

Comprehensive Plan Work Group
Town of North Dansville & Village of Dansville
14 Clara Barton Street
Dansville, NY 14437

Minutes for Monday, February 12, 2024

Meeting was called to order by Nancy Nice at 6:00pm

Work Group members:	Chairperson, Nancy Nice (Planning Board)	Present
	Katie Infantino, Secretary (Planning Board)	Present
	Chuck Menosky (Planning Board)	Present
	Kathy Button (Village Board)	Present
	Jeff Weidrick (Village Board)	Present
	Bob Infantino (Town Board)	Present
	David Luce (Town Board)	Present
	Jared Bridge (Planning Board)	Present
	Ann Lafford (Community)	Present
	Quinn Golden (Community)	Present
	Marcia Miller (Community)	Present
	Karen Howell (Community)	Present
	Sue DeMuth (Community)	Absent
	Karen Schleyer (ZBA)	Absent
	Chuck Infantino (ZBA)	Absent
	Sue Mettler (Community)	Absent

Guests: Brian Woodams, Aimee Zimmer, Bryan Mettler, Colleen Cone, Lisa Hartson, Dennis Weidman, Rick Lafford, William Mackowiak, Henry Everman, Gerald Welch Jr, Sue Saylor, Charlie Perkins, John Longuil, Rob Waltman, Peter Bacon, Tim Wolfanger, Sherrie Reilly

Review Old Plan - Nancy read the information regarding the airport from the previous plan.

New Business - Speakers

Rick Lafford- Finger Lakes Soaring Club

- Soaring club is a 501c3.
- Charter is to teach motorless flight.
- Junior program for kids 14 and up. They have taken 11 year olds who are interested. Costs about \$13,000/year to teach the kids.
- Each soaring flight counts as 4 flights for the airport.
- Built their hangar in 1986.
- The Dansville Airport fulfills their needs well.
- Their income sources have declined since the balloon fest is no longer at the airport. They had a high demand for rides that weekend.
- This is an excellent area for soaring - safe farm land to land and several private airstrips around where they can land.
- Members pay club dues, they don't charge a rental fee for gliders but do charge a fee for towing.
- They have reached out to the school with information about a STEM program but the school has not responded.

- Five of their former students have become commercial pilots and 2 have become maintenance techs. Two very well paying jobs.
- We have a unique set up in the Town of N. Dansville and the Village of Dansville in that we have a rail head, a major highway, and an airport. This is something other areas do not have and we should make use of these assets.
- Lease expired last year. The town requested that they contribute more and they have signed a new lease at a much higher price.
- When the lease expired they began looking for a new location. The airports they approached were all very excited at the prospect of having the Finger Lakes Soaring Club relocate. The airports offered many incentives to them if they relocated. It doesn't seem that Dansville really wants them here.
- The other airports have boards with airport and other transportation experts who serve. They meet monthly and work on getting funds for their airports. They also meet with the municipal boards to collaborate.
- The current engineering firm does not write grants for the airport.
- Fly-In Breakfasts stopped because the town charged too much for the water and the DPA decided to stop.

Concerns of the Soaring Club

- They do not want the grass runway to be torn up. Gliders land on the grass rather than the macadam runways.
- Availability of fuel. A 24-hour gas pump would be a great asset to the airport.
- A consistent operator (FBO) would also be an asset.

Benefits of the Soaring Club

- Brings people to the village on the weekends for rides. There are 4-5 rides per weekend.
- Soaring competition every other year is held at the Dansville Airport. This brings 20-40 pilots and crews to the area. They race for a week - 10 days. The people eat in the restaurants, frequent the grocery stores, gas stations, and other businesses in the village.

John Longuil - Dansville Pilots Association and the United States Air Force Academy

- Runway has been shortened.
- Only 1 runway is available.
- King Air is the largest plane that can land here.
- Large cranes at LMC affect the landing pattern.
- Fuel is not available 24 hours a day.
- Would be a benefit if bigger planes could be brought in.
- We can't bring business aircraft in, they go to Hornell or Batavia.
- Four students in this area have gone to the Air Force Academy. They started their careers at smaller airports but none in Dansville.
- We need more hangar space.
- North - South runway should be 5,000 feet long.
- Runway was ripped up by the C & S Engineering firm. It was a money maker for the firm. Things happen that do not benefit the airport and cost the town money. It is a money maker for the engineering firm.
- There is currently a high demand for commercial pilots. It is a well paying job and getting kids interested starts at the local airport.

- eVTOL (electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft) will be flying in the very near future. We need to be prepared for this type of activity.

Ideas

- They would like to see an airport board with aviation and transportation experts who can liaise with the Town Board. This was suggested multiple times throughout the meeting.
- A maintenance center would be a great asset
- Civil Air Patrol would be a great asset here. Heated hangar space is needed as well as 24 hour fuel service.
- Civil Air Patrol is funded by the Air Force. Hangar space and pilot time is donated.
- The Finger Lakes Civil Air Patrol would like to bring a plane to the Dansville Airport.
- There are many grants available but we are not applying for them. They are putting plans together to present to the Town, Village, and County.
- Restaurant at the airport? Many pilots fly to area airports for lunch or breakfast and fly home. This is where 24- hour fuel would be helpful too.

William Mackowiak - President of Dansville Pilots Association

- LMC is currently the FBO (Field Based Operation) at the Dansville Airport.
- LMC's involvement is nil.
- Hangar has been used for storage (FAA put an end to this practice) and a wedding facility (FAA seems to be ok with this practice).
- As far as I know LMC does not utilize the airport.
- Getting people to this airport is easy with Routes 390 and 86.
- The value of this airport to aviators has not been taken advantage of.
- DPA has awarded several scholarships, with 2 students being awarded this past year.
- No rental plane is available at the airport at this time.

The Dansville Pilots Association has tried to help maintain the airport. They have done the following to assist the town in the upkeep:

- Replaced bulbs
- Replaced the windsock in the middle of the field
- Painted the wind T
- Painted lines on the runway
- Plowed snow on weekends

Peter Bacon - Town of North Dansville Trustee/Airport Committee

- As a life-long resident of Dansville he would not like to see the airport disappear.
- FBO contract expires at the end of August 2024.
- Waiting list for hangar space.

Tim Wolfanger

- There currently is a plan available for 2 more hangars, if there is actual interest in renting the spaces.
- Cost is approximately \$195, with renters paying their own utilities.

Other Comments/Questions

- Is it possible to lease land to private owners who can then build their own hangars?
- Leftover COVID money is being put into smaller airports.

- How to raise money for the town? Pilots will fly to the cheapest place to get fuel. Put in a 24-hour fuel service system.
- Someone mentioned there are plans for a 5000 gallon tank for fuel. Follow up on this...
- North Dansville owns all the property inside the airport fence. There was a lawsuit about this a few years ago.
- The challenge for the FBO will be insurance for fuel, flight school, charter service, etc.
- Ways to make money: car shows and drag races on the runways.
- 24 hour fuel service seems to be a plausible plan.
- Nancy Nice said that the airport has so much history we need to make sure it is preserved and can make money.
- Tours of the airport?
- An airport board was suggested.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm

Next Meeting: March meeting TBD

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Infantino, Secretary Comprehensive Plan Work Group (CPWG)