

Newfield Planning Board Meeting

July 6, 2011

In Attendance:

Planning Board: Gary Goff (Chair), Randy Brown, Christine Ranney, Tony Russo, Gene Yaples, Jim Haustein (secretary)

Other: Richard Driscoll (Newfield Town Supervisor), Darby Kiley (Tompkins County Planning Department)

Minutes submitted by: Jim Haustein

Agenda Items

- Briefing by Darby Kiley on Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs).
- Update on Public Input Meetings.
- Possible use of Cornell Student in City and Regional Planning for Draft Comprehensive Plan Writing.

Critical Environmental Areas

A Critical Environmental Area (CEA) is an area of outstanding environmental qualities that deserves special attention for preservation in its natural state. The only CEA in Tompkins County today is Coy Glen. Local governments or the State can designate Critical Environmental Areas.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6184.html>

For example, gas drilling permit applications contains a checkbox if the area being drilled is a Critical Environmental Area. ECAs can provide another layer of review prior to development. This review will include potential impact and mitigation strategies.

Unique Natural Areas are sources of environmental resources or concerns to be used for planning purposes. For a map of Unique Natural Areas in Tompkins County, see http://www.tompkins-co.org/emc/docs/9_una_countywide_map.pdf.

Unique Natural Areas are potential candidates to be named a Critical Environmental Area. Unique Natural Areas are not a regulatory designation and do not imply any legal protection. They do not effect what landowners can do to their property but is an information tool and resources.

The Tompkins County Environmental Management Council is Tompkins County's official citizen advisory board on local environmental issues. For more information, see <http://www.tompkins-co.org/emc/about.htm>.

Jeffner Allen, Newfield resident, is investigating candidates for CEAs and Unique Natural Areas within Tompkins County and is working with Town Boards.

As a sidebar, there is an existing aquifer study looking at recharge rates and where recharge comes from. Additionally, this 5-year study is investigating the content and age of water.

Public Input Meeting Update

Three evening facilitated discussions at the town library with three topics to be discussed at each meeting. These will cover topics included in the Comprehensive Plan Inventory Report:

- Group 1: Housing and Population; Transportation; Municipal Utilities. Tentative date is August 1 or August 3. Randy Brown, Gary Goff and Christine Ranney expressed an interest in participating.
- Group 2: Economic Development; Energy; Health, Safety, and Security. Tentative date is August 15. Randy Brown, Gary Goff and Tony Russo expressed an interest in participating.
- Group 3: Agriculture; Forest, Wildlife Management and Natural Areas; Water/watershed. Tentative date is August 24. Randy Brown, Gary Goff and Gene Yaples expressed an interest in participating.

Meetings will likely be held on the second floor of the Library due to that building being air conditioned. Currently, a 7 to 9 PM time slot is planned.

A tentative agenda, based on input from Nancy Potter, was presented.

Student Assistance for Draft Comprehensive Plan

Work is in progress for the possible use of a Cornell Student in City and Regional Planning to help with writing the Draft Comprehensive Plan.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Gary Goff to approach the Town Board regarding the hiring of Nancy Potter for the three Public Input Meetings and funding for the Cornell student. Target completion date for this activity is July 15.
- When Public Input Meeting dates are finalized, Jim Haustein will be responsible for advertising in the Newfield News, Tompkins Weekly and Ithaca Times.