

Minutes

Tusten Comprehensive Plan Committee

June 29, 2020

The meeting opened at 6:03 p.m. on the Zoom platform. Attending were Ken Baim, Mike Farrell, Jane Luchsinger, Ben Johnson, Elaine Giguere, Crystal Weston and consultant Peter Manning. Art Hawker joined the meeting later.

A motion was made by Mike Farrell and seconded by Jane Luchsinger to accept the minutes of the June 8 meeting.

Reviewing the draft of the Comp Plan's Economic Development chapter, previously distributed to committee members by Peter Manning, was the order of business.

Ken Baim questioned the inclusion of industry in the the plan, noting that there were very few survey respondents who prioritized industry. He noted that industry prompts neighboring properties to ask for reduced tax assessment because of increased noise or traffic.

While consultant Manning drew some of his information about this Economic Development section from the internet and other written resources, he took a 5-hour tour of Tusten with Jane Luchsinger and then hiked the Red Dot Trail to discover resources that might lead to economic expansion. He was particularly complimentary about the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce website; the incubator businesses housed at the Narrowsburg Union; regional initiatives of the Scenic ByWay, Big Eddy Film Festival, and potential for local trails. As an outsider looking in, he noted that the signs that visitors were entering the Upper Delaware River Valley gave a sense of place while the tag line, "respect private property," was somewhat unfriendly.

A long discussion about the properties owned by the Boy Scouts ensued as these are seen as 1) a buffer from overdevelopment 2) potential areas where cooperative agreements could be made with the town and/or qualified nonprofits to expand recreational activity such as trails. Ben Johnson offered to open the discussion with Boy Scout leadership.

Other resources that might lead to economic development are National Park Service interpretive programs; agri-tourism; the railroad (non-passenger, but possible use of sidings); and encouraging access to the river from Main Street.

Seeking partnerships and promoting our assets is encouraged.

Challenges include:

- 1) parking, (although there is an expansion in progress of the municipal parking area);
- 2) high speed internet (expand advocacy efforts)

Mike Farrell asked whether we were meeting our deadlines for the grant. Peter Manning replied that we are on target. He is working in the background between committee meetings and the next meeting will include the chapter on environment.

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on July 13, 6 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Giguere