

CAC Meeting, January 3, 2022

Minutes prepared by CAC Secretary, Jane Meigs

Virtually attending: Jamie, Wally, Choral, David, Amy, Colleen, Kim, Jane, Jono.

Meeting commenced at 7:00pm

Approved December 6, 2021 meeting minutes

Iron Star Project-Updates

CAC members reported on the discussion of Iron Star at Dec 16 Town Board. Our discussion and concerns centered upon the following points:

- Use of the term “glamping” (given the square footage, heated space and bathrooms) and some questions about whether the term Retreat Center actually fits the Iron Star project.
- Casual and incorrect use of the term “organic” for crop/food production.
- Dubious expansion of affordable housing in the proposed barn attic space since this is a shared dorm space and not an actual increase in affordable housing units.
- Serious reservations about the safety and feasibility of the fire access road.
- Concerns about Iron Star’s petition to change the zoning status from Hamlet to Agricultural for the 13-acre portion of the property.
- We noted that mitigation of this project would be possible, particularly if there were changes in the number and location of housing units in the hill section where the proposed development and environmental disturbance would be greatest.
- Although the public raised multiple issues, we discussed the CAC’s role and focus on environmental issues.

Rural Ancram

- We briefly discussed Rural Ancram, the newly-formed community group which is uniting in opposition to the Iron Star project. We noted the importance of CAC members maintaining a professional distance from this group and that many of their concerns extend beyond the environmental aspects of this project. We also emphasized that Rural Ancram should be

responsible for getting any related Iron Star documents from the Planning Board and not rely on CAC members.

Ideas for Ancram Climate Infrastructure Planning and Projects

- Supervisor Art Bassin has asked that CAC and the Climate Smart Community Task Force (CSCTF) coordinate the selection of a few climate-related projects which would build disaster preparedness and climate resilience for the town and increase our CSCTF participation.
- Possible projects include: Flood Management; Open Space Planning; Storm Water Management; Flood Plain Management; Ground Water Protection.
- We agreed that it would be best if the CAC and CSCTF took on advisory roles for these projects. Also, it would be very helpful to tie any project to grant money which may be available either from NYSERDA or the CSCTF program. As a member of both the CAC and CSCTF, Colleen has agreed to sort through the possible plan options and narrow down the choices to three possibilities which both groups could support. She is keen to select the most easily accomplished and valuable projects.

Letter on Marijuana Production Plant

- Kim expressed concerns about a proposal before the Town Board for a marijuana production plant in Ancram. She mentioned that these plants cause overnight light pollution, greatly increase water use, and use noxious chemicals for odor control. We agreed to follow and watch this proposal carefully.

Other Business: Jane was appointed CAC Secretary by consensus.

Important Upcoming Town Meeting--We encourage zoom attendance at the upcoming town meetings:

Thursday, January 6, 2022—Planning Board Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2022—Town Board Meeting

Next CAC meeting is Monday, February 7, 2022 via Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.