

TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP
January 14, 2014

A regularly scheduled Town Board Workshop meeting was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2014 in the Town Hall 284 Broadway Port Ewen, New York at 7:30 PM with the following persons in attendance:

Supervisor John Coutant
Councilperson Gloria Van Vliet
Councilperson Wayne Freer
Councilperson Kyle Barnett
Councilperson Diane McCord

Fred Zimmer, Planning Board Member

Administrative Recorder: Holly A. Netter, Town Clerk

Supervisor John Coutant called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM.

Public Comment: None

1 Port Ewen Housing “The Meadows”

Stanley Schutzman, Council for Port Ewen Housing discussed their need to have a Drainage District in order for this project to be feasible for his client to pursue The Meadows project.

The Meadows is a project which originated in 2006. It currently proposes a 25 single family unit development on the property known to many as forty bumps. Financial Concerns were raised by Mr. Schutzman with regard to the rise in construction cost, which are more costly in the year 2014 than originally planned. Material and labor costs have increased dramatically over the years. Port Ewen Housing would like to go back to the Planning Board to see if there are ways to reduce the construction specifications and save money. Planning Board Member Fred Zimmer told Mr. Schutzman there were minimum specification requirements that need to be met and those minimums would not be negotiable. The life of a road is expected to have a minimum of 15 years of service life. Mr. Schutzman also would like to see the planning board eliminate the spur road that was requested. Communications that were sent prior to the meeting were reviewed by the Water Superintendent who found the pipe size required for the water main to be inaccurate. It was suggested the engineer be contacted to make corrections to the size of the pipes as well as a possible redesign which could be more cost effective.

Supervisor Coutant shared he originally had reservations about creating a water district but Planning Board member Fred Zimmer recommended the town collect the funds for this special district. Those homeowners in this development would be taxed to ensure proper maintenance of this district in years to come.

Councilperson Wayne Freer said his opinion differs a little bit in the way he would like to see the district set up. He has two concerns; if the district is set up it would take a while for the funds to accumulate and what happens if there is a major repair that needed to be done early on. The second question that he had was what happens if you lose residents. Do other homeowners pay more? Fred Zimmer explained once the drainage district is set up each lot would be assessed and the homeowner would be responsible for the charges.

Fred Zimmer also pointed out if a Drainage District is not set up and the development goes under the burden would fall to all of the tax payers. Homeowner Associations also often go under. By attaching the fees to the lot the cost follows the home owner themselves. Fred Zimmer also said it would protect the town by creating a drainage district. If something goes wrong within those first years the tax rate can be increased the following year for those homeowners in the district. Councilperson Gloria Van Vliet said in the original communication stated that the owners were going to set up an amount to start the Drainage District. Councilperson Barnett agreed that the drainage district would be the best way to proceed if this development goes forward.

Mr. Schutzman said his client is desperate to build. Usually the Drainage District does not have start up dollars associated with the fund. The engineer typically certifies what it will cost annually or over a specified period of time and the assessment is collected based on those figures. The Town Board suggested they go back to their designer to have them figure out how to redesign the project so the client saves money.

Supervisor John Coutant said he was in favor of adding houses to our community and raising the tax base. He also told Mr. Schutzman to take a positive message back to his client and the town is open to a drainage district.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Harinam Properties (Mobil Station) Tax Certiorari

A Motion to enter executive session in regard to the Harinam Properties (Mobil Station) Tax Certiorari was made By Supervisor John Coutant at 8:18pm seconded by Councilperson Wayne Freer. All Town Board members voted in favor. Motion carried.

A Motion was made to come out of executive sessions at 8:25pm by Councilperson Diane McCord seconded by Councilperson Wayne Freer. All Town Board members voted in favor. Motion carried

A Resolution to Authorize settlement for a reduction in assessment of the Harinam Property will be introduced and voted on at the Town Board Meeting on January 16, 2014.

3. Planning Board Candidate

Daniel Michaud has shown interest in the position for the Planning Board. A letter was received by Supervisor Coutant on January 13, 2014.

4. Zoning Board Candidate

Leslie Kalmus has shown interest in the position for the Zoning Board of Appeals. A letter was received by Supervisor Coutant on January 13, 2014.

Holly A. Netter, Town Clerk will run a notice in the Daily Freeman seeking volunteers for the Environmental, Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals. Council person Gloria Van Vliet made the suggestion that we wait to interview these candidates until we have resumes from all interested parties.

5. Anderson Center for Autism

Supervisor John Coutant received a letter from the Town Attorney, Paul Keller in regard to the alternative sites the town had proposed for the Anderson Center for Autism. The Anderson Center determined the houses that were proposed were not suitable. The Town has 15 days from January 9th to suggest one or more alternative sites for the proposed residential facility. Mr. Keller had requested a greater detail on the criteria used to select a residential facility. He received a generic response. In response to his request that more specificity be provided, the attorney for the Anderson Center declined to do so. Supervisor Coutant will send a letter addressing the safety concerns the Town Board has with the property which the Anderson Center has chosen, located at 283 Union Center Road. The Board has several safety concerns associated with the letters written by the Ulster County Department of Public Works regarding the limited sight visibility when entering and exiting the driveway. The other concerns were outlined in a letter from the St. Remy Fire department stating their inability to get emergency apparatus up the narrow driveway to the facility. A carbon copy of the Supervisor’s letter will be sent to all of the neighbors. The Town Board feels they made a good effort to provide alternatives to this location however; the Anderson Center has made their choice of Union Center Rd.

6 Church Property

Councilperson Gloria Van Vliet discussed the acquisition of the Ross Park Parking lot has been three years in the process. The Presentation Church has been very patient but needs to know the town’s intentions on purchasing the parking lot since the grant we were applying for is no longer available from the state. If the church decides it is not going to subdivide and sells the property as the lot stands now, it would be cost prohibitive to the town to purchase it. Options were discussed to create additional parking in the event the parking lot property is unattainable. One of the alternatives would be the possibility of creating a parking lot where the ice skating rink is currently. The rink space does not get used due to weather conditions and vandalism of the ice. A mention of the handball wall being removed was also suggested for additional parking.

7 Adjournment

A Motion to adjourn at 9:02 PM was made by Councilperson Wayne Freer and seconded by Councilperson Diane McCord. All Town Board Members voted in favor. Motion Carried.

Respectively Submitted

Holly A. Netter
Town Clerk