

**Minutes of the Comprehensive Planning Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 25, 2015**

Committee: Ted Brumleve, Chairman  
Bettie Jackson  
Ray Clifford  
Paul Doyle  
Laura Fallon  
Ann Gallelli, Village Board Liaison

Absent: Jeremy Ezra

Also Present: Daniel O'Connor, Village Engineer

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Doyle made a motion to approve and accept the minutes of November 19, 2014 and January 7, 2015, seconded by Bettie Jackson, and carried all in favor 5-0.

**2. Accessory Apartments**

The Comprehensive Planning Committee has completed their discussion about accessory apartments and sent their recommendations to the Village Board. Ms. Gallelli stated that the Village Board wants to move ahead with the process. The Village Board will declare itself lead agency and there will be a public hearing.

**3. Professional Offices**

The section in the village code on Professional Offices will be added to the Customary Home Occupation section. It has been determined that the revisions to this section were not part of the scope of work of the Comprehensive Planning Committee and will be handled at the staff level.

**4. Comprehensive Planning Committee opening**

Chairman Brumleve announced that Jeremy Ezra has resigned from the committee due to family and work obligations. Two openings are now available on this committee. Chairman Brumleve requested that if anyone had nominations for candidates to please mention it to him. Mr. Clifford recommended Mr. Joe Lippolis as a possible nominee given that he is familiar with the business community and has a good sense of regional commerce. The committee members were all in agreement that Chairman Brumleve should reach out to Mr. Lippolis.

**5. Presentation to the Village Board**

Chairman Brumleve highlighted some of the key points discussed in past Comprehensive Planning Committee meetings that he would like to include in his presentation to the Village Board on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Brumleve summarized Mr. Clifford's overview on wayfinding and signage in the village. Signage was seen from a commercial and destination point of view, as well as a brand for the village. Another goal includes capitalizing on Croton's historical and cultural identity, for example, its history as a railroad town, the Croton dam and an arts colony, as well as promoting the environmental open spaces and the Hudson and Croton Rivers for recreational and sports activities. The committee has also mentioned the possibility of a transit oriented development (TOD) project since the railroad is one of the main access features to the village.

The committee discussed other goals to present to the Village Board. Mr. Doyle observed a lack of cohesiveness of businesses in Croton, and the need for pedestrian walkways and enhanced parking which would help commercial vitality. The committee had identified a number of places in the village that could be more aesthetically pleasing and attract more people. Committee members questioned whether there were monies available to assist the village with public improvements. Ms. Jackson asked about the possibility of consultants, and Mr. Doyle asked about grant money, to which Ms. Gallelli responded that although the budget was tight this year, there are some funds in the budget for Planning.

Chairman Brumleve stated that he would like to present the Village Board with a plan of action. Mr. Doyle stated that the committee should focus on what we can solve regarding retail and business. The committee cannot change the decentralization of the village nor the retail mix; however, by locating signage in strategic locations, and having storefront consistency, the village might have more appeal and encourage more people to visit the village. Ms. Fallon also agreed that more uniform storefronts would refresh the look of the village.

Ms. Jackson stated that it was important to prioritize what we want and look for funding. Mr. Clifford agreed and stated that the starting point could be the development of a brand or identity for Croton.

There was a discussion about what it meant for a village to have a "brand." Chairman Brumleve suggested that branding is a feeling, a quality that contributes to a sense of belonging, whether it is an affiliation with the river, the railroad, open space, or a "dam" town. Ms. Jackson stated that the village was not maximizing the gateway areas and there needed to be a way to capture the emotional spirit of Croton. Mr. Doyle suggested that apart from branding, he would like to see some architectural consistency in facades of storefronts; he wanted people to enjoy visiting the village, but he believed the main issue was that the commercial mix was not good. The committee discussed the attractive signage in Ossining, and Mr. Clifford suggested asking Ossining what consultant they used. Chairman Brumleve recommended using Frank Fish of BFJ as a resource for finding consultants who are familiar with branding work.

Chairman Brumleve stated that he hoped to present to the Village Board a snapshot of the committee's progress and arrive at a few achievable goals. These goals would include public comments from all perspectives. Ms. Gallelli pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan of Croton is more conceptual in nature than the one in the Town of Cortlandt. Mr. Doyle pointed out that this committee is a combined Comprehensive Planning Committee and Economic Development Committee.

Chairman Brumleve will send through e-mail a summary of his ideas for the Board presentation and request the committee's feedback and input.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 8th.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronnie L. Rose  
Secretary to the Comprehensive Planning Committee