

Town of Ancram
Community Development Block Grant Project Team Meeting
July 15, 2009

Members Present: Art Bassin, Suzanne Bressler, Donna Hoyt, Jim MacArthur, Libby McKee, Will Lutz

The minutes of the 6/24 meeting were reviewed and approved.

1. Community Development Strategic Plan – The committee discussed Plan priorities and concluded that fixing the 82/7 intersection was the most important priority, followed by the Tin Smith House and Mitchell Houses to gain control of the retaining walls and sight lines on both side of CR 7. The Committee discussed the possibility of the town buying the Tin Smith and Stiehle houses to facilitate work on the 82/7 intersection. The Committee noted that even if the retaining walls on both side of CR 7 were carved back, the sight line looking north up 82 was still blocked by Perry Rollins’ house.

2. 82/7 Intersection -- Ms. McKee and Ms. Hoyt commented that the State DOT suggested that in the absence of fatality data at the intersection, we develop data to “make the case” that we need to improve the 82/7 intersection by collecting intersection problem data from the school districts, the fire company, the Mill and the Camps, all of whom have had vehicles report problems negotiating the 82/7 intersection. Ms. McKee suggested we should look at moving or removing the Tin Smith house if that were necessary to solve the intersection problem. The Committee also noted that the Fire District had expressed an interest in the Stiehle House. The Committee discussed the possible need to tear down the Porters Store at the same time work was done to cut back the retaining wall of the Tin Smith House.

Mr. MacArthur noted that if we were to consider moving the war memorial monument in front of Simons General Store, we might have more flexibility in redesigning the 82/7 intersection. The Committee discussed the possibility of moving the monument to either the Town Hall area or to the Tin Smith site, if the Tin Smith House were moved or taken down. In addition, Mr. MacArthur noted that if we were to get the intersection redesigned, there was a chance that we could get a traffic light at the intersection.

Mr. Lutz noted that the priorities we had been discussing did not add any aesthetic value to Ancram in phase 1, and expressed a concern that if the DOT were agree to “improve” the 82/7 intersection, we might get a result which would solve the intersection problem but create an unacceptable visual impression in town. Mr. Lutz commented that we had to insure that whatever happened in the center of Ancram, we had to have plans in place, in case the Tin Smith and Stiehle Houses were removed, to use the Tin Smith and Stiehle House sites to improve the look and feel of the Town.

3. Vacant Properties – Mr. Lutz suggested we include as a CDBG Plan priority the idea that the town organize a “vacant properties stabilization project” to identify all properties

in Ancram, Ancramdale and Boston Corners, other than the ones at the 82/7 intersection in center of Ancram, which will need work to prevent future deterioration.

4. Follow-up with CDBG – Ms. Bressler noted that we needed to get back in touch with the CDBG during August to set up a meeting in September to go over our detailed plans for the center of Ancram. Ms. McKee commented that we needed to be specific about what projects we wanted to fund and in what order. Ms. Bressler suggested that Mr. Bassin re-circulate the financial estimate for projects in the center of Ancram so the Committee could review and discuss them at the next meeting and make them part of the CDBG Plan.

5. Fire House Plans – Ms. McKee commented that we had to be sure that the Fire House Plans did not preclude future 82/7 modifications that might be essential for the development of the center of Ancram. Mr. MacArthur commented that if the 82/7 intersection were changed to make it easier for the fire trucks to use the intersection, a major reason not to move the Fire House would be eliminated. Mr. MacArthur noted that the Fire District planned to add an extension to the Fire House in the next 3-5 years at a cost of approximately \$1.3 million. If the Fire House were moved out of Ancram, a new Fire House could cost \$3 to \$4 million.

6. Ancram Marketing Brochure -- Ms. Bressler will discuss this in more detail next time.

7. Emergency Preparedness Plan – The Committee noted that the town did not have an emergency preparedness plan, and suggested that the Town Board should make this an urgent priority before this winter.

8. Affordable Housing – Ms. Bressler commented that it was not clear in the CDBG Plan how much affordable housing we would need in the future, and suggested that Mr. Bassin work with Ms. Stolzenburg to determine what the affordable housing needs of the community were and would be going forward.

9. CDBG Strategic Plan Public Hearing – Mr. Bassin commented that after the Committee finalized the CDBG Strategic Plan, which we should do at the august meeting, we should schedule a public hearing on the CDBG plan to get formal community feedback before presenting the Plan to the Town Board. Mr. Bassin suggested a public hearing for some time in the early fall...maybe in mid to late-September.

10. Next Meeting – Wednesday September 16.

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.