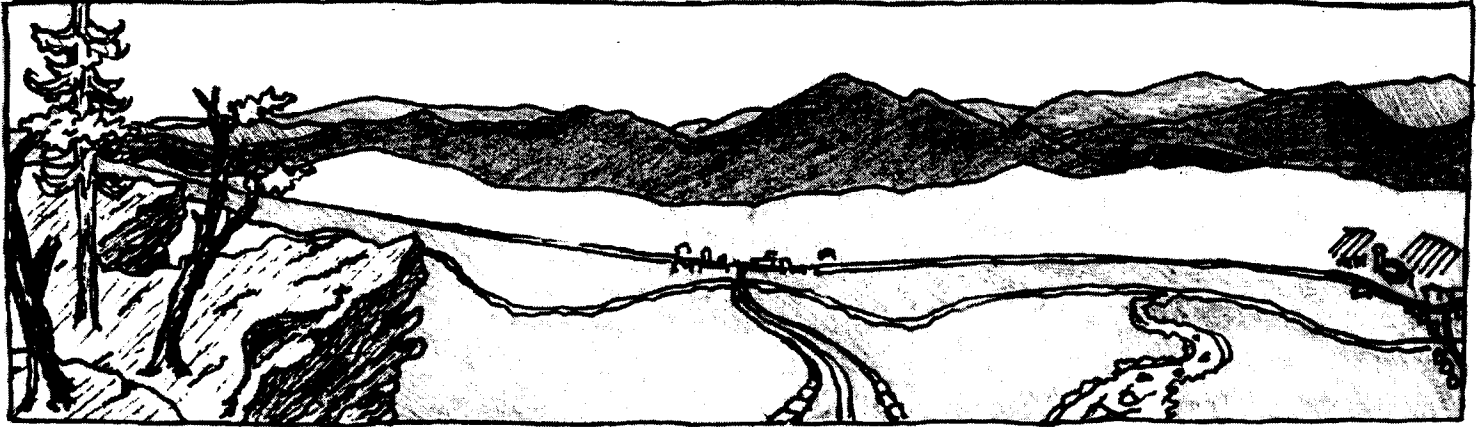


ROCHESTER REVIEW



Town of Rochester News...Improving Communication Between Residents, the Town, and the Schools

THE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OF OUR TOWN GOVERNMENT

The nucleus of our municipal government is made up of more than just our directly elected officials—several boards and commissions also help to run our Town. The principal legislative body is the Town Board, which also functions as its executive branch under New York State Town Law.

The Town Supervisor does not have executive authority *per se*, but functions as the chair of the Town Board and is the Town's chief fiscal officer. The Supervisor obtains his or her authority by resolution of the Town Board, which grants the Supervisor the authority to conduct the day-to-day business of the Town. The Supervisor is elected for a two-year term.

The Town Board consists of the Supervisor and four council members. Each is elected for a four-year term. Together, the five individuals are authorized to pass laws, appropriate funds, and manage the employees of the Town. The Town Board meets twice per month. On the first Thursday of each month, the board meets at 7pm in a session at which the public may speak. On the last Wednesday of each month, a business/workshop meeting is held at

4:30pm to review and authorize the payment of bills and discuss other pending matters.

The Town Board also appoints members to other boards and commissions. These boards, which are empowered to make legally binding decisions, include the following:

- **The Planning Board** makes determinations related to site plan approval, subdivisions, and special use permits. The PB has seven members, each appointed for a seven-year term. There is one alternate member who serves a two-year term.

- **The Zoning Board of Appeals** is authorized to approve appeals and exceptions to the Town's zoning laws. The ZBA consists of five members, each appointed for a five-year term. The one alternate member serves a two-year term.

- **The Board of Assessment Review** is the body that reviews appeals submitted by property owners related to property tax assessments. The five members of the BOAR each serve a five-year term.

- **The Board of Ethics** is the one board that does not make binding decisions. It consists of three members (one member must be an employee or elected official of the town). The Board of Ethics meets to review potential violations of the Town's

Ethics Law, which was rewritten in 2004, and makes recommendations related to the potential violations. Its meetings are generally closed to the public. Members are appointed by the Town Board for three-year terms.

In addition to the four boards, three town commissions meet regularly (see calendar on page 4). The members are appointed by the Town Board to make non-binding advisory opinions and recommendations.

- **The Environmental Conservation Commission** makes recommendations on conservation matters and protection of the environment. The ECC is also promoting a state-funded energy efficiency program called Energy Smart that

helps to upgrade homes and businesses (see page 3).

- **The Historic Preservation Commission** makes recommendations on preserving our Town's history and historic sites.

The various boards and commissions provide a valuable service to our community by amplifying residents' input on governmental decisions that affect us all. If you would like to serve on any of these bodies, contact the supervisor to learn how to apply. All are encouraged to attend public meetings to share thoughts and opinions on Town issues. ☺



The Town of Rochester is home to diverse people and landscapes.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Supervisor's Report..... 2
- Government Contacts.....2
- Imagine Rochester Update.....3
- Smart Energy Grants.....3
- Meeting & Events Calendar....4

Supervisor's Report

Dear Neighbor:

This newsletter is a direct and tangible result of the Imagine Rochester sessions that we conducted in the Spring of 2004. In those sessions, which were attended by more than 200 people in all, we discussed ideas on how to improve our town's government. We also discussed ideas on what our government, and indeed our community, should be doing to make the Town of Rochester a better place for us all to live.

One idea that community members focused on was the improvement of communication between government officials and the public. So on behalf of my colleagues on the Town Board, I'm pleased to provide you with the first issue of our Town Newsletter. In this issue, we have attempted to explain the structure of our town government and the duties of and the relationship between the various boards and commissions of our government. We have also included a four-page questionnaire to ask for your input on what priorities our government should pursue to strengthen our community. I hope that you'll devote some of your time and thought to the survey so that we can obtain the broadest and most comprehensive level of input possible. In the past five years, our town has seen an unprecedented pace of growth, and this growth will most likely continue. The purpose of the survey is to assist in the process of attempting to make that growth manageable and consistent with the vision that our residents have of our community.

I'd like to spend a little time telling you what exactly the Town Supervisor does. Unlike a mayor, I don't have a lot of executive authority and I rely on the Town Board to pass resolutions that are important to the functioning of our government. Our town employs 30 people, broken out as follows:

- The Town Clerk's Office has three employees under the responsibility of our elected Town Clerk. This department is responsible for the maintenance of town records, permit issuance, and tax and permit revenue collection.



- The Highway Department, under the elected superintendent of highways, has nine employees who do an excellent job of maintaining our town's roads. The IBEW Local 1968 union represents the employees in this department.
- The Youth and Recreation Department has two full-time employees who devise and operate programs for youth, seniors and the general public.
- The Planning and Building Department has two employees, including a full-time secretary to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. This department is responsible for the issuance of building permits. There are also two part-time inspectors who are responsible for building inspections and building code enforcement.
- The Assessor's Office has one full-time assessor and one full-time assistant. These employees are responsible for property assessment rolls and various exemptions, such as Star, Enhanced Star, Veterans and Agricultural exemptions.

- The Rochester Town Court has two elected justices and one full-time and one part-time court clerk, and two part-time court officers.
- The Transfer Station has two full-time employees plus seasonal help.
- The Town has one full-time employee who is responsible for maintaining our buildings and grounds, including the two town parks, and a part-time cleaner.
- One part-time animal control officer is on call 24/7. She is also responsible for our municipal animal shelter and adoptions.
- One part-time Social Services employee is responsible for providing public assistance to eligible recipients.

Together, we all try to provide the best service possible to our residents. This newsletter is one step in trying to improve the excellent service already provided by our dedicated employees. We welcome your input and I invite you to call me at 626-3043 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Pam Duke, Supervisor



OUR GOVERNMENT AT A GLANCE

Town Hall:

Supervisor Pam Duke.....626-3043

Council Members:

Francis Gray.....626-4527

Randy Hornbeck.....687-4531

Ronald Santosky.....626-4314

Tom Ryan.....626-4909

Town Clerk:

Veronica Sommer.....626-7384

Highway Department:

Wayne Kelder626-7221

Assessor's Office:

Sharon Hornbeck.....626-0920

Building Department:

Douglas Dymond.....626-2433

Planning Board and ZBA:

Becky Paddock-Stange.....626-2434

Youth & Recreation Department:

Carol Dennin.....626-2115

Rochester Town Court:

Ronald W. Keillor Jr.....626-2522

Albert S. Babcock III.....626-2522

Environmental Commission:

Christopher Hewitt, chair.....626-7580

Historic Preservation Commission:

Alice Cross, chair.....687-9998

See page 4 for all meeting schedules.

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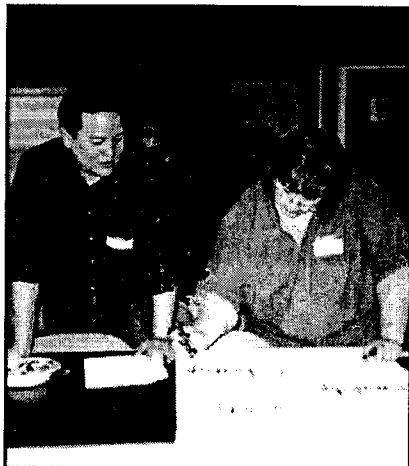
A LOOK BACK AT THE IMAGINE ROCHESTER MEETINGS AND WORKSHOP

Imagine Rochester, an all-day visioning workshop held on May 15, 2004 and sponsored by the Town Board, brought together diverse members of the community to discuss the challenges that face the town and share ideas on how the town might begin to address these issues in a positive and constructive way.

Facilitators Ted Fink and Michelle Grieg of Greenplan first led the group in discussing and envisioning a "model com-



Alice Cross presents the thoughts of her group.



Zali Win and Marijane Knudson co-chaired the communication group.

munity." Attendees then broke out into smaller focus groups on: a) economic development, b) rural character, c) culture and recreation, d) communication, and e) environment. Each group created a presentation about its topic, which was later shared with everyone. The group then ranked priorities.

Thoughts and concerns that were identified included a desire for the preservation of open space and the rural atmosphere of the town (vs. "suburbanization"), a focus on enriching our existing hamlets, and an improved system of communication between residents, the school, and the town.

Also high on the priority list were improved enforcement of existing zoning laws and investment in local businesses.

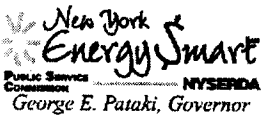
TAKING NEXT STEPS: THE ENCLOSED SURVEY

The purpose of the enclosed survey is to gather feedback from the entire community on issues that were discussed at Imagine Rochester. So please take a few minutes to fill it out and send it in, so we'll know what you're thinking.

After receiving this additional feedback, information will be prioritized and presented to the town's newly formed Planning and Zoning Committee. This committee will have representatives from all town boards and commissions.

As this process develops and more people become involved in shaping the future of our Town, we can all imagine a Rochester that we'd like to live in. ☺

SMART ENERGY GRANTS FOR HOMEOWNERS & RENTERS



Do you want to make your home more energy-efficient and reduce your utility bills? If you are eligible, the Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Program will cover up to 50 percent of the costs associated with the energy-efficiency improvements, up to a maximum of \$5,000 per household or \$10,000 for a 2- to 4-family building.

If you are not eligible, you can have work done under Home Performance with ENERGY STAR.

The objective of the Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program is to reduce energy costs of low- and moderate-income households by providing affordable energy efficiency improvements.

Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR, a New York Energy Smart program, brings a whole-house building performance approach to energy efficiency improvements.

A BPI-certified contractor performs a home energy audit of your home, and provides a customized work scope of recommended energy-efficiency upgrades and the cost of the work. There is a testing fee to perform the audit, which is deductible if you choose to have work done on your home.

In addition, low-interest loans are available for qualified applicants to cover the balance of the cost of the work.

WORK MAY INCLUDE

- Insulating
- Air sealing & duct sealing
- Repair or replace heating
- ENERGY STAR appliances
- Upgrade hot water heating
- ENERGY STAR lighting
- Other cost-effective energy saving measures

Solar Incentives Are Heating Up!

You may be eligible to receive incentives to help fund the installation cost of photovoltaic (PV) or solar-electric systems that are 50kW and smaller through the Solar-Electric System Incentive Program. As a point of reference, a 2kW PV system could provide about 20 to 30 percent of the energy needs of an average home.

Key Benefits

- Save 40 to 70 percent off the cost to purchase and install a solar-electric system by combining this program with other New York Energy Smart programs.
- Automatically receive a 5-year parts and labor warranty.
- If the system is 10 kW or smaller, excess electricity you generate may be "sold back" to the utility.

MORE PROGRAMS TO CHOOSE FROM

New York Energy Smart offers an array of options for households, businesses, and municipalities. Choose from Energy Efficiency for Building Owners & Managers, Energy Smart for Contractors & Partners, Energy Efficiency in Your School, the programs mentioned above, and more.

SIGN ME UP FOR SAVINGS

For more information, visit www.getenergysmart.org or contact the Mid-Hudson Energy Smart Communities at 331-2238 to get the energy audit process started.

Energy Smart is administered by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). ☺



ROCHESTER 2005 MASTER CALENDAR

Town of Rochester boards and commissions meet at least monthly. The following calendar is a sampling of the many meetings happening every month in our town:

Town Board:

The Town Board meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7 pm.

The audit workshop meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 4:30 pm.

Zoning Board:

The Zoning Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm.

Planning Board:

The Planning Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 pm.



The O&W Railway brought pedestrians and shoppers into downtown Kerhonkson and Accord until 1956. The Accord Train Station, above, now sits as a reminder of our past.

Historical Preservation Commission

meets the third Monday of each month at 5 pm.

Environmental Conservation Commission

meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 pm.

To contribute to the growth of the *Rochester Review*, contact Pam Duke at 626-3043 or pamdreal@aol.com. Visit the new Town Web site at www.townofrochester.net for meeting updates and much, much more.

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