

September 27, 2021

To Compromise Plan Review Comm.
From Jane Geisler Verbank NY
(Town of Washington Landowner

Large land owners need creative solutions:

Tax relief for saving open space

Dont limit it to ag uses.

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Comp Plan's edits near completion

Millbrook Independent
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By Jesse Ordansky

Drafting Washington's master plan update began about five years ago and the Comprehensive Plan Committee will begin editing the draft's fourth of six and final goals on Wednesday night.

Committee Chair Josh Mackey said the process has taken five years due to the volume of public participation, communication and semantic issues among committee members and townspeople, and the pressures facing the committee given the importance of the final document.

The plan's update began with the volunteer committee and Planning Consultant Margaret Irwin of River Street Planning in Troy surveyed Washington citizens, developed a vision statement, and made an action plan outlining six overarching goals - each of which includes policies, objectives, and recommendations.

During each workshop meeting, a committee member is designated to take notes on community feedback and finalized decisions. Due to expenses associated with Irwin's attendance, she generally receives notes and edits via email or during regular phone conversations.

According to Mackey, the Town of Washington pays for Irwin's services by the hour and "Margaret offered to come whenever we want her presence," but he said communicating via email and phone is "a much more efficient way of doing it."

The majority of the edits are based on language the committee finds inconsistent with the vision statement that discusses the importance of "a rural community with great scenic beauty, a healthy, natural environment, and a high quality of life for its residents" and "protecting our town by ensuring that our working farms, beautiful historical landscapes, water resources, and natural habitat for our plants and animals are preserved for the future."

Mackey said, "a lot of times it's members of the public that calls [inconsistencies] to our attention." He said the public's participation is an invaluable resource, but also implies a slower more methodical process.

"The town is very accommodating to the public, probably much more than other municipalities or what was originally intended," said Mackey. "It's just a very open community... Sometimes we go over things word by word."

He said phrasing and terms mean

different things to different people and guaranteeing conciseness within a document as important as a town's master plan is an imperative aspect of the committee's duties.

The comprehensive plan is "something that's just so special and it's a little nerve-racking trying to make sure we get it right," said Mackey. "The stakes are high." He hopes the plan remains relevant for 20 to 25 years and will inevitably evolve with changing economic and market forces.

Combatants argue that the committee could expedite the planning process, but according to Irwin a five-year process is not unusual.

"Some communities move through this very quickly that's their choice, but sometimes good things take time," she said. "The fact that it may take Washington longer doesn't mean its not right thing for them to do."

Irwin and Mackie agreed that the plan's edits would likely be completed by the first quarter of 2012. The document must then be approved by the Washington Town Board, community members at a public hearing, and the Dutchess County Planning Board.

"No matter how quickly the committee and community move at this point, there's still a three to three and a half month process," said Irwin. She said if nothing else, the amount of time Washington is spending on the conciseness of their comprehensive plan should guarantee a well-written and versatile document.

Amenia Farmers' Market goes indoors

The only local winter farmers' market around is going full blast every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a full contingent of food sources.

Vendors offering their farm-raised beef, veal, and lamb give shoppers a choice of viands. Local veal is such a rarity that the Amenia Farmers' Market might be the only location where one can find such a delicacy.

Glenn Golovin - an Amenia cheese monger - always has a table covered with cheeses from boutique cheese-

Donna Ponessa Victorious in Australia

By Carola Lott

Despite terrible weather tornado type winds, lightening, torrential rain and flooding at the Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre the American Paralympic team won the gold competing against 40 Para Dressage riders. Donna Ponessa, who trains with Wes Dunham at Woodstock Stables in Stanfordville won the Grade IA, division in each of the three days of competition. Grade IA is for riders whose impairment has a significant impact on their ability to ride.

As was the case in Mexico, U.S. riders had only a few days to find and become accustomed to their horses. Ponessa rode Don Armani, a Grand Prix trained horse that competes Prix St George and Intermediare 1. "I am very grateful to his owner Setsuko Miike of Melbourne and his trainer Charlotte Pedersen for having confidence in my ability and allowing me to ride this amazing horse," Ponessa said.

Pedersen, who was impressed by Donna's determination, said "She did a fantastic job with Ralphie (Don Armani) I nearly had tears in my eyes seeing her ride him in the test."

Ponessa also gives credit and thanks to her own trainer, Wes Dunham. "Wes was willing to travel and work with me down under. Under his guidance I posted some of my best international scores ever," she said.

makers that can only be found in high-end markets like Murray's on Bleeker Street.

Market Manager Sophie Meili of Meili Farm carries a line of eggs from pastured chickens, beef, and pork from her free-range belted galloway cattle and Berkshire pigs. Perry Hill Farm offers a selection of hand-made organic glycerine soaps infused with herbs, flowers, and spices for a fragrant wash.

Christmas shoppers will find orchids, pillows, handbags, ceramics, textiles, jewelry, and wool products in addition to jars of jams, jellies, and condiments all in one place - the Amenia Town Hall. For more information see the market's website at Amenia-farmersmarket.com.