

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Lewisboro, Westchester County, New York, was held on April 25, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cyrus Russell Community House, 779 Route 35, Cross River, New York.

PRESENT: Supervisor - Edward P. Mahoney  
Councilmen - Peter DeLucia, Al Perruzza, Suzanne Whalen  
Dep. Town Clerk - Florence Furdyna  
Town Attorney - Jessica Bacal

ABSENT: Councilman - Allen Hershkowitz  
Town Clerk - Kathleen Cory

Also attending were Deputy Supervisor Joann Vasi and Facilities Maintenance Manager Joel Smith.

GRANTS – Report re Grantwriters

Supervisor Mahoney reported on a meeting today with the Town's grant writers. Department heads and representatives of the Town's lake areas attended. Mr. Mahoney said the grant writers and all involved parties will work together to improve the grant seeking process. He noted that the Highway Superintendent has \$200,000 of revenue in his 2006 budget which will not be received because certain things weren't done last year. Mr. Perruzza asked Mr. Mahoney about upcoming deadlines. He offered to follow up with the grant writers to be certain they know of deadlines. During the prior administration some important deadlines were missed.

Regarding the Silvermine bridge project and possible grant funding, there is a question of whether it is a culvert or a bridge. Mr. Perruzza said he will ask the grant writer to send a monthly status report on all the grants. Mr. Mahoney stressed the need for the lake associations to have detailed plans for use of the grant money. Mr. Perruzza reminded the Board that the lake project funding is a matching grant. The Town will have to match the funds awarded.

Mr. Mahoney said everyone came out of the meeting today with a clear understanding of what their responsibilities were.

One grant requested is for the utility upgrades at Oakridge, and Town Attorney Jessica Bacal said bonding counsel is ready to go once the plans are ready.

LEON LEVY PRESERVE – Report re Trails, etc.

Mr. DeLucia reported on trails and the proposed parking lot on the Leon Levy Preserve. He said the Town will have to design some way to lock a gate at sundown. Mr. Perruzza asked if there was any evidence that the access to the cell tower is an issue. Mr. DeLucia suggested ways to make it less obvious.

TOWN PROPERTY – ADA Compliance and Facilities Upgrade

In talking to the Town Engineer Mr. DeLucia said Mr. Altermatt is spending a lot of time on the Town campus, and is pleased that this Town Board is paying attention to the finances and that the plan is realistic. Mr. Altermatt had said there are a lot of infrastructure problems in the Town and he has had problems meeting deadlines with the DEC, the DEP, the health department. Mr. DeLucia reported that the engineer is spending a lot of time on the Silvermine bridge, the Leon Levy subdivision and the campus.

Mrs. Whalen said she would like to know what Mr. Altermatt means by “major infrastructure” and asked when he is going to tell the Board in detail what that is. Mr. DeLucia said the engineer needs to know what the Board is going to decide for the Town House. Mr. DeLucia said the Board will be saving money acting as one unit. He said the Board is in a position to start looking at phasing out the present Highway Department location, but the consultants need unwavering direction from the Town Board.

Mr. Perruzza reviewed the campus decisions. He said when last discussed, the Board definitely eliminated going into Keeler Court and the consultants were given some mandates: one was to work with the chosen plan, firm up the numbers, take some input re number and location of parking spaces. This is theoretically the re-write without changing any of the numbers. Mr. Perruzza said the cost figure given didn't include any permitting or the work needed at the post office. He said this is the aesthetics without costs.

Mr. DeLucia said the purpose of tonight's meeting is to focus on the Town House. He said the drawing in front of the Board shows the parking moved to the post office side of the driveway, the road kept out of Keeler Field, improved passage between the library and highway garage, removing the parking spaces on the south side of the proposed new parking area (facing the adjoining residence) and left gravel parking lot labeled “future parking”. The consultants need to know what will happen in the building envelope behind the Town House. The Board has to come up with a proposal that can be taken to a bond referendum.

Mrs. Whalen asked what the Board is looking at tonight. She said there are four different designs that came in during the architectural competition for a new building where the Highway Department is. The Board also had a plan drawn by Bruce Helmes for a large addition to the Town House to accommodate the Onatru offices.

Mr. DeLucia said perhaps the thought is not to go in that direction, but to start phasing out the Highway Department and take some ideas from each plan. He said the Town needs an ADA compliant meeting room that is large enough, to make the rest of the Town House ADA compliant, and to make the court a little bigger.

Mrs. Whalen said she agreed that the Board needs to pare down the ideas that have been presented over the years, but the Board also has to consider that the Town has a police department that is absolutely falling apart. She said the Town has Onatru which is not ADA compliant, and never should have had offices in the first place according to the Onatru master plan. Consolidating offices might be a good idea. Regarding the Highway Department, Mrs. Whalen said the Town has to pay \$80,000 just to keep the Highway Department where it is. She said in

her opinion it wasn't an efficient operation. She said she understands what the Board is trying to do but there is a big picture the Board has to look at down the road.

Mr. DeLucia said the Board has to start somewhere—it might be a five or ten year plan. He said the Town has to get the library built, get the Town House into compliance, start moving offices, start phasing out the Highway garage, and shore up Onatru in the meantime. He said it is a long-drawn-out process and nothing ever gets done.

Mr. Perruzza said the Board should talk about what the Town garage will ultimately be, assuming it moves at some point. Right now there is the “immediate” vs. “the future.” If there is a vision that the Highway garage will be X, that will frame the discussion. He said the Board is “never going to get anywhere unless you know what the end goal is.”

Mr. Mahoney asked if the library ever looked at the Highway site. The answer was “yes.” Jeff Vreeland, library trustee said a study was done two years ago. It required moving the Highway garage to the salt dome area and he did some sketches. Mrs. Whalen said there was a study and the library rejected the idea. Mr. DeLucia said that could be revisited as a future project. But if the Town is going to do the infrastructure, the library and the Town House should have their new buildings.

Mrs. Whalen asked Mr. DeLucia if he wanted to combine all the Town offices on the campus now, when in the future they would move the Highway garage. Mr. DeLucia said they are not going to be able to fit all the offices at the Town House. Mrs. Whalen said that is what the Helmes plan envisioned. It included an addition to the building with an elevator. Mr. DeLucia said there are still a lot of offices not included—police, court, parks and recreation. Those could be consolidated at the Town garage if a future Board wanted to, or in the library building, moving the library to the garage site. He added that moving out of Onatru would leave it available for the senior citizens to use.

Mr. Perruzza said there are two potential paths; one is to add onto the Town House with the recognition that at some point the Police Department will have to be shored up. Then the Town would need x number of feet of space whether the Highway garage is to house other offices. He said he is “ok” with a multi-phase plan if it was clearly defined, but he asked how much would be spent on the Town House. Peter DeLucia felt the plans were close to a million dollars.

Mrs. Whalen explained past efforts to add to the Town House. The Helmes plan was presented at a public hearing and went no further. The Ozols plans were not viable plans for the Town House. Mrs. Whalen commented on the Helmes addition to the Bedford Town House. She said it is beautifully done, fits their needs and fits into the community.

Mr. Perruzza suggested making a list of all the offices that truly need to be on a campus, and logically belong together. Of that list, the Board should decide how many does the Board think it would want to put in a pared-down building--those that would logically fit together. Mrs. Whalen said combining all the offices would be too much traffic for the campus. She said the Minner report contained space needs.

Mr. DeLucia said the Helmes plan appears to stay within the parameters shown on the campus plan. Mr. Perruzza said it appeared to him to be a grand design. Mrs. Whalen said the design does preserve the charm of the front of the building and is not as visible from the front. Mr. Perruzza asked what offices were to be included.

Jeff Vreeland said the Town could replace three walls on the Highway garage, put a second floor on and finish it off very nicely, leaving the bays underneath. It would provide all the office space the Town would need. Former Town Supervisor Tom Herzog said a few years ago the Town had an engineer assess the Highway garage. He reported that it would so expensive to shore up those walls that it would be cheaper to knock the walls down and rebuild them. Mr. Vreeland said his idea was to rebuild three concrete block walls. Mr. Vreeland said the master plan still holds true and the Town would still have to do the drainage work anyway. Whether or not the Highway garage is moved the Town still has to do that work. If office space is added there, the Town will need some of that parking.

Mr. DeLucia noted that the Helmes plan does not include any large meeting space. Mrs. Whalen reminded everyone that the Helmes plan was based on a separate building for the court. Mr. Perruzza asked how much a second floor would cost.

Mrs. Whalen said she thought adding to the Highway Garage and the Town House was a very good idea. In further discussions with Mr. Vreeland, he suggested the Police Department could someday occupy the lower level of the Highway garage if that department's operation was moved.

Tom Casper of 9 Main Street, South Salem asked where the Highway trucks would go, and voices his displeasure with the idea of moving the Police Department into a residential area. He said if the Board is going to be building, then build at the salt dome. He also said a referendum would affect the timing of the library's addition. The Town has to do what is minimally necessary, convert the downstairs into a smaller meeting room, a larger handicapped accessible bathroom, and expand internally some of the offices. He also suggested taking the library building and putting all town offices in there, then working with the library to allow them to build a bigger building where the Town garage is. If you have to rebuild three of the walls, you are talking about a demolition and reconstruction. With that in mind, contrast with building on top of the town highway garage, and then how do you phase?

Mr. DeLucia said he didn't think it made sense to move the police dept. over but it does make sense to utilize the footprint of an existing building and add to the building. He stressed the phasing of the campus project.

Francis Loewald, Library trustee said he hears the word "eventually" and that is really the problem. Once the Town Board can come to a decision as to what footprint they need at the Town House and agree to it the library can move ahead. If at some time the Town had a library that overlooks Lake Truesdale, it would be marvelous.

Mr. Mahoney stressed the need for coming to a decision on what is to be done with Town facilities.

Mrs. Whalen said tonight the Board is looking at a footprint tonight. If it were chosen, a certain number of parking spaces would have to be moved. If a second story were added on the Highway garage, it wouldn't affect anything with regard to the footprint. What do we tell the consultants?

Mr. Perruzza stressed the need to have a specific plan for the Town offices and where each one would be going. Now the Town has a library plan and a million dollar price tag. He said the Town property should really look like a campus. He suggested the Town prepare a "before and after" plan, bring in the architect and ask for a price tag. Jeff Vreeland offered to prepare a sketch.

Mr. DeLucia asked how the Board got to the point of deciding. He said the new space over the Town garage makes sense for the meeting room and the court.

Mr. Perruzza asked if the Town could put the library where the garage is, what would be the objection. Jeff Vreeland said it was "money, a lot more." He said the library would be asked to abandon all they've done and start over.

The Board discussed further various suggestions for combining offices. Mrs. Vasi noted that all of the offices at Onatru,--the Building Department, the Assessor's office, Planning and Zoning, work together and share information. Mr. DeLucia noted that they would need to be moved as one group.

Mrs. Whalen summarized that the Board would like to bring the Onatru offices over to the Town campus and put the court and a meeting room over the Highway garage. All the offices would be ADA compliant. That is the Board's charge for Mr. Helmes and Mr. Vreeland. Mr. Perruzza said the Board should give them the charge that the Board wants the campus to have a "quaint" appearance because the Highway garage will eventually be moved.

Mr. Mahoney said the Board must come to a decision, determine the cost and move forward. Mr. Perruzza said Board now has a vision for the campus, and needs to know the cost for that vision.

Joel Smith, Facilities Maintenance Manager said perhaps three-quarters of the proposed cost of repairs to Onatru Farmhouse were related to the need to support the weight of offices in the building. If there are no offices that work isn't needed nor is ADA compliance needed. The architect has said ADA compliance is impractical for the second floor of Onatru.

Former Town Supervisor Tom Herzog said the Board will be "flabbergasted" with the cost of adding a second floor to the Highway garage. Architect Bruce Helmes brought in a structural engineer who said not only is the foundation not appropriate for a second floor, but all of the footings would have to be redone.

Mr. Perruzza said the Board should bring in Mr. Helmes for a discussion and see what the costs would be. Mr. Perruzza suggested that two Board members meet with Mr. Helmes and report to the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Employment History

On motion by Mr. Mahoney, seconded by Mr. DeLucia, the Board voted 4-0 to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular person.

On motion by Mr. Mahoney, seconded by Mrs. Whalen the Board voted 4-0 to come out of executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mr. Mahoney, seconded by Mr. DeLucia, the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn at 10:10 p.m.

Kathleen G. Cory  
Town Clerk