

August 4, 2004

MEETING MINUTES

SUBJECT: TONAWANDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
Comprehensive Plan Board (CPB) Meeting
Meeting Date: August 3, 2004

ATTENDANCE: Ray Sinclair; Edward Umiker; George Melrose; Ken Swanekamp; Robert Mayer; Robert Dimmig; Jo Nasoff; Steven Achramovitch; Robert Morris; Drew Reilly; Mark Mistretta; Ellen Parker

I. Introduction: Ed Umiker provided introductions and noted that the inventory section of the report has been distributed. Any comments should be forwarded to Ellen Parker at Wendel Duchscherer.

Drew Reilly noted that the purpose of this meeting is to ensure that the CPB is in agreement with the direction of the Plan. The process of creating the Comprehensive Plan is a collaborative effort between the consultant and the Town, and at this stage we need to be sure we are addressing the priority issues before we spend time on detailing implementation steps.

II. News

In request for information on issues or news about the Town, the following was mentioned:

- The Governor's office needs to sign the Home Rule message regarding the access road for the Colvin Woods project before the next stage can occur.
- The North Youngmann Commerce Center project is moving forward. Proposals for the road are being reviewed.
- The Paddock project on Delaware Avenue was approved. This approval keeps this business local in the Town of Tonawanda. They will be using the site mostly for car storage, but will have a small sales facility on-site.

III. Direction of the Plan/ Key Elements: WD reported on the status of the project. Drew Reilly noted that the key factor for the Town of Tonawanda plan is the neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are positive assets that are not widely known outside of the Town. In current urban planning discussions, the hot topic is "neo-urbanism" which emphasizes interconnected street patterns, mixed-use areas (residential, commercial and public uses in near proximity), transportation choices, and an emphasis on pedestrian access. Many communities are trying to build in neo-urbanist concepts in their planning. The Town of Tonawanda already has the framework of this. The Plan will be providing guidance on how to improve on this strength, focusing on the neighborhoods.

For the neighborhoods, we will provide a list of the neighborhoods and a list of the key features/assets (schools, churches, business districts, etc.) This has all been mapped, also. We will try to get information about the neighborhood watch boundaries from the Police Department and Mr. Achramovitch will provide the school boundaries.

There was discussion about the schools, and their role in neighborhood stability. Mr. Achramovitch noted that the Ken-Ton School District will be doing a planning effort to address school needs and possible reorganization. Also, Town policies sometimes affect

the schools. For example, redevelopment of Sheridan Parkside has decreased the number of school-aged children in the neighborhood. It was noted that there should be coordination between the Town and the school district so that their planning efforts complement each other.

The idea of organizing the public meeting around neighborhoods was discussed. The format of the meeting will include an overview to all attendees, as well as the opportunity to look at specific neighborhoods in more depth. It was agreed that the room should be a large, open area, such as a cafeteria.

It was noted that this is an excellent time to be preparing the Town's second Comprehensive Plan. The first plan did a good job of laying out the framework for a growing community. The Town is now at a stage where there will be a large turnover in demographics, with new residents moving in. The Town has the opportunity to set the stage for this transition, and set the tone for the community.

It was noted that additional attention to economic development issues should be included. The Town has a large amount of available land for industrial and commercial development becoming available, and this will have impacts on other aspects of the Town. For example, the employees at Colvin Woods are likely to patronize the neighborhood business area down the street.

In regard to major thoroughfares, it was noted that these streets are the primary impression many people have of the Town. Areas such as Kenmore Avenue, with missing curbs and minimal landscaping, present a negative image. The Town has been making important investments, such as the planting of trees along Sheridan, and this helps enhance the Town's image. It was agreed that the Plan will not focus much on issues such as utilities or recreation—the Town has excellent programs in those areas.

IV. Next Steps:

We will try to schedule the public meeting for the last week in September, (the 28th, 29th or 30th) depending upon availability of a meeting space and conflicting activities. Ed Umiker will check on reserving a location. Wendel Duchscherer will host an optional update meeting at our offices prior to the public meeting to go over what will be presented at the meeting.

We thank all CPB members for their assistance and participation.

Respectively submitted,

WENDEL DUCHSCHERER

Ellen L. Parker, AICP