

A meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Lewisboro, Westchester County, New York, was scheduled for June 9, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. at the John Jay High School Library, Route 121, Cross River, New York 10518. The purpose of the meeting was to hear presentations by the Town's consultants regarding the Town House campus on Main Street in South Salem.

PRESENT: Supervisor - James Nordgren
Councilmen - Jessica Bacal, Pat Daigle, Allen Hershkowitz, Sue Whalen
Town Clerk - Kathleen G. Cory
Town Attorney - Leslie B. Maron

Also attending was the Deputy Supervisor Joann Vasi, members of the Board of Trustees of the South Salem Library, and the following members of Town boards and committees:

Planning Board members: Jacqueline Dzaluk, Joseph Decaminada, Frieda Halpern, P. J. Rossi, Maureen Maquire.

Zoning Board member: Peter DeLucia

Architecture and Community Appearance Review Council members: Re Hagele, Ciorsdan Conran, Gail Ascher, Jan Axel, Peter Clark

Conservation Advisory Council member: Mark Patek

The Town's Planning consultant Will Agresta, Town Engineer Tom Altermatt and Wetlands Inspector Jay Fain were also present.

The Town Attorney Leslie Maron was moderator for the meeting. He said the intention is for the Town's consultants to present their findings regarding traffic circulation and parking at the Town House campus.

TOWN PROPERTY – Review of Town House Campus Plans

Town Planner Will Agresta said there are four major steps to any project: The first step is sketch analysis, determination of what the client wants to do and the budget. The second major step is design development. The third step is obtaining the permits for the development, and the fourth step is construction. He said the Town is in the very first step. Mr. Agresta stressed that what the consultants are showing tonight is at the concept level; nothing has been decided as a final plan. Step two requires a decision by the Town Board to give direction.

Mr. Agresta said the first step is to look at site analysis. Displaying a drawing of the Town campus, he said it identifies aspects of the site. It consists of the Town House, the Highway Department garage, the library and the post office. He also noted Keeler field, the recycling center and the highway storage yard, and the wooded land area. He said the area is in a residential zone, there is a lake nearby and wetland resources on both sides of the property. Across from the Town House there is a stream corridor and wetland system. The 150 foot wetland buffer is shown and a very small corner of the property is within that 150 regulated area.

On the front side the buffer goes up to the edge of the library, the back of the existing post office and cuts halfway through the existing lawn at the front of the Town House. From a physical standpoint the grade is higher at the part where the library, Town House and post office are, and drops down “pretty dramatically” to Lake Shore Drive. Mr. Agresta estimated a 12- 14% slope, which is steeper than would be desired for new construction. In new construction the grade would be kept to 10% or less. He said the driveway entries are relatively flat which presents drainage issues. He said the Town needs to be mindful of those issues.

Mr. Agresta said there are a series of driveways onto Main Street. There is an “in” driveway next to the Town House and another “in” driveway next to the post office. There is a central “out” driveway, and an internal connection in front of the Town House. There is also an informal driveway on the back of the post office. He said the whole area is poorly controlled and open. There are a series of conflicts on Main Street both visually and from a traffic standpoint. Mr. Agresta said there was a traffic report three or four years ago. For a campus that has multiple uses and has children going to the library, those are really serious conflicts. Mr. Agresta said that one of the charges to the consultants was to improve circulation of the site. Other conditions include a new well built on Keeler field, an existing well in a shed that is still in operation, and a new well house.. Associated with the wells is a well-protection radius, an area that needs to be protected, which means no septic systems in the area. The whole campus is surrounded by a residential neighborhood.

The Planning Consultant went on to say that the main parking lot behind the Town House is poorly controlled, has no striping, the dimensions are not standard, and the connections to the driveways have little controls in the way of curbing or islands. He said it affects the aesthetics of that area.

Mr. Agresta said the presence of the highway garage presents a different traffic problem in that trucks, automobiles and children “don’t mix all that well.” However, the garage is there and that does affect the circulation and transportation issues. He said the sight lines, multiple driveways and multiple uses compound the safety issues on the campus.

Mr. Agresta discussed the septic systems. There is an existing system serving the post office and the library located in front of the library, and an existing septic system serving the highway garage. The Town House’s system is located to the right of the library. There is no system for the storage barn. There has been testing on the site by both library and Town engineers. The analyses is that there are limitations in the front of the Town House for septic and that the field known as Thibdeau Park is the prime location, if not the only location, for a septic system that will meet county health department regulations and get approval from that department.

The consultant noted that the campus site is used differently at different times of the day. There are different peak loads relative to the uses; there is a mid-day peak at the post office. There are uncontrolled parking patterns with the post office--people do not follow the established circulation pattern. There has been self-created on-street parking which is not controlled and affects the “country-charm” aesthetics of Main Street.

Mr. Agresta said the consultants were charged to come up with some concepts to deal primarily with traffic circulation and parking, to determine where parking could occur. There is a need for parking in proximity to the buildings. It is also a limitation to the site because space is limited and parking should be kept away from neighboring residences and the wells on Keeler field.

Mr. Agresta said the consultants came up with two alternatives, and the third alternative they evaluated but have not drawn is a variation on the other two. There were only two concepts to deal with the primary consideration, which is safety.

Town Engineer Tom Altermatt said the consultants' first priority is safety, and that must be addressed as soon as possible. Fire protection needs to be considered. Driveways and parking lots need to be designed for a very slow speed, about 10 miles per hour. The Town needs to find ways to control the traffic. He suggested raised crosswalks. Mr Altermatt said they need to find out if there is an area where the Town House can be expanded and where that area is. That is a high priority. They also want to maximize the number of parking spaces, and there is a need to provide enough landscape area and space for six-foot walkways. After those areas are identified what is left will be for other uses to expand.

Mr. Altermatt said the Town's zoning code says that the aisle between two rows of parking should be 25 feet wide and parking spaces should be 18 feet wide. He said he and Mr. Agresta agree that at least 8 feet should be left between the edge of a parking area and the building as a minimum. They show a 6-foot-wide walkway, and between the edge of the walkway and the parking area they are showing a three-foot grass strip. That allows for snow to be piled there in the winter. Mr. Altermatt displayed a drawing and explained the traffic pattern. The plan deals with the safety issues next to the Town House and post office, and the easiest ways to deal with those is to move the driveways away from the buildings. Moving away from the post office got the driveway closer to the library. This layout shows one entrance at the far left end of the post office, a new entrance which opens up the entire site. It does disturb and have impact on Keeler field and requires the clearing of trees. Mr. Altermatt said the road and parking are a tight fit and the parking area as drawn infringes on the highway building.

Mr. Agresta said although the planting area is 8 feet wide, it isn't specified in the code and is drawn from experience. He felt 8 feet was the bare minimum that was needed from a visual standpoint and from the amount of area needed to support the plants put in it. Any smaller area would require a different type of vegetation. He felt to do it right would be perhaps twice that width. Mr. Agresta stressed that there is no set standard on the widths. The point of the drawings is to show how a given action would affect the whole area and to help in making design decisions.

Mr. Nordgren noted that one condition the Zoning Board of Appeals had placed on variances given to the library recently was that there be no new driveway north of the present post office driveway. It looks like the plan shows a new driveway north of the post office, and Mr. Nordgren asked if the library would have to go back to the Zoning Board for changes not approved by that board. Mr. Fain said they approached the plan as a blank slate with no preconceived notions. Mr. Agresta said those conditions are specific to the library itself. The consultants were looking at the Town campus and the Town's needs. They didn't ignore the library, but did not base their drawings on any particular building design, standards or conditions. Mr. Nordgren said the

consultants had been asked to do their studies without any assumptions, but asked what was the point of doing all this?

Mr. Agresta said there were other conditions placed by the Zoning Board that will negate the decision if other changes are made on the site. Mr. Altermatt said what went to the Zoning Board was a starting point. Their plan needs to be developed for all the uses on the site.

Peter DeLucia, a member of the Zoning Board, said the plan seems to be what the Zoning Board had requested before they were forced to make a decision on the library application. Mr. Altermatt said this is also what the Planning Board wanted—an overall look at the project. Mr. Altermatt noted that they have shown walkways, landscaping, the entrance and exit for the Highway Department and have minimized the use of steep slopes. Throughout the design development a lot of details will be tweaked and improved where necessary.

In answer to Mrs. Whalen's question, Mr. Agresta noted that some parking could take place in the current recycling center area. That could be overflow or employee parking. A gate could be installed to separate the recycling area from the parking area. Some displacement of the highway equipment storage area would take place and another site would have to be found for that storage. That is another component of the decision-making process. Mr. Agresta stressed that the plan shows a concept for traffic circulation. The Board would have to decide how much building they are constructing and how much parking is really needed.

Mr. Altermatt referred to conceptual site plan B. He said they have tried to improve the situation by the post office. They showed a six-foot walk and parking spaces on the left of the current driveway and up against the post office. At present people park on the right of the driveway and walk across the driveway to the post office. When they exit the building, they are exiting directly into the driveway. Mr. Altermatt reviewed the site plan noting that there appears to be adequate area for the Town House to expand. There appears to be space between the Town House and the library for other expansion areas. He also said it would be logical to expand the Town House toward the rear of the building. The front yards need to be kept for stormwater treatment or landscape areas.

Planning Board member P. J. Rossi asked if the major difference between the two plans was the location of the driveway north of the post office. Mr. Agresta said after going back and forth there are basically two options. Moving the driveway visually ties the three buildings together with one frontage which they are trying to maintain. Mr. Rossi said nothing changes to the right of the library.

Mr. Maron noted that both of the alternatives eliminate the center driveway. Mr. Agresta said yes, they do because feeding traffic to the center is part of the traffic problem.

Mr. Altermatt noted that all of the options come down to the two layouts presented this evening. Mr. Maron asked how many parking spaces would be created. Mr. Altermatt said the second alternative shown calls for 97 spaces. He would like to see more spaces at the post office. The proposed parking lot to the right of the Town House in the recycling center area will take a lot of pressure off the Town House parking lot.

Mr. Maron asked what the capacity is now. Mr. Agresta said it is less than 60. Including the highway area it is 97 and they need 100 spaces. Mr. Agresta said by determining how many parking spaces can be created they then determined how much building could be done in the areas that are available for building. He said the Town House may only need a small addition at this time but they don't want to close the door on what might be needed in five or ten years. He said the Town Board should make sure they have room to accommodate parking for a need in the future. The consultants are trying to show approximately how the parking can be maximized.

Re Hagele, ACARC chairman, asked what is the current parking requirement for the existing Town House, library and post office. Mr. Agresta said they didn't do that analysis. Mr. Altermatt said there are about 60 spaces now.

P.J. Rossi clarified that the consultants had said the parking couldn't be set in stone because there are different uses at different times of the day. Mr. Agresta said you can do the zoning analysis which says that each individual use needs x number of spaces and add them up, but you would not build it that way. If you are doing a coordinated plan you would do an analysis which the consultants did somewhat on the existing conditions and traffic. By looking at peak usage and shared usage it is possible to reduce the number of built spaces.

Mr. Nordgren read from a March 2003 report which stated that the Town House needs 30 parking spaces, the Highway Department needs 22 spaces, the library needs 46. With 100 spaces existing now, that's 60 unmarked in the upper lot and 40 unmarked spaces in the lower lot. So in this analysis there is enough parking available using the Highway Department area. However, it's not the best spot.

Mr. Agresta added that the existing parking is also not safely on the site. It is a hazard waiting to happen.

Mrs. Whalen questioned one-way traffic. Mr. Agresta explained that it had to be that way to avoid cross-traffic. One negative of the plan is that drivers are limited in getting to the site based on the direction from which they are coming. Jackie Dzaluk said that forces all the traffic past the library and creates safety issues. A cul de sac was mentioned and Mr. Altermatt said there wasn't enough room to do that.

Ms. Bacal asked why traffic and parking were the one element that was considered rather than other questions. Mr. Agresta said the reason is they have an existing site with existing uses and a non-designed layout. It is "quaint and great", but the reality is that it is a major Town piece of property and safety needs to be a top concern. It is a liability issue. This site has outlived that haphazard design that evolved over time. Circulation related to traffic pattern is the primary design issue for going forward on this site even if the Town doesn't build another thing. It really has issues as outlined in the March 2003 report.

Mr. Agresta said the Town is limited by the buildings to some extent. He said as far as he knew the Town House isn't going anywhere. If it expands, there will be more Town House. The library isn't going anywhere. If it expands, there will be more library.

Mr. Maron said if the Town doesn't do anything it doesn't have to worry about storm water management. If it does anything, then it has to comply with the regulations.

Mr. DeLucia asked if the consultants were leaving room for a proposed sewer district if needed. Mr. Altermatt said they felt there was adequate room for a septic system for each building. There is room for a stormwater management system for modest expansions to the Town House and library. Mr. DeLucia asked if the consultants would recommend doing that work first before any construction. Mr. Altermatt said he felt the septic system would have to be done first. Mr. Agresta said that phasing is part of the design development. Mr. Altermatt said he felt strongly that driveways and parking have to eliminate safety hazards before the Town gets too far ahead on any action. Mr. Daigle asked for clarification from the engineer that he felt that from a traffic, parking, septic stormwater standpoint that the improvements are doable. Mr. Altermatt said none of issues are "show stoppers" but without the traffic and parking layout being determined nothing can happen.

Mr. DeLucia clarified that anything done in the area has to be in the blue area shown on the drawings. The front needs to be reserved.

Mr. Hagele asked if there was an established written program for the Town campus. He asked what will be accommodated on the site, or are we assuming it will be what is being accommodated now. Mr. Agresta said the premise of this analysis is primarily addressing existing traffic and safety issues. Questions to be answered include "how can traffic and safety issues be addressed? How would parking fall; how does that work with sight lines and landscaping to have a functional safe site," which then backs into what areas are available for expansion and that is what the areas outside the blue are. From there the next step is to look at what areas there are to accommodate growth. Then that starts defining or refining the overall site plan and layout for the entire campus property.

Mr. Hagele said that gets to what his board and the Planning Board have been looking for, which is a master plan. Mr. Hagele said his concept is that one has to have a plan of what one is trying to accomplish on the site now and in the future, and what the site can encompass. He said "it might actually be possible that this site is not large enough, the current uses are not accommodated properly on a site of this size and configuration, and it's possible that the uses are not compatible. The issue of highway trucks, and children going to the library--that's the sort of analysis ACARC was hoping to see, not 'can we back into available niches that we can over-develop on this site', but rather can we have a comprehensive pro-active approach to how to this gem in the center of one of our special character districts, the historic center for South Salem, how that can be best used."

Mr. Nordgren said there aren't any plans for any expansions. He said he felt the consultants were saying that the current use is accommodated by this layout with safe parking and safe circulation. Mr. Nordgren said the Town has no need to expand office space – the number of employees is not growing--it's dropping, the Town's not growing—there are only 15 housing units added a year. With technology and storage he said he had excess office space. The Town House doesn't need any more space. He said the Town isn't adding any more roads, there's no need to expand the

highway garage. There is no need to expand recycling. There is a need to expand the library. There aren't going to be any changes. He said the Town can accommodate an ADA entrance for the Town House for \$50,000. There is a lot of concern about stormwater runoff from the highway and the Town has applied for a \$160,000 grant for that. The Town can capture all the stormwater and treat it, and take care of that problem. He said the Town can make sure refueling is done safely—"so that's the plan; what you see is what you get."

Mr. Hagele said "with all due respect, it is a major expansion of the campus as it exists as a whole." Mr. Nordgren said the other buildings aren't changing so we're talking about the library. Mr. Hagele said just the parking alone is a major expansion, a major definition of the entire site. Ms. Bacal said she agreed with Mr. Hagele and wasn't sure about Mr. Nordgren's comments about the Town House.

Mr. Nordgren said "believe me, I work there, we don't need it."

Ms. Bacal said this is a parking plan and the Board is backing into the parking space and it's predicated on a number of assumptions that made her uneasy. This is the campus plan for the Town. She felt it is a very special place and what she is hearing is that the site as it presently exists is tight and the traffic patterns and parking are less than satisfactory. She said the Board has to keep the future in mind when deciding what to do, not just today, but what the Town may need five, ten or fifteen years from today. She said Mr. Hagele is saying that we need that oversight rather than the emphasis on parking.

Mr. Nordgren said the Town is not going to be expanding the Town House. It certainly is a special hamlet, and he didn't think he or the neighbors want to see more building in a special place, in a constrained place. It's not going to be changing dramatically. He said "certainly the Board wants to make the Town House accessible for people with disabilities, do all we can to keep highway from polluting, but the library has the needs. We can't plan for as far as we can see into the future, given the demographic and planning and buildout analysis. He said everybody wants the Town House to get bigger—it doesn't have to. We don't have to, believe me I spend all my day there—we have too much room now."

Peter DeLucia said he agreed with Mr. Hagele and Ms. Bacal. He commended Mr. Agresta for his drawings and for adding blue lines to indicate what has to be reserved for each function. He said as a Town we have to look at what the potential is and what the needs could be in the future. Mr. Nordgren said the Board can't look out fifteen years. The library has been trying to expand for at least seven years. He said the Board can't plan for something we don't see. We don't see any further needs for uses at that campus. He said he can't see holding up the library for hypothetical things.

Mr. DeLucia said there were three opinions that differed from Mr. Nordgren's: ACARC's, the Zoning Board's, and another Town Board member. He said no one mentioned a huge expansion. He said his impression was that we are here tonight and the consultants explained that everyone here is representing the Town and we are looking at the Town's interests right now. Tonight everyone is looking at what the Town's needs are, what the campus needs are. He said he felt Mr.

Nordgren was concerned about the library right now, and everyone is concerned about the library. But this meeting is about the Town, about all the residents.

Mr. Nordgren said he is definitely concerned about the library. Mr. DeLucia said he is concerned about the Town. Mr. Nordgren said the consultants just demonstrated how the library addition fits. Mr. DeLucia said what the consultants are showing is what the layout is, and now what we have to look at is what needs to be carved out, what is the Town House possibly going to need in the future, what is the library going to need, what is the highway garage going to need, are we going to use spaces, are you going to need spaces or have to take any from recycling or take away some of the equipment, is it going to be stored somewhere. Once you make these decisions and you lay blacktop and start doing this work and putting a septic system in, there's no going back. This should have been done many years before the library got involved so we know what chunk of land is theirs to deal with and how they're going to connect. That was a major problem the Zoning Board had with the master plan.

Mr. Hershkowitz said it appears that each board had activities that coalesced to move things forward. He said what he heard is that there is no plan or no consensus on this board for fundamental changes to the building uses at the Town campus. That might change in the future. What we do know is that the library plan has been long deliberated. That is what brought us to this tonight. He said he thought in part that was what motivated the Town Board to ask for this master plan. He said he didn't disagree with a request for an over-arching opinion. He feels things will stay the same with minor modifications to the Town House and with modifications to the library. If opportunities arise for a better site for the highway garage he said "we would jump on it." What he came tonight to hear was impressions of how the library interests might be overlaid with the information provided by the consultants.

Mr. DeLucia said tonight's meeting is a major step forward, while it is a major step back for the library. This is something that needed to be done to look at the maximization of the site. He said even though the Town House may not need to expand but it must be made ADA compliant. Perhaps a bathroom is needed, ramps need to be put in, maybe expand the size of the hallways, maybe add an elevator. The footprint of the building may change. He said what the Town Board has before it now is the beginnings of deciding how much of that footprint they need to reserve. That is what this planning is all about. This is what the Town Board has to look at.

Mr. Hershkowitz said he agreed. He sees an interest in accommodating handicapped access at the Town House with minimal impact. He said there is no understanding or plans regarding moving the highway garage, and another major issue, besides ADA compliance, is the library.

Mr. DeLucia said that was not the concept of this meeting. The genesis was so the boards could get together and hash out all of the possibilities for the entire campus, and it seems a fait accompli.

Mr. Hershkowitz said he didn't know what charge there is for that type of planning process to happen. Mrs. Axel said that was the purpose of this meeting. Mr. Nordgren said that was never what he envisioned. Mrs. Axel said this isn't about the library, it's about the campus.

Mr. Maron said he would like to stick with the focus on parking. He said he thought Mr. Hagele was saying even if we are only talking about parking and ingress and egress he still wanted to have some kind of plan to go forward. Mr. Maron said as he reads the Town code even if there was no change in the buildings, the suggested parking changes would have to go to ACARC and the Planning Board, and might have to go to the Zoning Board if they didn't meet the code. If Mr. Hagele still has a concern that ACARC doesn't want to act without a plan we can address that on behalf of his board when it gets there. Mr. Maron said he felt that one of the purposes of this meeting was to hear concerns from the various boards, and perhaps there needs to be a general plan. Mr. Nordgren said "no, that's not what we're hearing."

Mr. Daigle said he thought this might happen. When the Board talked about what the consultants would do he assumed everyone would have a different tack. He said he felt it was an important first step. He felt the Board decided they needed to address the circulation, traffic and parking at the campus in order to decide on any expansion. The main purpose of this meeting as he understood it was to look at it and then decide what space is available for expansion of the Town House if that is ever decided on, and for the library, and there is something on the table for that. He said he sensed from Mr. DeLucia's comments that he saw this as a plan that the Board is going to accept or vote on and decide and begin laying asphalt.

Mr. DeLucia said that was a totally wrong impression.

Mr. Daigle said this isn't something that the Board was going to vote on. It would be a working plan to look at the proposed library expansion to see if it fits into this and have a discussion about the major differences in the traffic. If we all are against going on the opposite side of the post office, then so be it, and we don't even consider that. He said he thought it would be helpful to think about future uses, (highway garage, whether the post office is going to stay for another 10 years, what kind of an expansion at the Town House). Mr. Daigle said he didn't think the Board would come up with the kind of plan Mr. DeLucia characterized.

Mr. Nordgren said the Board gave direction to the consultants, set a limit of \$7500 to see what the site accommodates for safety, circulation and parking, and then see what's left. If we asked for a master plan for fifteen years from now they would have given us something else.

Ms. Bacal said once you see the plan that has been prepared there will be a number of other questions. It's not just about moving the road to the left of the library or the right of the library, it's what are we doing with this campus.

Mrs. Dzaluk said the Planning Board has seen this for many years. However they have not received the application and reviewed it and "hashing" it out tonight would be inappropriate. The Town Board is the client and defines what uses they see for it. As the Town's consultant the Planning Board will evaluate all the considerations. Items to be reviewed include septic, stormwater, safety, maintaining and improving the appearance of the campus, increasing green space, eliminating roads, considering the neighbors. She encouraged the neighbors to come to Planning Board meetings to see the review.

Mr. Hagele said to clarify, he didn't think he was debating the merits of this plan. He said the Town's consultants have done a great job and he believed that there really is, if not a written program a defacto program for the campus, and that is that all of the buildings stay, the current uses are what they are, and let's look for expansion space where it might be. If that's the case, then state it. As an architect when he does a site analysis he tries to list the assets and liabilities of a given site and tries to completely divorce himself of proposed notions and ask "what belongs there". And personal opinion aside, he said he is not suggesting that the highway garage should move. The site itself might suggest that, but it might not be in the budget. That question has got to be asked and answered in terms of the site itself as an organism, because what happens is that by backing into it you lock yourself into where and how the library can expand, which then locks itself into how that impacts on the Town House, regardless of the size of the needed addition to the Town House. He said he believed that it can be accomplished nicely and neatly behind the Town House, that's no issue, but then it begs the question of the positive and negative space along the front of this site. It's a great parking plan and a great traffic flow plan, but what it's going to do is dictate what the outcome of this project will be architecturally from Main Street and one of ACARC's concern is exactly that. He said to a person the members of ACARC are 100% in favor of expanding the library. But it's a very difficult project and when done piecemeal and done in a "back in" fashion it makes it very difficult for them to do their job in good faith and try to dot all the "i's" and cross the "t's" without stepping on feet somewhere else.

Planning Board member P. J. Rossi asked when the lease on the post office expires. The response was 10 years. Mr. Rossi said if the consultants can come up with what dimensions the Town House needs to be in order to be ADA compliant, he said "we have the ingredients to bake this cake. Let's start baking."

Joseph Decaminada, a member of the Planning Board, said he agreed with Mr. Rossi. He asked if there was anything being done now that will restrict the Town from putting offices there should the post office ever close down. Mr. Agresta said he believed that there was a clause that the Town may have the right of first refusal on the property. If the Town gained control of that building and there was a need for that space the Town could become the tenant. If the Town took ownership obviously it opens it up for a little bit more. He said things could happen that can't be predicted.

Mr. Hershkowitz asked that everyone recognize that there is a diversity of opinion within the community and on the Board about this site and urged action on the library's plan.

Frieda Halpern, a member of the Planning Board said the consultants did the job they were asked to do. She felt it wasn't clear that this was not just to be an open forum for suggestions on the whole process. The fact that the library came in with a plan was the spur for this whole process. She said the focus tonight is the first step in what the library wants to do and that is proceed with their plan.

Mrs. Whalen said she wanted to respond to Mr. Hagele's remarks. She said the parking plan everyone is looking at tonight will dictate other decisions. The process has to start someplace and she felt safety should be the first consideration and that was the focus tonight, and that will restrict something else down the line.

Maureen Maguire from the Planning Board referred to Plan A and Plan B (with the entrance to the left of the post office versus the right of the post office), it seems in one plan there is an encroachment upon Keeler field but it looks as though there is a better walkway to the post office from the other buildings. She asked if the consultants would agree with that, and asked what are the other main differences in the plans. Mr. Agresta said there are quite a few differences, both of which have positives and negatives. One of the positives is that pushing the driveway north greens up the space between the library and the post office and could be done through further vegetation and better walkway systems. It eliminates a pedestrian crossing and slightly opens up expansion potential for both of these buildings. The other positive is that one plan has a better geometric circulation of the driveway, is not as much affected by sight line issues, is a more gracious design with more areas for landscaping which enhances the "town green" concept. Negatives include pushing pavement and development into Keeler field which has impact on neighbors and somewhat changes the aesthetic of the area. It also encroaches on the wells. In some ways the negatives and positives are opposite each other. Another aspect is that there is a loading function in the back of the post office building that creates a problem in both alternatives. Looking at the pluses and minuses helps make a decision and decide where the compromises need to be. Unless the buildings go away, the main circulation pattern is going to be in the back of the buildings. There really isn't any other option.

Mr. DeLucia said the ingredients are there to bake the cake. The problem has been that the ingredients haven't been put in the right order. This is a big step forward, but it is a step back for the library. When the application was before the Zoning Board the members said the Town had to act first. Once the Town has picked something they are happy with, then it could go to the Planning Board and the library will know where they stand. The Town House may not change, but once a decision is made and it's approved the library will know what to submit. The whole process will develop the "master plan".

Mr. Hershkowitz asked why it was a step back. Mr. DeLucia said it is a step back because the library did not need to go the Zoning Board recently, and they will have to come back again in the future because the configuration of the driveway will change. The Zoning Board approved a totally different plan.

Mr. Agresta said once the Town Board makes decisions about circulation issues and what it reserves for itself and advances that as an application the library can tag onto that simultaneously.

Mr. Hagele said he would like to jell what ACARC's stance is. He said they don't believe the perfect plan presupposes that it is the enemy of a good plan. I think our concern is that the reversed planning that we seem to be doing makes the distinction between good, mediocre and fair solutions much more difficult. He said ACARC is charged with a very subjective review process of applications brought before them. When that is locked in in this fashion it makes it very difficult to weigh mediocre vs. fair, poor or even bad in absolute terms. You can say "this is the best we can do given all these circumstances" and it is still not a good solution in terms of the Town House, but it is a good solution in terms of the library.

Mr. Nordgren said Mr. Hagele was looking at it as an architect, but as elected officials the Board has to look at the real world, what we have. The Board has looked at other alternatives including a 20,000 square foot office building. They looked at moving the highway garage and there were a dozen reasons why that wouldn't work. He said he felt that he is charged with working in the real world and doing the best with what they can. The library is the one that needs to double the size of their collection, get a children's library and they've raised the money.

Mr. Hershkowitz said he felt that evaluating the library's plan can be done without understanding the long term facility planning for the Town House, and the long-term planning for the highway garage.

Gail Ascher, a member of ACARC said "if they spend 2.5 million dollars on the library do you realistically think things will change? Revise the traffic pattern, do all this septic work and nothing's going to change? Long-term, you are setting the stage and it's going to be that way long term and I don't see any major changes happening."

Mr. Hershkowitz said the change he is interested in is repairing the library. He told Mrs. Ascher that she is saying the Town can't deliberate on the library's application without speculating on the needs for the future and he felt they can. He said he's seen things done on sites where other parts of the parcel were reserved for future uses.

Mark Patek, Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Council asked if with the two alternatives (including the use of Keeler field and a septic system going into Thibdeau Park,) the Town is losing a valuable resource and significant trees.

Jay Fain, wetlands inspector said he worked closely with the other two consultants and feels the plans are doable. He thinks the Town has been given a tool and the Town Board now should take the plan, look at the site and decide "this much is portioned to the library, this much is reserved for the Town House, this much to future post office, this much for recycling, this much for storage for highway garage. He said the drawings are a planning tool.

Ms. Bacal said that is why the Boards needed this study. One point of unanimity is that all appreciate the library and all want the library to expand. We want to support the library. We want it to be a wonderful resource to the town that it is. She said questions about the planning and its expansion and use of this campus site do not imply any objections to the library or anything negative. The Town Board is charged with making rational decisions. ACARC, Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council and the Zoning Board have their own responsibilities and obligations to ask question about the site and that's why we're here tonight.

Former Town Supervisor Thomas Herzog of Woodway, South Salem commented, saying he worked in the Town House for six years and challenged the statement that there is no more need for space at the Town House. He said it seems to have been forgotten that there is a great need to bring the court facilities at the Town House up to standards. Thought needs to be given as to where the police department is going to go. All of these things may very well impact what needs to be done on this campus and with the footprint of the current Town House. There is also a need

to move the offices out of Onatru. Police and court have definite needs that seem to have been forgotten.

Renee Purse, Library trustee asked what the next step should be and at what step the library would start to participate in the process.

Jeff Vreeland of South Salem said the planners have tried to set some limits to help arrive at a plan. He said it looks to him that enough space has been allowed to double the size of the Town House so it doesn't preclude something. This plan doesn't preclude moving the highway garage. The local residents did fight to keep the post office there. The number of employees at the post office and their vehicles has been reduced. He said at some point some limits need to be set. He said he felt this is a site plan that sets some limits. He said the Town doesn't have to build all these parking spaces, adding that about 65 spaces are needed now for all the overlapping uses. There is no need to build the other 35 spaces. But what is being said is that 25 years from now we want to be able to build them. He said the plan presented says "you can't build out the back of the library because we won't be able to build those spaces there." He said the Town is saying to the library you can only build here so the Town can build parking spaces if it needs to in the future. If the Town needs to double the size of the Town House 10 years from now, it can. And that is what this plan tell us—it tell us what we can do rationally. When you are thinking about your designs whether it be for the Town House or the library that you will keep this plan in mind so we don't restrict the future of this town. In that respect it is a very positive beginning.

Mr. Vreeland said "yes, the library will have to go back to the Zoning Board, but so what, we've been through these boards for seven years. But if we have a master plan then we have something to work with." He said each one of the boards has the power to do something positive. He said he has been here since 1972. The boards in the last 15 years have worked very hard to keep anything from happening in this town. "ou've done a great job—you've kept it rural. But now we're asking you, at least the library, to change your thinking. We want to do something instead of keeping something from happening. That's a whole different rationale—we're used to a process that if it takes 20 years to accomplish that's fine, it keeps developers out of here. But when we want a community service we have to think a little differently. This is the first proactive step in 7 years."

Mr. Decaminada asked Mr. Vreeland if he was speaking as a resident or in his capacity as a library trustee. Mr. Vreeland said he was speaking as a resident. Mr. Vreeland said he was involved in the Presbyterian Church when they rebuilt. It took two months to get approval, the first time the library needed approval to expand it took three months to get approval.

Alan King of South Salem said at some point the elected representatives have to consider that the answer might be "no." It might be "no more development" on that campus. After 7 years, might that not be the answer. If everybody in South Salem takes a look at how much parking is required under current standards the answer might be "sorry."

Mr. Maron asked Mr. Agresta what he envisioned as the next step. Mr. Agresta said he will make prints of the drawings exhibited tonight and circulate them. The Town Board needs to digest the information and may need a work session to discuss it. If they want to move forward based on

this analysis perhaps they need to start defining the pluses and minuses of these plans, the pros and cons of the driveway locations, in order to go to the next step which is design development. It doesn't make sense to do design development on both schemes. He said the Board also has to look at the available land areas re dimensions and square footage and what that allows, and other technical information from the consultants, to help the Town Board decide how much area the Town wants to reserve for its needs, even currently unanticipated needs. He said the Board has to look at the pros and cons of doing anything at all. Building a new septic system will change part of the site. All these decisions are to lead the Board to a direction that they can give back to the consultants to move forward with a program not only of the site issues, but they need to start defining the immediate land use issues such as ADA compliance that the Board needs to address. That needs to be included in the site development plan. With that program and with the library defining its program at the same time then we can move on to the design development stage based on those decisions that the Town Board must make, as the entity charged with making those decisions for the community.

Mr. Agresta said the first step of the design development would be for the consultants to give the Board an estimate relative of the costs because it is a lot more involved than what they just did, as well as some scheduling of that process.

Mr. Hershkowitz asked how the library's footprint related to the drawings the consultants presented. He also asked how does it work for the library. Mr. Nordgren asked how the Board could find out how the plans work for the library because the Town is not going to be building parking spaces. Mr. Hershkowitz asked if it was possible to get a drawing showing the proposed library addition overlaid on the consultant's drawings so the Board could review them at a work session. Mr. Agresta said they could do that.

Mr. Altermatt said the process is not to get to a certain level and then let the library to go off on their own. The Town Board is going to have to develop the entire site plan. The Town needs to build the roads when the library is constructed. The entire site plan needs to be developed and the entire site plan needs to be built.

Mr. Nordgren said that was the understanding of all the boards. Mr. Altermatt said there is a lot of work to be done before it goes to the Planning Board.

Mr. Maron thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting ended at approximately 9:45 p.m.

Kathleen G. Cory
Town Clerk