

Genoa Comprehensive Planning Group Notes
Monday 13 July 2009

Present: Maria Bachich, Dave Baildon Jr., John Berry, Ralph Nettleton, Anto Parseghian, Dave Stilwell, Dan Thayer, Susan Tosto, Karin Wikoff.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Previous meeting minutes for 15 June 2009 were reviewed and approved.

2. **County Planning Committee Report:** John Berry was unable to attend, so Dave Stilwell represented us at the most recent meeting. There was some snafu in announcing the meeting to representatives, but Dave heard about it through Geoff Milz. About 2/3 of the towns were represented. John and Dave now have the schedule for the rest of the year, and the next training session is 17 Nov, in Caucus Room 2, behind the Legislative Chamber on the 6th floor of the County Legislative Office Building in Auburn.

John Berry did receive his official letter from the County, though Dave did not receive one. He must take an oath and the position is for life. Though our Town government is fine with having an alternate, there is some question if the County will accept an alternate if he has not also received a letter, sworn the oath, etc.

Dave received minutes from past meetings; those will be available in the storage room at our Town Hall.

Issues were reviewed, then the meeting was opened to discussion. A free-form report of the issues follows:

- It was noted that the DEC is about to finalize the new statewide rules on open burning. There will be no more burning barrels, or burning of ag plastics (there was opposition to this, but it is going through all the same), and there will be some new restrictions on leaf and brush burning.
- Another note was on a composting workshop in Owasco.
- Apparently there has been a problem with grass clippings and leaves dumped in 53% of the streams flowing into Lake Owasco.
- Auburn is working on a sustainable energy plan.
- Outdoor wood furnaces have become an issue in several communities. Many people feel they need to be regulated, while many communities have no regulations for them. There are reports that people burn trash or anything in their furnaces. Outdoor wood furnaces have varied efficiency in terms of what they emit. Nuisance laws are being applied in some communities in the absence of regulations, while three states have banned them outright.
- \$2.3 Million went for farmland protection in our area, split between the Green Valley Farms and Allen Farms. Several comments were made in our meeting about how this money always goes to large corporate farms – would we want to put something in our comprehensive plan to endorse and support bids from small, non-industrial farms? The State will not allow any Town without a Comprehensive Plan to become involved. This may be a talking point to help get some small farmers interest in getting our plan in place.
- We should keep in mind that according to section 239, development in our town which is within 500 feet of our border with another town requires approval from the County.

- The County GIS server is now available so anyone can get maps online, though the contents are not yet complete.
- Dave noted that people were asking him how we were doing so well – many other towns report only 2-3 people regularly involved at meetings, and plans taking about 3-4 years to put together.
- Dave also noted that Geoff Milz reads our minutes and gives us feedback, and that Jean Gleisner is currently writing Scipio's plan.
- During a portion on subdivisions, the size of lots was discussed, some of which, when subdivided, would not pass the Health Department requirements. Niles in particular has trouble with this issue. People have been building right into the lake, whereas there is supposed to be no development beyond the high water mark. They also divide long narrow lots without sufficient room for driveways, easements, septic, etc. for each lot on a parcel. It was noted that Genoa has no laws of which we know governing subdivisions. At the training, Dave learned about the complex definitions of realty and non-realty subdivisions, the state, county rules and Health Department rules which govern them and more.
- Wind energy was discussed. The plan for the Venice/Scipio ridgeline project did not go forward. Some people heard this was because the developers wanted to put wind turbines wherever they wanted, and the land owners did not go for that. Other people noted that it came down to dollars, as the development rights would be lost. There are no policies as yet for wind energy.
- Horizontal gas drilling of Marcellus shale areas is another issue of interest. In our area, most drilling is vertical, while the horizontal drilling is happening more to our south. The U.S. Geological Survey could give us a presentation on Marcellus shale and gas drilling.
- Other communities report that CAFOs are also a big issue for them, and also very controversial. Most were finding that towns have few options. If a CAFO has its NMP (Nutrient Management Plan) in place, there is mostly nothing the town can do. It was noted that non-CAFO land is entirely unregulated and could be an area a town could address.

3. Review of Action Items from Previous Meetings:

--Water info: Dave checked with the USGS and found there is no information available Ten years ago they offered to do a ground water study, but Genoa declined. We have some info being gathered on surface water, but not on ground water. We could have it done, but it costs money. Information we could use includes where water is, where it flows, stream gauges and more. Maria noted that the Park Foundation (and possibly also the Emerson Foundation) is very interested in water in our area and a potential source for grant money for studies. We would need a grant writer who knows what s/he is doing, because the successful application requires a polished and thorough presentation. Dave mentioned wellhead protection. Vermont has recently passed state wide laws to protect wellheads as a resource – would we want to put something in our plan about protecting them? In a discussion of how water bottling companies have come into towns and sucked up their entire aquifer, leaving nothing for the residents, Karin mentioned Barnstead, NH, as a community which has successfully defied corporate water theft of this sort: (<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/stand-up-to-corporate-power/1828> ; also: <http://www.newrules.org/governance/rules/banning-water-withdrawal-corporations/banning-water-withdrawal-corporations-barnstead>) We need someone to summarize the issue: What

water resources do we have, why are they important, how are they used, what do we want and need to protect for the future, both in terms of ground water and surface water. Dave will go to the USGS and Maria will talk to the folks from the Cayuga Watershed to get things started, though someone will still have to write it up.

--**Additional Maps:** Dave is trying to connect with Geoff to pick up the additional maps.

--**Accurate Demographic Info:** Karin got it on good authority from Jan Vink of the Cornell Program on Applied Demographics that the "Genoa Town" information on the U.S. Census site is the most accurate

(http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFacts?_event=Search&geo_id=&_geoContext=&_street=&_county=Genoa&_cityTown=Genoa&_state=04000US36&_zip=&_lang=en&_sse=on&_pctxt=fph&_pgsl=010&_show_2003_tab=&_redirect=Y) If we find we need more information than is available here, we can cross that bridge when we come to it.

--**Feedback Loop:** Susan is working to prepare articles and announcements to help keep public awareness of our work. Her hope is to have something in every issue of the Genoa/King Ferry Tribune. She'll be sure to include contact info and a notice of the time and place of our meetings. The next issue is due out in September.

--**County Planning Committee Reps:** The issue has been resolved: John Berry is our representative and Dave Stilwell is our alternate.

--**Copier in Town Hall for our use:** We haven't heard the word on the availability of the copier in the meeting room. It is there and has toner, but is not located anywhere near a power outlet; not sure about paper.

--**Brief History of the Town of Genoa:** At the end of the meeting with the Historical Association, Hans Pecher had clearly stated he would write us a brief history for use in the plan. Now it is unclear whether he still plans to do this or not, or in what timeframe he could have it ready. John Berry has a letter from Marilyn Mann that makes it sound iffy, but the letter does have some info, though most of it is on schoolhouses. It does have some references, and we do have access to Storck's history of the first 100 years of Genoa. Dave Baildon will follow up on Hans' intentions.

--**Public Services Inventory:** Dan took a break due to work being very busy this month and next month. He is trying to get info we are lacking on the Fire Departments and to follow up with the water district people, who are very hard to reach and don't return calls. He notes that the new agricultural census will be available after 28 July at: <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>. The site will have all kinds of information, but only by zip code – there is no way to get it by town. He also notes that the Ambulance Service lost its funding when the subscription program was ended. Medical emergency services will be an area for follow-up for our inventory.

--**Religious Groups/Churches:** Karin has had no success in getting a group of representatives from the religious community together for a meeting. Anto has spoken to someone from the Cornerstone Church and will try to reach someone from Our Lady of the Lake, while Karin will try to reach a couple others. It was noted that if groups aren't interested in having a say in the plan, that'll just have to be that. Anto's contact indicated that most issues of interest to them had to do with their own facilities, and with no new taxes, with CAFOs and that there is still some suspicion about the plan. Another public service we might want to inventory which is usually associated with churches is food pantry services.

--**Schools and Businesses:** Is there an association for businesses in the Town of Genoa? There will be a Community Market where local crafts and produce will be showcases and local businesspeople can do some networking. Those are tentatively set for 18 July and 2 August – they will try the first one and see how it goes. Dave will call Peggy for more information and

follow up on businesses in our community (Perhaps include the Route 90 Association?)

--**Survey II Subcommittee:** Maria is awaiting input before calling a meeting of the Survey II Subcommittee. Meanwhile, we will set out the first survey again at the Wheat Festival.

--**Marketing Subcommittee:** Susan has been in contact with the reporter from The Citizen. They are interested but we are waiting until we have something of more substance to report.

4. Wheat Festival: We have been given an OK to have a table at the Wheat Festival on Saturday only, from 10 AM-2 PM. Four volunteers will man the table in pairs on 2 hour shifts. Additional volunteers would be more than welcome. Karin and Dave will be there from 10-12, and Susan and Ralph will be there from 12-2.

We will need:

- 2 folding chairs – Karin will bring these in time for the first shift.
- A long table – Peggy has provided it and Dave will be sure gets to the site for the beginning of the first shift
- A notebook, for taking any notes of comments from people who stop by the table
- A pad for people to sign up to be on our mailing list
- Copies of the first survey for people to fill out
- Hand-outs people can take away with them with some basic information, the website address and contact information. Susan is preparing these
- Hand-outs with a run-down of the committee's accomplishments
- A poster to stand up to draw attention to our table
- Some of the maps to spread out on the table – Dave will bring these.

5. Website: We have a page on the Town of Genoa website with our meeting minutes, but it is pretty buried and hard to find even if you know it is there. Susan and Karin have a text blurb explaining what we do very nearly ready to head the page. Other ideas for information to include on our page: Contact info, meeting schedules, links to useful resources we are using for our plan and more. Susan will coordinate with Peggy and Tonya to implement the additional changes to our page, and ask about making it a little more prominent, or at least not so buried. As soon as our materials are ready, Susan should go ahead and get them sent to Tonya to be mounted on the site.

6. Historical Association Article: Susan plans to have something ready to go in the next issue of the Genoa / King Ferry Tribune, which is due out in September.

7. Next Topical Areas: The next areas we hope to tackle include:

- Fire Chief Meeting
- Water District Follow-Up
- Medical Services Report
- Church Group Report
- Business Group Follow-Up
- Community Space

Susan noted that she'd feel more clear on what we are trying to accomplish if she had a better sense of the structure of the document we are creating. Karin will send Susan a copy of Steve Lynch's PowerPoint presentation. In the next two meetings, we'll try to review where we are in the process, and look at other plans and potential structure for our document.

8. Meetings: Henceforth our regular full committee meetings will be on the second Monday of each month, so our next meeting will be Monday, 10 August at 7 PM at the Genoa Town Hall. Dave will prepare and distribute agendas in advance. New folks will be directed to review the notes of previous meetings so we can focus on current business at meetings.

9. Action Items:

--John Berry will take the oath to be our County Planning Board Representative. He and Dave will find out if Dave has to take one too in order to be our alternate representative.

--Dave will make the minutes of past County Planning meetings available in the storage room at our Town Hall.

--Dave will follow-up on the possibility of the U.S. Geological Survey giving us a presentation on Marcellus shale and gas drilling if we are interested.

--A volunteer is needed to summarize the water issues facing the Town of Genoa. Dave will go to the USGS and Maria will talk to the folks from the Cayuga Watershed to get things started.

--Dave (?) will look into finding a possible grant writer in the community who could work on a grant from the Park and/or Emerson Foundations to fund a water study in our area.

--Maria (?) will look into the details of how to apply for one of these grants.

--Dave will connect with Geoff to pick up the additional maps.

--Susan will prep and submit an article on our work in time to be published in the Genoa / King Ferry Tribune.

--Peggy will let us know about the use of the copier/scanner in the meeting room at the Town Hall, particularly on the nights of meetings when the office copier is not available – it appears to need paper and to be located near an electrical outlet.

--Dave Baidon will follow up on Hans Pecher's intentions regarding the writing of a brief history of Genoa for the planning document.

--Anto and Karin will talk to more individuals from the religious community.

--Dave will follow up on the business community in Genoa.

-- Susan will coordinate with Peggy and Tonya to implement the additional changes to our page, and ask about making it a little more prominent, and, as soon as our materials are ready, she will go ahead and get them sent to Tonya to be mounted on the site.

--Karin will send Susan a copy of the PowerPoint Presentation, the notes to accompany the presentation, the comments from the first survey and any other materials she needs to catch up on things that happened before she joined our group.

--Karin will let Peggy know that we approved our previous meeting notes and they are ready to go on the website.

--Wheat Festival Checklist:

- Karin will bring 2 folding chairs in time for the first shift.
- Dave will be sure the long table provided by Peggy gets to the site for the beginning of the first shift
- Someone will bring a notebook, for taking any notes of comments from people who stop by the table
- Karin will bring a pad for people to sign up to be on our mailing list
- Someone will make copies of the first survey for people to fill out and be sure they get to the site for the first shift
- Susan will prepare hand-outs people can take away with them with some basic

information, the website address and contact information, hand-outs with a run-down of the committee's accomplishments, and a poster to stand up to draw attention to our table, then arrange for all these things to be at the site in time for the first shift.

- Dave will bring some of the maps to spread out on the table in time for the first shift.
- Karin and Dave will work 10-12.
- Susan and Ralph will work 12-2.
- Susan or Ralph (or someone) will return the chairs and sign-up sheet to Karin after the last shift, perhaps also the notebook? I can bring it all in to our next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Karin Wikoff
Secretary, Town of Genoa Comprehensive Planning Committee