

Village of Hastings on Hudson  
Comprehensive Plan Committee

Minutes of Meeting No. 8  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 8:00 pm

Media room of the James Harmon Community Center, 44 Main Street

Present: Ellen Hendrickx, Betsy Imershein, Jim Metzger, Rebecca Strutton, Kathy Sullivan, Harry Thomas, Carolyn Summers (arrived later during meeting), Lynda Merchant, Richard Bass  
Excused: Bob Mayer, Steve Corrigan

Zoning Board: Mark Leif

Reports:

*1. Hunter Studio Students: Richard Bass*

Richard Bass had the Hunter Studio Students introduce themselves. The students have organized themselves by topic as well. Richard will send our email contacts to the students and their contact information to the CPC members.

Richard spoke about the scope of the class activity over the next few weeks. The students will gather information about the municipal and school employees do a zip code analysis with current enrollment, capacity and the facilities of the school district. They will also look at the waterfront from a different perspective by designing the waterfront and then looking at square footage. They will investigate downtown retail vacancy rates and reach out to the various boards of the village and look at the application processes of each.

This class is over by May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008, so any investigations need to be completed in early April. The students have a google group for the website. Go to <http://groups.google.com/>. Go to search for a group and put in hasting studio. Follow the prompts and you will be led to the website. The direct way to access the Studio's site is: [hastingsstudio@googlegroups.com](mailto:hastingsstudio@googlegroups.com)

*2. Walking Tour: Jim Metzger*

Jim reported that the students were very attentive during the walking and riding tour of the village. Some of the Comprehensive Plan Committee members joined them for either the walk or lunch at the JHCC. Village Trustees were also available during the day for the students. Thanks to Jim for organizing this fun day. The committee may wish to sponsor a walking tour for themselves and the community.

*3. Documenting time spent on Comprehensive Plan by committee members: Kathy Sullivan*

According to the terms of the matching funds for the Greenway grant, time spent by committee members can be used as a part of the matching requirement. Kathy asked that we all keep a log of our activities between each meeting. (Post meeting, Harry asked Kathy to confirm with the village planner that this is needed. If the village plans on a financial match to the Greenway grant equal to or greater than the grant amount, there may not be a need to do this timekeeping.)

## Topics:

### *1. Regional and Local Setting & Intergovernmental & Municipal Structure: Betsy and Kathy*

Betsy and Kathy are looking into the village, town and county's organizations and funding structures. Kathy and Betsy met with Fran Froebel the Village Manager. Under discussion was the time frame of the plan, capital improvements the village is projecting, and programmatic information. Fran discussed the aged infrastructure that may need to be addressed in the plan. He sees this as potential deterrent to attracting new business to the village.

Fran is preparing next year's budget and is interested in the committee's input into a budget for a planning consultant. The budget has to be finalized in April. It is the opinion of the committee that the funds for a consultant for the Comprehensive Plan should be put into the village budget for next year. Richard Bass will reach out to his contacts in the planning community.

Next steps are to investigate groups like Scenic Hudson, The Greenway and other non-governmental groups. A Preliminary outline will be posted on the website.

### *2. Community Background and History and Planning History: Richard and Lynda*

The Hunter Studio students reported on their report about the history of Hastings. They found it difficult to find information during the 1930's. A question was asked about the carnival that used to be in Hastings. Lynda Merchant will look into getting some information to them. Their chapter will be available soon for the committee to review. Lynda will meet with the Historical Society soon.

### *3. Demographics: Steve, Richard, Bob, and Hunter Studio*

This committee is looking into the demographics of other jurisdictions such as Westchester County, Dobbs Ferry and Irvington as well as Hastings to see what comparisons can be drawn. The data collected on gender, population, schools and the economy will be compared and contrasted to make some future projections. Their chapter will be available soon for the committee to review.

### *4. Transportation and Infrastructure: Steve, Rebecca, and Betsy*

Under transportation this group discussed walking, parking, public transportation, safety personal cars and commercial vehicles. Under infrastructure, roads, bridges, underground infrastructure such as sewers and above ground structures such as Con Edison and cable TV. Per Betsy's and Kathy's conversation with Fran, there is no map of the sewer system which will be vital in looking into flooding etc. The overview of this committee looked at three questions. What presently exists? What are the levers of Change? What are the sources of information?

### *5. Economics: Rebecca, Ellen and Bob*

The tax framework of the various localities that impact our tax bills is to be investigated and how various municipalities impact our tax bills. John Dennehey gave Ellen some links on Economic Development and sustainability which she will investigate further. Suggestion was to contact Peter Swiderski as he is the trustee contact re town/village relationships and would have information on tax framework. Betsy and Kathy will contact as well.

## Schedule/Outreach

Committee jumped ahead to schedule and public outreach to accommodate the Hunter students' travel schedule.

Follow up discussion regarding John Dennehey's presentation to the committee in January. Kathy reported that John has provides us with the power point presentation for the website, contact for information on the grant and a list of the communities in the compact.

Kathy then reported on our draft time line and a draft schedule for the upcoming months.

The draft timeline was updated to reflect the Greenway grant schedule to some degree. The draft schedule is a proposed outline of tasks to be done over the next 5 months. These will be posted on the website.

She proposed starting the work to hire a consultant, to meet as a group with the LWRP and zoning board and to determine how to engage the community.

Should the process be launched with a community celebration to announce the process to the village?

Is the committee interested in holding small neighborhood meetings? Working from Jim's draft neighborhood map, there could be 20 – 25 individual meetings to reach the community. Jim suggested that the committee confirm that there is no issue with open meetings law if held in private homes. Kathy and Betsy have been discussing together and will present to committee.

Is the committee interested in holding a community visioning workshop? Would we ask John Dennehey to assist?

One idea was to have a photo exhibit of places in Hastings done by Hastings residents of their neighborhoods. These photos could be used in the Comprehensive Plan to identify neighborhoods. Holding a walking tour could be helpful as well.

Richard explained that due to their course schedule the Hunter studio would be interested in attending these types of events around the middle of April.

Discussion on what day of week to hold, what weekend to hold community celebration? After a discussion this topic was tabled until the next meeting. Lynda Merchant will call the Community Center for availability for a community celebration.

Betsy brought up the fact that this committee is taking up a lot of time for the participants that maybe a consultant should be doing. A discussion then was held about choosing a consultant. The consensus was that we are not ready to hire someone at this point. Richard will contact a couple of consultants that he knows to see what their thoughts are about where a consultant should fit in to our committee.

## Topics cont'

### *6. Community Services & Scenic Resources and Historic Resources and Recreational Resources and Natural Resources: Carolyn, Jim and Harry*

This group provided a hand out of a list of these resources. They met with Ray Gomes, Recreation Department. He said he would provide a report of resources available in the village. A suggestion was brought up that maybe a "Meet the Village" TV show can be broadcast on WHOH to highlight the village manager, the Library, DPW, Fire Department and the Recreation Department about what is happening in the village that people may not be aware of. It was also suggested that we should be fielding questions at community events and that the email alerts from the school and the village should be publicized again. From 3-7 PM the JHCC is bulging with young people. Bill Finkleday was interviewed about resources for youth. He does a superb job with the youth and with their families. He is a valuable resource to Hastings and his salary does not cost the village a penny. Their list will be posted on the website.

### *7. Community Facilities and Cultural Resources: Lynda and Harry*

This group made a list of facilities and resources. The question that drove the conversation was "What attracts People to the village?" The committee has reached out to the Village Arts Commission for a meeting. Their list will be posted on the website.

### *8. Land Use and Zoning: Carolyn and Jim*

This group is at the beginning stages of investigation. They are looking for volunteers who would like to look at the zoning code for the village. The code also includes property issues, ethics, view preservation and storm water management. They suggested that there are sections that other topic groups might find useful and will share that.

### *9. Sustainability: Ellen and Kathy*

A meeting with the Conservation Commission, Sustainable Hastings, Peter Swiderski and Diggitt McLaughlin was postponed because of weather. Westchester County is releasing a task force report on Sustainability on 2/26. Kathy and Ellen will talk with the Conservation Commission and Sustainable Hastings starting at the local level and then branching out. A suggestion was to look at Levittown in Nassau County they are the first village to go green.

*Public comment:* No public comment received

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM

Next meeting February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 In Media 1 & 2 downstairs

## Action Points

- Board of Trustees should be asked to extend the grant money that expires in October of this year.
- Kick off celebration- discussion about weekday or weekend and form the party will take. Lynda Merchant will contact JHCC for [possible dates.

- Question about Open Meeting Law and meeting in individual houses for neighborhood discussions
- Continue to work on assigned topics
- Bring a log of your committee hours.
- Richard Bass will get our email information to the students and provide us with their information for committee work.