

Town of Canandaigua

5440 Routes 5 & 20 West
Canandaigua, New York 14424

MINUTES

CITIZENS' IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2018, 9:00 A.M.

Committee Members Present: Doug Finch
Gary Davis
Oksana Fuller
Ray Henry
Kelly LaVoie

Guests Present: Karen Parkhurst, Parks and Recreation Committee, Eric Cooper

Members Absent: Sarah Reynolds, Kevin Reynolds, Pat Venezia, Joyce Marthaller

➤ **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting commenced at 9:10 am.

➤ **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

None at this time.

➤ **REPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE**

Eric Cooper gave the report of the Development Office. They are trying to increase revenues a little bit. There are areas of the Town that are under-utilized, i.e. plazas, etc. They are working with various developers to see who they can get in there in the event there is an opportunity for redevelopment of certain plazas. Some property owners are seeking to pursue conservation subdivision. A brief meeting was held to go over the process. It appears they might be willing to extend the gravity sewer North to wherever that connection would be, which would be beneficial for a couple of other property owners there. There was a discussion about where the sewers start and end.

Oksana thanked Eric for looking into the RLD on the accessory structures. Eric said he mentioned that in the Ordinance Report.

REFERRALS

None at this time.

➤ **OLD BUSINESS**

None at this time.

➤ **NEW BUSINESS**

Doug Finch opened the meeting. He began by filling everyone in on the budget status. In terms of Open Space, one of the recommendations that the CIC had made to the Town Board is a lead in terms of conservation easements and some assistance related to that. He put a couple of placeholders in the budget in order to have options, one of which would be for the indexing that they had discussed – the natural resource index. He also put a placeholder in terms of this conservation lead. Doug had had a conversation with Tom Schwartz about the possibility of talking to someone at a lending corporation such as Finger Lakes Land Trust to contract with them for a certain amount. They could help with some of that and work closely with Eric in the Development Office. There are some tentative placeholders to provide some wiggle room to work with as they explore that further into next year.

The Town Board adopted the Open Space Policy for the Reserve Fund at last night's meeting. There was some discussion at the Finance meeting about whether or not to purposely replenish that reserve fund. In the general consensus from the Finance Committee, there was concern about intentionally putting money back into, as a budget line, the reserve fund because it is so restricted (reserve funds are restricted by nature). The Finance Committee liked the idea that, at the end of the year, appropriation for any unassigned fund balance can be made back to that reserve fund, which is actually part of the policy. There should also be budgeting for any specific projects that they are trying to address through that.

Doug explained that over the last four years, the Town has appropriated approximately \$500,000 in fund balance to balance out the budget for the next year. Expenditures are, essentially, outpacing revenue. He is trying to correct that by doing a multi-year budget. At the end of last year, with that transfer of appropriated unassigned fund balance, not as much money had to get transferred over, as had been originally budgeted. There should have been an opportunity to have the conversation about whether to appropriate a portion of that, even if it was \$50,000 - \$100,000, to go over into that Open Space Reserve Fund. Each January, they will have to make sure that conversation takes place, wherein they ask the Town Board for its consideration. The concern is five years from now the Reserve Fund may run out, so other sources of revenue or ways to trim expenses need to be found.

Tom Schwartz raised the question of an Open Space fee similar to the Parks and Rec fee, which he believed to be a viable solution, as far as money goes. Doug said that Chris Nadler indicated that he was not sure it is legal. The Parks and Rec fee is specifically authorized by state statute. He does not know of any place in state law that allows a municipality to charge an impact fee for Open Space. Eric asked if the Parks and Rec fee could be increased to use on Open Space. Doug said it could not, as Parks and Rec has to be dedicated for recreational matters. He suggested a special district as an option. There could be a \$.02 - \$.03 tax that could go specifically into that fund and be used for conservation. Tom asked if that would count against the tax cap. Doug said it would count against the levy the first year, but then as long as it stays fairly consistent, it would be, essentially, a wash. It was agreed that this was a good idea.

There was a discussion about concept mapping, which was on the agenda for the Joint Meeting of the Boards prior to the Town Board Meeting on August 20th.

Karen's presentation was clearly directed toward the Town Board. A brief discussion about funding took place. The matter of potential funding that would be required was raised. In addition, they talked about a line item in next year's budget. LDCs were also discussed. Eric said that it is still very early in the process of development.

Doug met with the Drainage Committee last week. They would like to the Town to consider a special drainage district, where everybody would put in a couple of cents per thousand, so that there would be some money there to fix drainage issues. They felt it was important that that be shown as a separate line on the tax bill, so that the purpose is clear. Something similar could be done in terms of Open Space.

Karen Parkhurst said that since they would not be staying under the tax cap this year, it seemed to make sense to do those things this year. Doug said it is too late for the 2019 budget, as that is due next week. However, the Town is not likely to be tax-cap compliant for the next five years. Tom said that if the money has to be spent, it has to be spent, and perhaps the tax cap, as it relates to the Town of Canandaigua, is unreasonable. He pointed out that if the Town of Canandaigua had had the storm they had in Lodi, people would have been demanding to know why certain things had not been done. Tom said proactive measures need to be taken to help those families with land worth saving get into conservation easement. Doug said that there may be an opportunity for some of this to cross over with the drainage, too, if they end up doing that. There may be an opportunity for some additional funding there. A comment was made at last night's Town Board Meeting regarding when they did the (five-year) multi-year budget, the Highway Department – it's not so much the personnel services as it is the benefits over those years in 2024 – they either have to reduce the expenditures, the number of roads they do per year (or not redo them as often), or they have to find another source of revenue to help pay salaries when the snow is not being plowed during the winter. Doug told Jim Fletcher that the Special Drainage District might be another opportunity where the Drainage District is hiring the Highway employees in the summer time to do this work as another source of revenue to cover those expenses. All options need to be explored. Everyone agreed that something needs to be done during the 2019 calendar year to positively impact the 2020 budget.

Agricultural Enhancement Plan Implementation Update

Doug had asked Eric to look at the Zoning Audit in the Ag Plan and the changes that need to be implemented. Eric made a list of everything and will come to the Ordinance and Ag Enhancement Committees for those potential changes to zoning code that were touched on in the report, as well as some other ones that he identified through different research that might be beneficial.

The potential reorganization of the Ag Committee was discussed. This is still in discussion. Karen said that the first order of business is to recruit agricultural-related businesses. The Ontario County Economic Development Corporation looks for opportunities to provide help to supply-chain organizations like Ag. There was a presentation from Real Eats in Geneva. There could be substantial use of the supply chain from area farmers due to expansion opportunities right now. They are committed to Ag and Workforce Development. It was agreed that if everyone has the same goal in mind, it would be best to work together in a coordinated effort.

Ray Henry gave an update on the Ag Enhancement Plan. The process of conservation subdivision was discussed. Conservation subdivision can be beneficial to farmers if done properly and some revisions are made to the current code. The Ag Committee understands that revisions to conservation subdivisions may be difficult. Ray will share those concerns with the Ag Enhancement Committee and ask members for their thoughts. A suggestion was made that all the Boards have updated training about conservation subdivisions. Ray will get copies of the most recent Ag Committee minutes to everyone on this Board.

The topic of the need for USDA slaughterhouse in the region to support local farmers was discussed. This is one of the recommendations in the Ag Plan. Many farmers' animals have to be shipped a long distance for slaughtering.

An update on PDRs was given. The Town is almost finished with the applications. This will be completed before the end of August. There was extensive talk about the items that might require money for 2019 for the Ag Committee:

- Fliers
- Mailings
- Special trips to Town farms
- Possible sponsoring of field trips, transportation, etc.

There was a discussion about the possibility of having some 'Fun on the Farm' events for children, as well as adults, in the Town of Canandaigua. In addition, this would also be a good opportunity for farming and agricultural industries to show their support. Farming needs to be accepted as an industry; the educational benefit would be great. Oksana and Karen agreed to work together on this effort.

Ray said there is work being done on a Finger Lakes Agricultural Museum that is going to be located halfway between Canandaigua and Geneva (on the old Oliver farm). The property, along with a couple of adjoining acres, has been secured. The concentration will be on young children, with the focus centering on the (circa) 1900 – 1950's era. Information and in-house demonstrations on how to use farm equipment will be provided.

Ray and Saralinda Hooker are looking into nominating a Town farm for an agricultural award. The suggestion was made that Century Farms should apply.

Ag Committee Implementation Plan

The question was asked about what, specifically, the Ag Committee is working on. Ray will be sending copies of the minutes to everyone. Attendance at the meetings has been very low, and the suggestion was made to recruit more members.

There are some small movements for some people to start their own farms (hobby-style). It is not known for sure if the Town can support the large 1,000-acre farms, but ways to support the smaller farms can potentially be found. PDRs are a way of subsidizing farming, as are Ag exceptions and outright farming subsidies. Some of the farmers are using the money to acquire more land. Area developers are paying more for the land than farmers can afford to pay. There are ways to use the conservation subdivisions to allow farmers to have greater access to capital without taking more of their land.

Upcoming events, sponsored by the Special Events Committee, include Farm Day, scheduled for September 4th (time and location?) and Halloween at Onanda, October 27th, from 2 – 5 pm at Onanda Park.

➤ **MEMBERS' REPORTS**

None at this time.

UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS

Parks Master Plan – Implementation Update

TDR Program Design Partners

➤ **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:20 AM.

Next meeting scheduled for September 4th, 2018.