

Hamlet Committee Meeting Notes

9 a.m., Feb. 5, 2012

ATTENDING: Mike Dvorchak (chair), Paul Amash, Lynda Brenner, Jade Carroll, Grigori Fateyev, Ian Rasch, David Ruede, Jill Sims-Elster (Town Board member), Brian Spence, Mike Stertz, Tim Stookesberry, Steve Tiger (Town Board member), Joan Wallstein, Matthew White, Bart Ziegler, Tom Carty and Howard Van Lenten.

Chair Mike Dvorchak welcomed Ian Rasch, Jade Carroll, Brian Spence and Paul Amash as members of the Committee.

UPDATE ON PPS PLAN

Mike Dvorchak announced that the PPS's Design and Development Plan for the Hamlet would be presented to the Town Board at a public hearing, at which time the Town Board will vote on whether to accept the plan as an appendix to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

UPDATE ON NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Steve Tiger reported that as co-chair of the Town Board's Business Development Committee, he planned to call an organizational meeting in March of the Town's 90+ businesses to get input on policies and initiatives that would foster new business development.

Howard Van Lenten noted that the Library, as part of its 5-Year Planning process, would conduct focus groups with area businesses, organizations and interest groups to ascertain how the Library could, through its collections, data bases and programs, attract new businesses and help existing businesses expand.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tom Carty reported that he needed up to date numbers on the Hamlet Park and Beautification initiatives and would give a detailed financial report at the March meeting.

TOWN BOARD ISSUES

Regarding the process by which the Town Board selected a new Town seal, **Mike Dvorchak** urged Committee members to attend Town Board meetings and to read the minutes of Town Board meetings so as to be aware of any issues that might have a bearing on the Committee's projects and initiatives.

Howard Van Lenten remarked that, in the context of creating a favorable environment for existing businesses, it was unfortunate that the Board had chosen not to retain one of the many Hillsdale-based graphic designers available to design the new Town seal.

Tom Carty noted that it seemed that the Town Board did not regularly post its meeting agendas in advance of meetings, a practice which would help alert people to upcoming issues in which they might have an interest.

[ADDENDUM: Agendas have been posted in advance of Town Board Meetings and we stand corrected. The above notes should have read "Financial Reports" which are out of date.]

Jill Sims-Elster was asked if any progress had been made on the removal of the shed that sits in the Hamlet Park, adjacent to the gas station, and she reported that there were no records as to who owned the shed and no information as to the content of the two barrels inside the shed.

Mike Dvorchak recommended that the Committee write a letter to the Town Board requesting that the Board:

1. Post Town Board meeting agendas on the Town website at least one week in advance of meetings
2. Take action to remove or paint over graffiti in the Hamlet Park, as not doing so encourages repeat occurrences
3. Take steps to permanently remove the shed in the Hamlet Park
4. Post monthly financial statements on the Town website

UPDATE ON THE HAMLET PARK

Tim Stokesberry reported that the Committee had purchased toddler playground equipment as part of Phase 1 of the Hamlet Park revitalization project. The new equipment will be installed in the spring under a "community build" initiative, which will be overseen by a representative of the equipment manufacturer. Preparation involves clearing the area, removing the existing boat structure, and installing a bed of mulch "flooring" under the new equipment. All funds for Phase 1 have been raised. Phase 2 of the equipment purchase for older children is underway and a budget will be presented as soon as possible.

To raise funds for Phase 2, the annual "Flowers to Power the Parks" luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 6, with Tim Stokesberry serving as co-chair representing the Hamlet Committee and the Hamlet Park. Tim said he would be calling on Committee members to volunteer for the luncheon, and that a volunteer was needed to look into possible grant opportunities to help fund Phase 2.

Howard Van Lenten will present proposed language for new entrance signage to replace the existing ones damaged by graffiti to the Committee at the March meeting.

Grigori Fateyev volunteered to create a visual “map” of the Hamlet Park showing the area where the new equipment would be installed and indicate proposed future initiatives. **David Ruede** volunteered to help in this effort.

UPDATE ON THE FLEA MARKET

Mike Dvorchak said that discussions were underway with the Roe Jan Park to conduct the annual Flea Market as a joint effort between the Park and the Committee. Should that not pan out, the Committee discussed the possibility of holding a scaled-down version of the event.

UPDATE ON THE RAIL TRAIL

Bart Ziegler, co-chair of the Copake-Hillsdale Rail Trail Alliance, reported that a contract to create shovel-ready design plans had been signed with an engineering firm and that work was already underway. It could take as long as one year to complete the plans.

Tom Carty reported that the Planning Board was in the process of creating an overlay map of the proposed Rail Trail Village.

Bart Ziegler and Ian Rasch volunteered to report back to the Committee on what other towns have done regarding mixed-use (residential and commercial) zones.

BEAUTIFICATION

Lynda Brenner reported that the new Hillsdale Gardeners organization had held its second meeting, a Landscaping 101 Workshop at the Library, with approximately 30 people in attendance.

She reported that efforts were being made to get members to commit to helping plant and maintain the gardens that surround the Welcome to Hillsdale signs on Rts. 22 and 23, as well as the Veterans’ Memorial garden and town hall garden.

She also noted that money needed to be raised for plants and materials for all these efforts, including tall shrubs and bluestone paving for the Town Hall garden, and that there were naming opportunities for benches and tables.

In that regard, she reported that a fundraiser would be conducted on Sunday, May 6, and that volunteers were needed to staff donation tables at various locations in the Hamlet.

She also noted that a \$25 per person fundraiser would be held at a member’s garden on Saturday, May 12. (Note – this date is now tentative)

NEW BUSINESS

Jill Sims-Elster reported that plans were being considered to conduct various events for children in the Hamlet Park, including movies, block parties, etc. Jill will present more details and a budget for such plans at the March meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Hamlet Committee will be held at 9 a.m., Sunday, March 4, at Town Hall.