

# Newfield Planning Board Meeting

April 6, 2011

## **In Attendance:**

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

[Chris Ranney and Tony Russo have each accepted another term on the Planning Board. Jim Haustein has accepted the role of secretary.]

## **Agenda Items**

- Revisions of the news releases and plans for getting the word out
- Plan for the public meeting soliciting input to the Comprehensive Plan
- Review of request to Town Council for funding of Nancy Potter and a Cornell Graduate student intern to help with public meetings and writing of the draft Comprehensive Plan this summer
- Sharing of information and impressions of the energy transition conference held in Watkins Glen March 30-31.

## **News Release**

Gary Goff previously drafted a short and long version of a news release announcing the results of the public survey on the Comprehensive Plan. Richard Driscoll has provided some comment.

A decision was made not to include comment on the 12 percent response rate received, in that the news release and results of the public survey are intended to state facts as compiled, not any interpretation of the data. Additionally, it was suggested that the Comprehensive Plan Inventory Report be mentioned in the news releases. Aside from these two concerns and some editorial comment, the Planning Board accepted the content of the release. Gary Goff will finalize and forward to the Town Council.

## **Public Meeting Planning**

Three types of meetings are planned pursuant to discussion at previous Planning Board meetings:

- Participation at already-established meetings of select community groups.
- “Open door” at the Town Hall (a Saturday from 9 to 1 and a Sunday from 12 to 3).
- Three evening facilitated discussions at the school with three topics to be discussed at each meeting. Refer to the March 2, 2011 meeting minutes which provided the list of discussion items at each meeting, based on the Comprehensive Plan Inventory Report:
  - Group 1: Housing and Population; Transportation; Municipal Utilities;
  - Group 2: Economic Development; Energy; Health, Safety, and Security
  - Group 3: Agriculture; Forest, Wildlife Management and Natural Areas; Water/watershed

The intent of the different types of meetings is to ensure that the Board provides convenient venues to ensure maximum participation on the part of citizens.

Additionally, Randy Brown mentioned that high school (Gary Emerson) is willing to hold a class on Comprehensive Plans to educate students. This would include what a comprehensive plan is and what Newfield is doing in this arena.

**Assistance with the Draft Comprehensive Plan**

Gary Goff presented a justification and cost summary for Nancy Potter and a graduate student (intern) to provide assistance in drafting the Comprehensive Plan. Total cost would be \$2,875 and the Planning Board recommended that the request for funding be forwarded to the Town Council for approval.

**Energy Transition Conference**

Planning Board members who participated in the March 30-31 Energy Transition Conference in Watkins Glen felt that the Conference was extremely informative and participation was very worth while. Approximately 100 people participated in the conference. Salient points of discussion from information obtained at the Conference:

- Gas drilling is coming, it is inevitable.
- Gas wells are generally drilled in six well pads which produce gas from approximately a square mile of land.
- Well production life is generally short, approximately 3 to 7 years before pressure drops off dramatically.
- The gas drilling experience for our area will be a “boom and bust phenomena” that was referred to as an “economic, social and environmental tsunami.” There will be winners ... and losers.
- The secret is to PLAN. This requires strong local leadership and an assessment of impacts. You increase the chances of being a winner if you plan. The immediate question was, “what can the Planning Board do to help plan?”

A point was made that the internet also contains a wealth of knowledge on drilling in the Marcellus shale.

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ACTION ITEMS: Gary Goff to finalize the two versions of the news release and provide to the Town Council.