

Town of Tusten, Comprehensive Plan Committee
January 31, 2020, Tusten Town Hall

Jim Crowley, CEO; Art Hawker, Ken Baim, PB; Jane Luchsinger, TB; Kathy Michell; Elaine Giguere; Dot(?); Peter Manning; Planning Consultant

The meeting began shortly after 6PM. Peter Manning presented a series of slides on the topic of the comprehensive plan. Material covered included purposes, statute overview, benefits, illustrative process and content, and requirements. During the slides, particular points of group discussion included the relationships between the comp plan and land use regulations, how other plans of the town fit within the comp plan, and a comp plan update vs. a new comp plan.

Kathy mentioned that there was a Tusten comprehensive plan prior to the existing one. The group then discussed county assistance for the project, including GIS support from RPTS and possible assistance from planning staff. Jane agreed to contact these county departments to inform them of the project and explore assistance.

Notifying the public and the press of the project was also discussed. Jane will reach out to Greg Briggs of the Reporter. The Chamber also has a website that may assist in communication, along with the town website. The timeline of the project was also discussed. Peter is flexible and responsive to the town and stated that a comp plan project (including an update to an older plan) usually takes a year, approximately. A UDC grant for the first half of the project concludes in August. Other topics that are likely to be included in the plan were discussed, including involvement of youth, scenic byway involvement, and the subjects related to the National Park Service, the Upper Delaware Council, and the River Management Plan.

The group agreed to use a survey to gather public input, as was done with the previous comp plan. Discussed at length were aspects of the survey which included a sample of the population vs. every property owner; electronic or US mail or a combination; and details on bulk mailing, postage, and supporting means including the town's website and availability of the survey at the town hall. Elaine will explore mailing options with postal workers and possibly others. There was agreement to send the survey to all property owners without return postage, yet there was concerns about the cost. Jane will look into the specifics of the grant award and will bring the matter to the town board.

Everyone agreed to review the existing survey (distributed via email) and use the "copy all" option to share comments by February 6. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 10 at 5:30 PM to discuss the comments and finalize the survey. Ken mentioned that there will need to be an introductory statement to be included with the survey. This could be written on a separate half-sheet of paper, while a full, double-sided sheet will used for the survey.

Discussed was the amount of work involved in preparing the mailing and in tabulating the results of the survey. For example, Ken stated that the town would need to order

printed (with return address) envelopes. This will first be contingent on the findings of mailing options that Elaine will explore and the cost approval, as needed. High school students were identified as possible contributors for tabulation, as they have certain requirements to meet that coincide with the assistance needed. A two-week period was agreed upon for the return of the survey.

The forthcoming survey is to be integrated with the initial press release of the project, whether that press release occurs in advance of or at the time of the survey. Peter agreed to look at other surveys and include findings as part of his comments. As a means to gather more responses and to help with costs, electronic surveys could be included as options. Members stated that some segments of the population are likely to respond better to printed material and by mail, and there was concern about the possibility of people responding more than once, if given that option.

In an effort to elect a chair, members indicated their existing commitments. This led to a motion to approve the election of Jane to serve in this capacity. Jane then distributed an implementation chart from the last plan. The group will go through this chart to identify and update the status of recommendations. However, in the interest of time, this will need to be a future exercise.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:10.