

Genoa Comprehensive Planning Committee Notes -- Thursday, 15 January 2009 7 PM

Present: Maria Bachich, Drake Bassett, John Berry, Peg Bradley, Dan Dal Cais, Louis ABub@ Delap, Kelly Doolittle, Ralph W. Nettleton, Anto Parseghian, Barbara Patchen, Marilyn Ramsden, David Stilwell, Karin Wikoff.

1. Review/approval of previous meeting minutes.

2. Review of members of group

A. Karin will review the list of regular attendees and confirm with each that they are willing to commit to being responsible for the planning process, though meetings remain open, and input from the public is welcome.

B. Volunteers were sought to spread the word about the Steve Lynch presentation on 2 February. Several people volunteered to post notices at: the IGA, the Pitstop, the Post Office, the Library, the Genoa Hotel, the King Ferry Hotel, and several area churches. Karin will whip up a simple notice people can print and post. Peggy will put an advertisement in the paper, because whenever more than one member of the Town Board attends a meeting, it is supposed to be noted in the paper.

The committee was pleased to welcome first-time attendees Maria Bachich, who has lived in the area part of the year for 20+ years, and newcomer, David Stilwell, who has experience doing comprehensive planning in Lansing, and who does environmental work in the area of fish and wildlife.

3. Presentation of data from the first survey

A. Drake Bassett took us through the results of the first survey. He made a point of noting that we only had 65 surveys returned out of 1,710 people living in the Town of Genoa.

**BDemographics:** The first part was a comparison of demographics between the survey respondents and the entire population. More than 95% of the survey respondents own their own homes, compared to about 80% of the total population. Only a few renters filled out the survey. Both whole town and respondents average about 2.5 people in the household, while more higher income households responded than lower income households, though the majority of both town and respondents were in the \$50,000-\$74,999 range.

--Non-comparative demographics showed more people from Genoa responded than King Ferry, but Genoa has a larger population. The vast majority of respondents have lived in the Town of Genoa for more than 10 years (close to 80%), with around 46% who=ve lived here more than 20 years.

**BQ1: Short and Long Term Goals:** 94% of respondents choose the highest priority (4 or 5) for ATo promote a variety of healthy and sustainable agriculture practices.@ In order or priority: ATo preserve the Town=s Rural Character@ (75%), ATo protect and preserve wetlands, ponds, and wooded areas@ (71%), ATo improve Hamlet Centers@ (69%), ATo improve schools and expand educational opportunities@ (66%), ATo develop tourism@ (63%), ATo protect farmland from commercial or housing development@ (57%), ATo attract new commercial development@ (43%) and ATo

encourage the development of a variety of housing types@ (31%).

BQ2: Characteristics which make Genoa a desirable place to live: The three top responses were ARural Environment@ (84%), AProximity of the Finger Lakes@ (81%) and APhysical Attractiveness@ (73%) B with only 48% for ALevel of Taxes,@ 42% for AHousing,@ 38% for ASchool System,@ and 36% for ATown/Municipal Services.@ The low ratings for these last four are flags for further study.

Q3: Characteristics you would like to see developed and/pr improved: AVibrant Hamlet Centers@ (68%), AImproved Public Services@ (58%), ACommunity events, festivals, etc.@ (56%), ARекреational facilities, playgrounds, etc.@ (54%), ARestaurants and shopping,@ (49%), ASenior housing@ (40%).

BComments: Comments were grouped into three large categories: Agriculture, Technology/Business and Public Services, with the latter receiving the majority of comments from this group of respondents. Complete comments are available at the Hazard Library or e-mail Karin Wikoff at [kwikoff@thumpernet.com](mailto:kwikoff@thumpernet.com) for an Excel spreadsheet. Drake indicates he will be making his presentation of the data available online as well, and Karin will distribute that link when she has it.

#### 4. Discussion

A. Survey: The group discussed the meaning of the results of the survey. It was noted that the small number of respondents was disappointing and not necessarily representative of the whole community. However, when we publish the results of the first survey, it is sure to get a response, both positive and negative, which should lead to a dialogue and input from greater numbers of residents. The article can include a link to the survey data and contact info to solicit more input. Hopefully the publishing of results will bring up other A big ticket@ items we may have missed. One idea to get more people involved is to recruit A opinion leaders@ B people with the respect of others of their peer group who can join our committee as representatives of their portion of the community. This starter survey can give us some broad strokes which we can now leverage to get more feedback; we can drill down into the issues.

B. General Discussion and Announcements: Someone asked about documentation related to this committee. Karin noted that she has placed everything she has from past meetings on ACommunity Reserve@ at the Hazard Public Library in Poplar Ridge (which has daytime, evening and weekend hours). She has also sent minutes to the Town Clerk for posting on the Town website, but due to technical difficulties and complications, they are not yet available there. It was noted that we need to have before us the rules and regulations regarding what authority we have, and what is the Town=s job. Dan mentioned three additional items which had been brought to his attention since our last meeting: Rental property issues, gas drilling and the Route 90 Garage Sale. These items are too specific to be addressed in the comprehensive plan, though they might fall under some more general language like AWe would like Genoa to be a safe and healthy place to live.@ In general, the comprehensive plan is more like a vision or mission statement, while it is up to the Town to write laws to fill in the specifics of making that vision a reality. It was also noted that the County wants to have our plan by August of 2010, though in exactly what form it needs to be by that date is unclear.

David told of his experience working on the Town of Lansing Comprehensive plan some 15-20 years ago. They had a 20 year plan, but if he had it to do over, he said, the plan should look out 20 years but most of the specific recommendations are likely to address a time frame over the next 10 years because things will be changing in town and may need to be revisited around year 10. Lansing did not have a consultant to write their plan for them, but wrote it themselves, with much of the work being done in subcommittees. He noted that while the Comprehensive Plan could not lay out the zoning laws, it could indicate some general ideas about zoning. For example, they set down that the northern part of Lansing should be preserved as primarily agricultural and they would not encourage residential development in that area, while the southern part of Lansing is a bedroom community to Ithaca, and they wanted to develop a ATown Center@ with shopping, businesses and residential growth.

Karin noted that she had been in touch with Marian Brown, who is working on the Town of Scipio Comprehensive Plan. Their group is at just about the same point in the process as our group, and we are welcome to attend their meetings, as they are to attend ours, to network and see each how the other is going at the process.

Peggy has been in touch with Jeannie Gleisner of the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board, which A provides a comprehensive range of services associated with the growth and development of communities in Central New York@ and which is working with Scipio and other local communities to help with their planning. She has indicated that she would like to attend our next meeting after the Steve Lynch presentation to see if her group can be of assistance.

It was decided we would set the date of our next meeting after the Steve Lynch presentation at that meeting, not this meeting.

##### 5. Wrap-up

- A. Reminder of Steve Lynch Presentation 2 February at 6 PM
- B. Review of items accomplished tonight (Did not take place)
- C. Action items: Who is doing what by when

BKarin will contact regular attendees to get their commitment to being official members of the committee responsible for the planning process, then send that list to Peggy

BPeggy will send an ad about the Lynch meeting to the legal notices section of the paper

BKarin will send a notice for printing to all individuals who volunteered to help spread the word

BAll volunteers will post their notices in the locations they said they would

BKarin and Peggy will work together to prepare a presentation of the survey results for the media; Karin can contact Nate Robson at The Citizen when we are ready.

BPeggy will continue to pursue assistance from Jeannie Gleisner of CNYRPDB.

BPeggy will continue to seek a volunteer from the official committee members to serve as a representative of the Town of Genoa to the Cayuga County Planning Board in place of Gene Reynolds, who has stepped down.

BKarin will type up and distribute a draft of the notes of this meeting for approval at our

next meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Karin Wikoff, Secretary