTION to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Hawkes SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Louis A. DiPietro on December 11, 2015.