

**TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
BETHLEHEM 20/20 ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

March 14, 2008 Meeting Record
Elsmere Fire Station, Poplar Drive
7:45 – 9:30 a.m.

Members Present:

Terri Egan, Co-Chair, Kenneth Ringler, Co-Chair, Steve Baboulis, Keith Bennett, James Blendell, Mort Borzykowski, John Clarkson, Steve Coffey, Joanne Cunningham, Lisa Evans, Cathy Griffin, Susan Hager, Terry Hannigan, Jim Lytle, John Piechnik, Ted Putney, Pam Robbins, Patty Salkin, Brian Stenson, Suzanne Traylor, Bob Verstandig, Jr., Bob Ward

Members Absent:

Peter Conway, Dick Kotlow, Bert Trombly, Ann Wendth, Christo Zemerling

Town Staff Members Present:

Judi Kehoe, George Leveille, Kim Ryan

Co-Chair Report:

The Co-Chairs began the meeting by welcoming new members and discussing various housekeeping items. As far as questions and inquiries received from committee members, the Co-Chairs requested that staff provide copies of this correspondence in the monthly packets distributed to the members.

February 15, 2008 Meeting Record

Upon motion, the committee approved the draft meeting record from the February 15, 2008 meeting.

Update on February Action Items

The action items from the February meeting were reviewed. The committee members agreed to move future meeting start times to 7:30 a.m. In the interest of preserving meeting time for committee interaction, the Co-Chairs indicated that they would forego the use of a monthly “question” for the committee members to consider. A revised draft mission statement was circulated and discussed with the committee.

Question: If you could improve some feature or characteristic of the Town, what would it be?

The committee members were asked to respond briefly to the above question. The following is a summary of the general topical areas of the committee responses:

- Bike, pedestrian and streetscape
- Tax base balance
- Intergovernmental services
- Emergency services
- Communications between the Town and its school districts
- Water supply
- Business friendliness
- Human services for both young and old
- Entertainment venues and community facilities
- 9W congestion
- Housing affordability
- Enhanced central business districts
- Land conservation

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- Community design
- Community diversity
- Parks and recreation

Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Controls Overview:

George Leveille presented an overview of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2005) and land use controls (amended in 2005 and 2006). The presentation covered the following topics:

- Background and overview of the planning process
- The Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement for the year 2020
- Comprehensive Plan community goals
- Comprehensive Plan priorities and Tier I Recommendations
- Overviews of the Vista Tech Campus project, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Conservation (CACC), and the Route 9W Linkage Study
- Highlights of the Zoning Law and Subdivision regulation amendments enacted in 2005 and 2006
- The Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee (CPOC)
- Development activity and building trends
- CPOC Findings and Recommendations
- Financial modeling to support the 20/20 committee (presented by Judi Kehoe)

A group discussion and question and answer period followed the formal presentation. Co-Chair Egan indicated the potential need for a sub-committee to work with staff on the financial modeling element and a couple of committee members (Hager and Stenson) volunteered to participate on this sub-committee. The following are among the highlights of the group discussion:

- The importance of being on the same page as the Town's three school districts (Bethlehem, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk, Guilderland) and reconciling both demographic and financial planning with the districts
- The potential to "share services" with the school districts
- The minimum value of a home required to support the school aged children produced per household
- An assessment of the housing market and trends experienced in the Town
- The need for quality data to use for forecasting purpose
- Increased need for senior services as the population ages
- Discussion of the assessment process (and the desirability of a more detailed presentation in this regard at a future 20/20 meeting)
- The potential for a best practices analysis of comparable communities
- The use of a community survey to explore key issues, opportunities needs and preferences

Action Items:

1. Affirm the tentative schedule with the exception of moving the monthly meeting start time to 7:30 a.m.

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2. Continue to submit comments and suggestions on the draft mission statement
3. Look into the possibility of establishing a discussion board or list serve for the members to use for ongoing discussion

Next Meeting:

Friday, April 11, 2008, Elsmere Fire Station, 7:30 – 9:15 a.m.

Discussion Topics: Part I, Programs and Services – Public Safety; Overview of Town Facility
Needs Analysis

To submit comments and questions, contact:

George Leveille, gleveille@townofbethlehem.org, 518.439.4955 x1129