

MINUTES

VILLAGE OF CHESTER VILLAGE BOARD

DECEMBER 2, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING

PRESENT: John Thomas BELL, Mayor
Alan BATTIATO, Trustee
Chris BATTIATO, Deputy Mayor
Brian BOONE, Trustee
Elizabeth REILLY, Trustee

PLAN COMMITTEE: Leslie SMITH, Member

ALSO PRESENT: Henry CHRISTENSEN, Village Board Attorney
John ORR, Code Enforcement Officer
Megan TENNERMANN, Orange County Department of Planning

SPECIAL MEETING

Mayor Bell opened the Special Meeting at 9:30 AM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Bell read into the record the letter received from Girl Scout Troop # 387 (copy attached). The Girl Scouts followed with a presentation of their idea to include recycling bins in the parks and around the Village.

Public Comments

- E.J. Szulwach, 9 Elm Street, Chester, NY: Noted that tax incentives are given to large businesses to come into the Village. Is there a plan in place to encourage farmers to develop and utilize the black dirt?
 - Megan Tennermann, OCDP, advised the County has an Agricultural Protection Plan in place.
- Mary Altobelli, 4 Garden Street, Chester, NY: Stated the Village needs to address protecting the black dirt from people who want to exploit and misuse it;
- David Stevenson, 16 Elm Street, Chester, NY: Suggested the Village consider a moratorium until the Comprehensive Plan is complete to ensure new projects are in line with the comprehensive plan vision;
 - Village Board Attorney Henry Christensen advised a moratorium is generally for a maximum of 6 months. It can be extended, but the Village would need to demonstrate why the extension is needed.
 - It was also noted that the Comprehensive Plan could take 12-18 months to complete. Can the Village wait that long to act on development?;
 - Mayor Bell advised the Village would look into the moratorium.
- Patti Salerno, 11 Hambletonian Avenue, Chester, NY: Asked what some of the natural resources are being looked at as potentially being impacted by the comprehensive plan.
 - Mayor Bell advised they were listed in the SWOT review and the information is on the Village website;
- Marshall Coles, 1743 Kings Highway, Chester, NY: Suggested sidewalks be installed to connect the Village and Town of Chester and Sugar Loaf to support more foot traffic to the library and sports activities.
- Megan Tennermann, OCDP: Provided a brief overview of what a Comprehensive Plan is.
- Daniel Solimando, 4 Bank Street, Chester, NY: Stated the Village needs to preserve its history, maintain its resources and look at the resources outside of the Village that have direct impact on the Village (Walton Lake, sewer system and the treatment plant in Harriman, etc).
 - Trustee Elizabeth Reilly advised we received Mr. Solimando's email with his SWOT assessment;
- Village Board Attorney Henry Christensen advised that inter-municipal cooperation can be included in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Eileen Hand, Chester, NY: Asked if there has ever been a meeting between the Town, Village and Sugar Loaf to discuss inter-municipal cooperation/issues.
 - It was noted that Sugar Loaf is part of the Town of Chester. No Board member was aware of any such meeting taking place.;
- Megan Tennermann, OCDP: Advised the County has a Complete Streets Policy and that grants are available for potential projects in the Village;

- Clif Patrick, 119 Brookside Avenue, Chester, NY: Suggested the Village televise and/or record the meetings so those that couldn't make it can watch; the Village should take advantage of grants; and asked the Board to clarify that joint services the Village and Town have;
 - Mayor Bell advised the Village and Town share the following: Moodna / sewer with the Village, Town and Town of Monroe; garbage; DPW equipment; share services with the County for Police Department radios, Park and Recreation.
- Bea Stern, Chester Agricultural Center, 168 Meadow Avenue, Chester, NY: Advised the Chester Agricultural Center is an LLC and has purchased black dirt on Greycourt and Meadow Avenue to provide affordable black dirt space to local farmers so they can continue to farm; they develop programs to train/support farmers and small businesses working in the black dirt; they take action to protect farming and farming businesses. She indicated the most difficult thing is finding affordable housing for the farmers.
 - Village Board Attorney Henry Christensen asked what kind of housing the farmers are looking for – permanent, seasonal, single/couple farmers or farmers with families?;
 - Bea Stern responded by saying they lease black dirt to 5 business which consists of couples and families. They are having a hard time finding year round, affordable housing close to the land they farm. They also have seasonal housing needs for interns, labor and groups;
- E.J. Szulwach, 9 Elm Street, Chester, NY: Suggested beautification is a part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Mary Altobelli, 4 Garden Street, Chester, NY: Advised the Board that the Town of Blooming Grove voted for a ward system and asked if that would be something the Village would consider.
 - Mayor Tom Bell advised the Village is too small for a ward system.
- Clif Patrick, 119 Brookside Avenue, Chester, NY: Stated he believes the current zoning in the Village segregates uses and suggested the Village look at the zoning to enhance areas like downtown where there are mixed uses. He suggested there be more flexibility in the zoning and maybe the Village look at a tiny home community.
 - It was suggested an educational district be added to the zoning.
- Patti Salerno, 11 Hambletonian Avenue, Chester, NY: Suggested the Village have an ARB.
- Committee Member Leslie Smith: Advised tentative historic overlays have been suggested.
- Steven DeVico, 56 Maple Avenue, Chester, NY: Suggested the Village send post cards like voting cards with reminders about meetings. He also advised there's a school in Maine which mandates its students work for 2 weeks with a local farmer for hands on experience and suggested the Village could become part of a program like that.
- Eileen Hand, Chester, NY: Stated Chester encompasses 4 school districts and only one has an agricultural program, but there is no program in the Chester school district.
 - A suggestion was made to possible create an agricultural program as part of the summer Park and Recreation program.
- It was noted that residents can post comments on the County's co-urbanize section and Megan Tennermann, OCDP, will advise if she receives any comments.

A sign-up sheet was created for interested residents to list their email addresses for future meetings and information. Residents were asked to note on the sheet if they were interested in serving on a committee.

The Board discussed the next meeting and decided it would be held to begin creating study groups and narrowing down the main topics. ***MOTION** was made by Trustee Reilly, second by Trustee Alan Battiato, to **SCHEDULE THE NEXT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MEETING FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2018 AT 9:30 AM**. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Bell asked if there was anything else to discuss. As there were no other comments, ***MOTION** was made by Trustee Alan Battiato, second by Trustee Boone, to **ADJOURN THE MEETING**. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra VanRiper
Planning Board Secretary