

Comprehensive Plan Committee
Wednesday, September 9, 2015

Present:

Chairman Ted Brumleve
Ray Clifford
Paul Doyle
Bettie Jackson
Ann Gallelli, Village Board Liaison

Absent:

Laura Fallon
Joe Lippolis

1. Chairman Brumleve called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Brumleve made a motion to approve the minutes of July 1, 2015, as amended, and the minutes of August 5, 2015, seconded by Mr. Doyle, and carried by a vote in favor of 4-0.

3. Comprehensive Plan Discussion

Mr. Doyle introduced Ms. Erica Laudon, former investment banker and currently working as a legal marketing professional, whom Mr. Doyle invited to the Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting this evening to share her perspectives of families with young children moving into the village. Ms. Laudon explained that she grew up in Croton, had moved away and then about five years ago had returned to live in Croton where her parents currently reside as well. She offered her thoughts on Croton's appeal to newcomers especially those with young children; for many of the young people that she knows, affordability, good schools, and walking to the train station were important aspects of Croton's desirability in addition to the natural beauty of the river, the many parks, and the availability of sidewalks.

Mr. Doyle asked if she was aware of any negative opinions about Croton and Ms. Laudon responded that she had heard some negative comments on the architectural style of 383 South Riverside Avenue. Young families liked the calm of the neighborhoods and the fact that there were no major highways running through the village. She said that many people she knew were attracted to Croton because the housing market was more affordable than lower Westchester or NYC (e.g. Brooklyn) and were able to afford to upgrade their homes. Ms. Jackson commented that the hope was to attract young people but still retain the older residents as well. The Committee members present all expressed a desire to possibly "age in place" and stay in their homes in Croton. The Comprehensive Plan Committee acknowledged the changing demographics of the village.

Chairman Brumleve thanked Ms. Laudon for her input and participation in the discussion. Chairman Brumleve stated that the committee hoped to distill and update the plan into achievable goals targeting

commercial viability and the visual environment including architectural consistency and signage; access to cultural and historical destinations, and increased code enforcement.

Mr. Clifford stated that signage could serve as a launching pad for branding the village. Chairman Brumleve noted that the gateways are the linchpins to enact some of the committee's goals.

Mr. Clifford shared his prepared Signage presentation, noting that gateway signage is the first impression of a village, and conveys a brand; the brand is the "emotional connection" to the village or the intangible feelings for the village. There was additional discussion about parking in the village, and Chairman Brumleve noted that in a work session with the Village Board, he had discussed receiving assistance from BFJ on issues of traffic and parking.

Mr. Clifford suggested establishing a steering committee to encourage buy-in and ownership from other committees in the Village. Mr. Doyle questioned having too many people weigh in on the decision-making and asked why the Comprehensive Plan Committee couldn't do it itself. He commented that the more people are involved, the longer it takes to make decisions. He suggested that the Comprehensive Plan Committee get the go-ahead from the Village Board and then request input from others but ultimately have the decision on signage remain in the Comprehensive Plan Committee's control. Ms. Gallelli agreed that branding can be decided by the Comprehensive Plan Committee with some input by the VEB. Chairman Brumleve suggested drafting a schedule for review and comments from other committees. Ms. Jackson suggested that it be made clear what the role is of other committees. Mr. Clifford explained that a creative brief will be reviewed with the Board of Trustees and include input from the VEB. Mr. Doyle agreed that the committee must consult with the VEB in creating a brand and signage consistent with the changing character of the village.

Chairman Brumleve suggested drafting a preliminary schedule for the presentation of a creative brief to the Village Board and inclusion of the VEB for their comments.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21st at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronnie L. Rose
Secretary to the Comprehensive Plan Committee