

20/20 VISION
VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSVILLE COMMUNITY PLAN
COMMUNITY PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES – AUGUST 23, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Community Plan Committee Attendees: Walter Pacer, Mary Carr, Nancy Delo, Kim Giannelli-Calos, Todd Nelson, Carolyn Schlifke, Wes Stone, Dave Sutton, Ed Zabel

Absent: Doug Adema, Thomas Claxton, Paul Iskalo, Kevin Lester, Timothy Madsen, Victor Paquet

Village Trustees: Ron Daniels, Brian Geary, Basil Piazza

Consultants: Allison Dubie, Jocelyn Gordon

Village/Town Staff: Joelle Guy, Dan Howard, Lynda Juul, Sally Kuzon

MINUTES

Motion made by Ed Zabel, seconded by Carolyn Schlifke to approve the Community Plan Committee meeting minutes of the July 26, 2005.

Motion Carried.

Walter Pacer asked if anyone had any question or concerns regarding the Village of Williamsville Community Plan Advisory Committee PowerPoint Presentation given by Jocelyn Gordon on July 26th. There were no comments or further input.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Jocelyn Gordon reviewed the elements of the Public Participation Plan with the Committee.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The consultant is planning to hold four meetings open to the public. The first meeting will deal with visioning. The second meeting will be more of a presentation and discussion of different plan alternatives; this will get the public to react to those plans. The third meeting is a presentation of the Community Plan in draft form. The fourth meeting would be a public hearing to fulfill the SEQR requirements. The draft would be

presented again, and people would be able to come in and formally comment before the document would go to the adoption process.

The first meeting will be held around the first week of November. The Inventory Report will have been made public, with drafts in the library as well as on the web site. The consultant will give a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation that will incorporate all the elements of the Inventory Report. The goal for the end of the meeting is to have the residents prioritize their most important issues. They will be divided into tables of six or eight and work together to compromise and come up with the table's issues, not just individual priorities. This type of system allows any number of people to participate. Three or four consultants from Peter J. Smith will be there, as well as representatives from the Village of Williamsville and Town of Amherst. Jocelyn will walk from table to table to help, if necessary. The topic of having Community Plan Committee members help to facilitate was discussed. If anyone would like to participate, they are welcome, but Jocelyn would like to do some training with them in advance. Attendance usually varies depending on the specific community's issues. As much information as possible will be released to the public prior to the community meeting. A role of the Community Plan Committee is to go out and talk to their neighbors and get them involved in the process. The consultant and the Village need the Community Plan Committee to assist them in getting information on groups of stakeholders in order to inform them of the upcoming events. They would like to develop a list of contacts in the Village to get them involved in the process.

Jocelyn then confirmed that everyone felt comfortable with the community meetings.

The Community Plan Committee will be notified of the meeting dates.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The three focus group meetings that were held in July were then discussed. The participants from those groups will be sent information on the community meetings. Each session took approximately 90 minutes and involved brainstorming about the 'big picture' for the future. Jocelyn asked if anyone had any questions about the focus groups. Carolyn Schlifke felt that representation in the Transportation group seemed to have come from the groups that have caused traffic problems, and didn't see any resident representation. Nancy DeLo felt it was beneficial to have these people at the focus group meeting. Jocelyn responded that most residents who attended any of the focus groups have had plenty to say about the traffic, and that those in the Transportation group are needed to determine what is possible, and what they are willing to do to be flexible in the future. She likes experts to be at the focus groups, and feels it is most helpful when people have a level of expertise.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey will be mailed out in late September or early October. The survey is conducted to be scientifically accurate. In order to achieve this accuracy, 600 surveys will be randomly distributed throughout the community, and a 15% rate of return is

required. This gives enough information for the survey to be statistically accurate within plus or minus 4%. The consultant has always had at least a 25% response rate.

APPROVAL

A motion was made by Todd Nelson, seconded by Ed Zabel to approve the Public Participation Plan. Dave Sutton abstained from the vote, stating he felt he needed more information. Motion carried.

WEB SITE PRESENTATION

Joelle Guy of the Town of Amherst Planning Department presented the web site to the Community Plan Committee. Peter j. smith and company developed the web site, with input from Village and Town staff. The information is located on the Village web site (www.village.williamsville.ny.us). Any comments or concerns received through this site will be responded to by Sally Kuzon, and the committee will be made aware of what the comments/concerns are.

Discussion centered on the timing of the web site going live. Some committee members were concerned that it was not posted earlier. There needed to be products for people to respond to. The plan to date has involved a lot of organization. It is just now at the point of pushing out product and getting people involved. In addition, all information must be approved by the Community Plan Committee before it is released to the public. The committee asked how helpful a web site is in getting information out to the public. Jocelyn has not found it overly helpful in the past, but the Town found that their site was frequently accessed. At the end of their plan, they found there were a lot of people who did not attend meetings, but were tracking the progress of the plan through the web site. The committee would like to find out if we are able to monitor web site statistics. The site should be up this week.

COMMUNITY MEETING

The date of the first community meeting was discussed. The first week of November would be ideal since it would allow a vision statement to be prepared by the end of November, for presentation to the Community Plan Committee at the following meeting. The location of the meeting was also discussed. Dave Sutton suggested Christian Central Academy, since it is within the Village. The committee approved the following as locations at which to hold the meeting: Christian Central Academy, Williamsville South, and Mill Middle. It was decided that the meeting will be held on either Tuesday Nov. 1 or Wednesday Nov. 2, 2005.

The committee discussed promoting the community meeting. Jocelyn stated that she would put a press release together. Dan Howard asked for suggestions of groups in the Village (i.e. civic or homeowners associations) that we could approach to help get the word out. The following suggestions were made as ways to have information

disseminated: PTA newsletter, Business Association membership e-mail, condo associations, general mailing, church bulletins, water bill mailings, Buffalo News, community bulletin boards, and flyers. The committee was asked to e-mail Sally Kuzon (skuzon@village.williamsville.ny.us) or Lynda Juul (ljuul@village.williamsville.ny.us) with any other suggestions for getting this information out. Todd Nelson suggested including information on future meetings, even if the specific dates aren't listed.

Mary Carr thought it would help at the public meeting if the Village Trustees made an appearance to show their support. Sally Kuzon said that Board of Trustees will be aware of the date and it can be talked about at the Village Board meetings.

COMMUNITY SURVEY PROCESS AND FORMAT

Jocelyn discussed the community survey in more detail. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is sent out to help with the response rate. The survey is distributed to renters and owners equitably (62% of residents are homeowners; 38% are renters). They reach the homeowners from the tax roll by first removing all the multiple homeowners so each one will have only one chance of completing a survey. Those who live out of town are eliminated. By the end of the process, everyone will have one opportunity to be randomly selected to complete the survey. The Community Plan Committee discussed where the survey should be returned to and agreed to have it returned to the consultant. There is a personal information section on the survey, but it doesn't include a name or address. This helps to maintain anonymity. The consultant will make it clear in the cover letter that they are performing the survey on the Village's behalf; it will be on Village letterhead, and will be signed by either the Committee Chair or the Mayor. The letter will also state that participants are randomly chosen and will have a paragraph describing what the survey is all about.

The format of the survey is as follows: each statement corresponds to a chapter in the Inventory Report, and gives five choices for response. The responses are: 1 – strongly agree; 2 – agree; 3 – no opinion/don't know; 4 – disagree; 5 – strongly disagree. They do their best not to lead people and make sure the statement is very clear one way or another. They will make sure they're hitting on the hot issues for Williamsville. The survey will also have areas for people to write in additional comments. The survey asks how many people are living in the household, their age, and how long the person has lived in the community. Jocelyn reviewed the list of topics to be addressed. Ed Zabel requested that the Community Plan Committee members have the opportunity to complete the survey. Jocelyn stated they could put together another copy of the survey to be documented as public input, but it would not be included with the scientific survey. Two weeks are allotted for return of the completed surveys. She hopes to have at least a general analysis for the community meeting. When asking youth-related questions, the age groups are split between 12 and under, and over 12.

Dan Howard announced that the next meeting is Tuesday, September 27th, not the 26th as listed on the agenda. The goal is to have the Inventory Report out to the Community Plan

Committee at least a week prior to this meeting. It is an 80 page document. Jocelyn will walk the committee through it at the September meeting, they can review it during the month of October, and the consultant will then ask the committee to endorse the report. At that point it will then be put on the web site. This will be a week or two before the community meeting. She also hopes to talk about the community survey results at the October meeting.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The Community Plan Committee agreed to modify its November and December scheduled meeting dates. There will be a combined November/December meeting on December 6th. This will allow the committee to attend the community meeting in November.

The next meetings will be September 27th, October 25th, and December 6th.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CLOSE OF MEETING

On motion by Ed Zabel, seconded by Nancy Delo, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.