

Town of Olive
County of Ulster
State of New York
Saturday, October 2, 2010

Minutes of a public hearing of the Town Board of the Town of Olive held Saturday, October 2, 2010, 2 pm at the Olive Free Library, West Shokan, NY. The purpose of the meeting as stated in the legal notice is regarding the preparation and content of a Town of Olive Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the standards and requirement as set forth in Section 272-a of New York State Town Law.

Members Present: Berndt Leifeld, Supervisor
 Henry Rank, Board Member
 Linda Burkhardt, Board Member
 Peter Friedel, Board Member
Member Absent: Bruce La Monda, Board Member
Recording Secretary: Sylvia B. Rozzelle, Olive Town Clerk

Others Present: Drew Boggess, Planning Board Chairman; Helene Grant, Planning Board Member and Ulster County Planning Board delegate; John Ingram, Zoning Officer & Assistant Building Inspector; Dom Covello, Building Inspector; Bill Cook, Sole Assessor; Jim Mays, Chairman ZBA; Sandy Friedel, ZBA member; Jim Bogner, NYC DEP Project Manager; and Matthew D. Rudikoff Associates, Inc. representatives Matthew Rudikoff, Will Agresta, and Sonja Teichman.

Supervisor Leifeld called the meeting to order.

Town Clerk Rozzelle presented the 2010 tentative budget to members of the Town Board as required by NYS law.

Matthew Rudikoff stated his company is overseeing the drafting of a master plan for the Town of Olive and this is the first step in the Town Board receiving the plan and ultimately deciding if they want to adopt it or not. One of the key procedures to be followed is that information is to be gathered from the public and the Town Board scheduled this day to get the kind of input they have received in this morning's groups. One of the ways to formulate the discussions from the morning is to present this information at a public hearing noting that two public hearings are required in the process. Anyone should feel free to say anything they wish as all these ideas will be put together, the Town Board will review it, a draft master plan will go out to the public, more input will be received at another public hearing, and then the Town Board will take that input and put together a final comprehensive plan.

Will Agresta stated the purpose of this public hearing is to convey to the Town Board what you individually feel should be addressed in a comprehensive plan. The second public hearing at the end of the process is another place to add additional input.

Robert Selkowitz, as part of the Scenic Byway Group and the Central Catskills Collaborative, presented his summary of the morning discussion on economic development. He stated discussion occurred on the contrasts between the north and south sides of the reservoir—the rural Samsonville area versus the businesses to the north and Boiceville. Route 28 is of prime concern for the Town of Olive as to the speed that people travel. Signage may be required to slow people down so that perhaps Boiceville could become more park like with sidewalks and access to the stream. He noted in Boiceville they addressed needed access at the old bridge at the Esopus Creek. They also suggested perhaps a fishing trail along the Bushkill Stream. Maps and brochures could address cultural attractions and businesses and a rest area with restrooms could be built at the picnic park planned in Shokan. The Catskill Park is an asset and emphasis should be put on inspiration of the American imagination and spirit through wilderness and the arts. In strategies they were interested in knowing where the town's tax base comes from, noting that state lands and the reservoir contribute to our taxes. The town should encourage the Scenic Byway, Catskill Interpretive Center, Ashokan Center, and discussed the need for a history museum for the Town of Olive. Their group talked about the Boiceville Sewage Treatment plant encouraging economic development in that area but felt that development in Shokan could possibly require another sewage treatment plant. They discussed doing an assessment of businesses and an art studio tour as they want people to stop and patronize businesses in Olive. Lodging for travelers was discussed and potential grants for sustainability. They support a visitor center on the town property in Boiceville and we should be looking at ways to bring funds to local businesses.

Helen Chase stated there was extensive discussion about the Shokan/Ashokan area for growth and development. Linda Burkhardt stated they also discussed a business group such as a Chamber of Commerce. Bob Selkowitz stated that space has been purchased on the Central Catskills Chamber of Commerce website in Margaretville. Matthew Rudikoff stated that the Ashokan Watershed Program through Cornell Cooperative, Catskill Fund for the Future through the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC), and NYS Department of State Inland Waterways would be funding sources available for grants. Jim Bogner stated they also talked about natural resources of the town contributing to the economic development of the area. As state and city lands become more open to the public this does bring in economic development. Olivebridge is a quaint hamlet with a prior history of business establishments and is another hamlet that should continue to thrive. Hamlets in the town should be very viable.

Drew Boggess stated their group talked about the rural community and natural resources. The first thing that struck him when Bob Selkowitz talked was that a lot of things we talked about are the same. He noted there are transition problems in Boiceville and Shokan by needing sidewalks without having to get onto Route 28. Concerns were expressed about protecting the rural character of the town and dealing with the reservoir view shed and about the properties the city is buying as there is a lot of land preservation in town. He stated NY City is now working on reviewing the hamlet areas and will stay away from those areas when purchasing land. The group mentioned that in order to keep the town rural the large land owners that are having issues with taxes could perhaps receive abatement programs to keep these properties from getting developed. They discussed the town working more with NY City for more access to city

lands encouraging canoeing and kayaking. He noted there was a lot of talk about the two Olives—one north and one south—and how do we plan for a town center and pull these communities together. They talked about the need for preservation of farming in the town and the need to make peace with NY City—basically wanting better workings between the two municipalities. They talked about historic destinations and walking routes and the perception that a lot of people go through the Town of Olive but don't stop. He noted there is no signage on Route 28 to say that a beautiful body of water is located a mile away. The group identified the Ashokan Reservoir and High Point Mountain as the town's two most natural resources and we need to protect them.

Helene Grant stated their group discussed sustainable planning goals and would like to integrate buildings with the green idea, teach people about green, and provide guidelines for building green and/or solar buildings. She stated they discussed incorporating green strategies into the building codes noting the town should educate and identify green resources. Also, we should look at town revenues and see how they could help with that. Matthew Rudikoff noted that interplay among the private sector, the public sector, and the churches, schools, and library could provide information as to how the master plan could express some of these energy and green resources in the plan to include grant programs as they become available and encourage green growth and energy.

Will Agresta thanked all for their summaries from the morning's discussions and asked anyone to make a public comment.

Sherret Chase asked what the relationship is between the comprehensive plan and the zoning ordinance. Will Agresta stated the plan is a guideline and statement by the town as to where the town wants to go. He noted the plan might talk about the density and districts and would implement those goals noted in the plan. The zoning ordinance puts the teeth on the plan. Sherret Chase asked if they would also overlook the revision of the zoning ordinance. Will Agresta stated he has not heard anyone saying the zoning needs a revision. Sherret Chase asked if that is something his company would make recommendations to the Town Board if the zoning needs revision. Will Agresta stated that ultimately the decision is made by the Town Board; but, in that process Rudikoff Associates will be giving their advice. Mr. Agresta stated they have been looking at the zoning ordinance and will advise them if needed, but, ultimately it is the decision of the Town Board. Matthew Rudikoff stated there may be a listing of some of the things that may be inconsistent.

Sherret Chase stated the town needs a legal document and a new zoning ordinance. Drew Boggess and Helene Grant disagreed with Mr. Chase's comment. Bob Selkowitz stated that what they've discussed this morning is in the line of a master plan. Will Agresta stated that a lot of the discussion this morning has centered on economic development and the zoning needs to insure that this is done in the master plan. Bob Selkowitz stated it is necessary to insure protection for our scenic view shed. Drew Boggess stated he does not see that a substantial revision of our zoning is required. He stated it may need a few minor alterations; but, a master plan will help the zoning be more forceful.

Delia Adams stated that protection of the “whole bowl” view shed should be protected, not just High Point Mountain.

Will Agresta noted the Ashokan Reservoir is a natural scenic resource; but, is also a divider of the town. He stated it has been mentioned that some of the goals are to keep Olive rural and by protecting these natural resources it will encourage economic development. He noted the areas around the reservoir would be the places for B & B’s, restaurants, and small businesses.

Sandy Friedel stated she would rather see lots of cell towers and no phone poles stating that lines should be underground.

Sherret Chase stated an ordinance should encourage consolidation of services in the hamlets and encourage more residential usage of hamlet environments. The town would benefit by having Olive New Town and stated he is quite concerned about the ordinance.

Supervisor Leifeld stated that the Town Board has been getting a lot of suggestions about interpreting zoning and the Planning Board needed guidelines. Plus, in order to be competitive in receiving grants we agreed we need a master plan and that’s where we are in this process. In going through this we hope to get a plan that would work with the zoning ordinance. He noted that a community center should be off of Route 28 as this road will be doing nothing but getting bigger and bigger.

All persons present having been heard the Town Board adjourned at 3 pm on a Leifeld/Burkhardt motion.

Sylvia B. Rozzelle, Town Clerk