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REPORT ON PROGRESS OF CODE UPDATE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY RICK PAGE AND PETER MINOTTI, CO-CHAIRS

In late August of 2009, Peter Minotti and Rick Page were asked by Supervisor Yudelson if they would facilitate a review of all Town Codes by co-chairing a large committee of community representatives. After accepting, the three of us met on several occasions to design the process and to select the committee. On September 10, 2009, the Supervisor sent letters of invitation to 50 members of our community. Members invited represented a diverse cross section of our local community. Those invited included member/s of the Town's Planning, Zoning and Conservation Boards, Henrietta Ambulance, Henrietta Fire District, members of the Henrietta community at large, retail and wholesale business, the legal community, school district, Henrietta Neighbors United, building and development specialists, Riverton Community Association, religious community, Rochester Realtors Assoc, as well as Town staff and department heads.

When the responses were tallied, about 35 members agreed to participate. An electronic Code Forum site was created by Henrietta's IT Coordinator Mario Angotti. The existing Code was divided into 8 major categories and Page, Minotti and Yudelson selected eight co-chairs from the list of participants to lead those sub-committees. Supervisor Yudelson then presented us with a list of topics that had presented themselves, over the years, as needing specific review and discussion. These topics became our first assignments and were posted on the Code Forum site under the sub-committee responsible for completing them. The electronic forum allowed us to work on the code review process from our homes and businesses cutting down significantly on the face to face meetings needed to complete this process.

Yudelson, Page and Minotti then met with representatives of General Code Publishing, a professional service that writes, supports, reviews, and researches Codes on a national level. It was decided that we would sign a contract with them to review our existing codes from a legal perspective only. Our local codes had not been reviewed in a very long time as county, state and federal building, fire, and other mandated codes needed to be addressed along with a multitude of legal case decisions that affect how our codes should be reviewed. This process has been completed and needs to be reviewed by the Town Board for consideration of changes and recommendations made by this very professional company. We determined that General Code Publishing would advise us on the legal issues mandated by recent court cases at all judicial levels and our local committee would make recommendations/changes that affected the look, touch and feel of our beloved community.

This committee of 35 (ending up to be about 20 after a year of hard work) met on a monthly basis from October of 2009 until June of 2010. During these monthly meetings, work to date would be presented, topics that were more controversial and/or more difficult were discussed by the entire committee, and two major workshops were conducted for Wind Energy and Electronic Reader boards. Two local experts in these areas presented an in-depth seminar followed by discussion and a question and answer period. From time to time, members of the community, not participating fully on the committee, were allowed to come in and discuss particular concerns they had with respect to topics of interest.

During the sub-committee work process, existing codes from local neighboring communities as well as existing codes at the national level were reviewed and presented in areas that proved to be more difficult and controversial.

In the Spring of 2010, Mr. Page and Mr. Minotti met with every department chair as well as other members of the Henrietta Town Staff to make sure all of their issues and concerns were discussed and taken into consideration. Following these individual and/or department meetings, Page and Minotti then reviewed the topics and issues brought forth by staff with the larger committee during our monthly large group meetings. A special thank you to the Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance for hosting most of those meetings and allowing us to use their state of the art media and projection equipment.

The large community committee agreed in June that their body of work had been completed. From this larger group, 10 members have been selected to assist in the final completion of all draft proposals and this group is now called the Core Team. It will be their specific charge to review all of the proposals made by each sub-committee, complete any and all of the review topics not completed to date, and to review the final report from General Code Publishing before recommending those changes to the Town Board.

This has been a huge task and our community members have donated hundreds of hours of volunteer time. We are proud of each and every one of them as they have gone above and beyond in helping us with our assignment. Once all of our draft proposals have been completed (we anticipate that there may be well over 100) and the recommendations of General Code Publishing has been discussed and agreed upon, it will be our pleasure to meet and work with the Town Board to determine how to proceed from that point.