

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW PLAN COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF MONTEBELLO HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2009 AT THE MONTEBELLO COMMUNITY CENTER. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:38 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Thomas Campbell-Chairman
Lance Millman
Jane Burke
Melanie Golden
Anthony Piazza

Others Present: Ira Emanuel-Asst Village Attorney
Robert Geneslaw-Village Planner

Absent: Sandra Ward

Recording Secretary: Shelly Flanagan-Ramos

PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

March 17, 2009 minutes reviewed with several amendments to the draft agreed.

Member Millman made a motion to approve the amended minutes of the March 17, 2009 Member Golden seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

SCHEDULE DELIVERABLES:

Members discuss the progress made with this review up to this point and the need to submit a Final Draft to the Board of Trustees by September 17th. A second Public Hearing (The first was Jan 17, 2009) will be scheduled for late July or Early August leaving enough time to incorporate any input from the public into the Final Draft.

Robert Geneslaw submitted an editable 2003 CD version of the Comprehensive Plan to simplify the incorporation of the Commission's decisions into a single document.

COMPONENT UPDATES/DISCUSSION:

Parks, Open Space, Walking and Biking Paths:

Everyone received a copy of the 2007 Open Space Report. Member Piazza gave the Commission a brief overview of the pros and cons of Active and Passive parks as well as basic Open Spaces with a focus on the maintenance costs typically associated with each. Discussion regarding whether there is a need for more active or passive parks in Montebello. The consensus was that the Village should focus

on building Passive parks if they are appropriately located; in addition they are more inexpensive to maintain. There are a number of Town of Ramapo owned parks nearby which meet the majority of the Village's Active park needs, although the Village should consider adding Active parks where the possibility of fees covering expenses were viable. Ira Emanuel stated that money in lieu of land can be used for acquisition of any recreation assets or open land, but not maintenance.

Discussion on undeveloped parcels that might be good candidates for parks or open spaces. There is discussion on the Village's Wetland Code and wetland designations and possibility that developers could "Wetland Swap" – consensus was that likelihood of losing existing wetland statuses was minimal.

The Commission determined that a survey should be done periodically or annually of all properties within Montebello that would be good candidates for future open space or other parkland. The Commission suggested that the current Parks commission could be converted to a standing committee or joined with the Open Space Committee, with the survey maintenance as one of their responsibilities. Ira Emanuel mentioned that Rockland County has a GIS website, whereas you type in an address and receive lots of pertinent information regarding specific properties.

Discussion regarding walking and bike trails: Consensus was to leave the plan as submitted in the 2003 Comp Plan, with direction to expedite efforts to implement portions on land already owned by the public. Maintenance / updating of the walking and biking path plan could also become a responsibility of a standing Parks Committee.

Linking existing trails and paths in adjoining communities / properties should be pursued (such as the Kakiat trail behind the Montebello Community Center); member Golden will attempt to determine if the New York / New Jersey Trail Club < www.nynjtc.org > is an appropriate organization to coordinate with for more information.

Traffic Calming: Discussion on recommending professional review of plan: members determined that not cost effective in current conditions as well as recommendations would likely not match character of village. In areas where the Commission feels attention needed, the Commission should make specific recommendations. Discussion regarding most important traffic calming areas: Mile Road, East Mayer and Mayer Drive (width entices higher speeds), Montebello Rd. Discussion regarding approaches: Speed Humps, stop signs (not allowed as a traffic calming tool), one way, road widths. Further discussion required.

Economic Development and Climate Control and Historic Preservation to be tabled to the next meeting.

Zoning:

Chairman Campbell met with the Building Inspector who recommended changing the style of the use / bulk tables in the Zoning Book to read easier for the layperson. Chairman Campbell will attempt to get an example for the Commission to visualize. The Building Inspector also suggested a thorough review of the glossary of terms to reduce ambiguities in the Village code. Members had a limited discussion on need for changes to zoning code on residential FAR, setbacks, etc. Discussed possible tactic to control oversized houses based on maximum square footage – more discussion required. The Comprehensive Plan should recommend separate commission(s) (possibly overseen by the Planning Board or ZBA) undertake these tasks.

Members discussed enticements for “green” building, primarily commercial building. Also discussed having a review of the existing building code to incorporate more green requirements on both commercial and residential building (e.g. some communities now require new construction use tankless instead of tank-type water heaters).

Discussion on “customized” zones created for residential developments (clustering, etc) that appear on plat maps but not village zoning map – example: Montebello Pines R-40 zone. Per State Law (Robert Geneslaw to investigation conditions) this needs to be defined more clearly on Zoning Maps. Commission could recommend that the Village undertake a project to update maps over a given period of time.

Members would like a record list of all the cluster/average density subdivisions in Montebello. Discussion on tax exempt properties.

Architectural Review Board:

Members discussed whether the ARB should review residential properties in addition to commercial properties. Determined that ARB for residential properties too contentious except in instances where historical context is present. Table this issue for inclusion in discussions regarding the HPC (Historical Preservation Commission) portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

Members were asked to read the HPC sections of the Village Code for the next meeting.

Undeveloped Properties:

Discussion ensued on the properties on the three corners adjacent and across from Village Hall. Retail vs. Office, Village’s need for increased ratable versus community flavor.

GENERAL:

Members would like the "Recommendations from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Report" to include more detail on the outcomes of each; i.e. not simply "DONE or NOT DONE",

but also any new regulations implemented or decisions to resolve issues differently than the Comp Plan recommended.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No one wished to speak.

NEXT MEETING:

Monday - 4th of May. Ira Emanuel and Lance Millman will not be in attendance.

ADJOURN:

At 10:00 pm Member Millman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Chairman Campbell, motion carried unanimously