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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Fri Aug 13, 2004 4:50 pm
Subject: Southeast Town Board Recap (Work Session)

Hello All,

Last night the Southeast Town Board met in a Work Session. Below please find a recap. As always these notes are unofficial. No minutes are taken at a Work Session.

Considering the items on the agenda this meeting was a real record breaker. We were in and out in under an hour. So I have just a few pertinent (and yeah, caustic) observations before I hit the highlights.

First of all, the agenda did finally make it onto the Town Website (although after 11:30 so I'm not sure when). But I'm still betting that you guys can get next week's agenda on the website by Wednesday morning.

Question: How annoying is it in any meeting, theater, etc when an audience member's cell phone rings?

Answer: Not half as annoying as when a councilman's cell phone rings- Not once but twice, as Mr. Johnsons' did. To his credit he was quick on the 'off' switch and didn't take either call. I have, on more than one occasion, seen Councilman Bonanno take calls during a meeting- although he does leave the room. Gentlemen, we all know how important you are but throw your constituents a bone here and concentrate on the business at hand.

Quote of the evening: When discussing (sigh) Sodom/Old Milltown Road signage, Mayor Cesar inquired, "Can I ask something?" Supervisor Dunford (mercifully) replied a curt, 'NO' and added, 'But you can talk to me at the Pool Hall later.' Thanks to Supervisor Dunford for maintaining some decorum and sparing us the inconsequential discourse. And how was the Pool Hall?

It was nice to see Conservation Chair Steve Fasano in attendance as so many of the

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agenda items involved wetland permits.

WORK SESSION:

1. PUTNAM SEABURY- Wetlands Permit.

No questions from the Board. On the August 19th agenda.

2. ROOT AVENUE: Variance from the Moratorium.

No representative present. Not much 'Financial Hardship' proven according to one Board member.

3. TURK HILL ESTATES SUBDIVISION- Variance from Moratorium.

The questions asked here were: How long has this project been in front of the Planning Board? Ans. Since October of '03. The Board indicated that this was not a long time. Attorney for the project, Robert Lusardi, indicated that the applicant had already spent \$30,000 to \$40,000 so that there was financial hardship. He also indicated that this project had approved by all the Boards. Will be on the 8/19 agenda.

4. WATERVIEW ESTATES SUBDIVISION: Variance from Moratorium:

No questions were asked. Mrs. Mitts commented that she didn't see much in the way of financial hardship. At which point the attorney for the applicant explained that the applicant had waited until after the first Moratorium before submitting plans in accordance with new zoning regs. The applicant has owned the property for 18 years. This will be on the 8/19 agenda.

5. PALAZETTI WAREHOUSE- Wetlands Permit

No comments or questions. Applicant not present.

6. LAWES CONSTRUCTION- Wetlands Permit

This is the 'staging area' for the Brewster Sewer Project. The land has been leased from the owner for 3 years. This is on the 8/19 agenda.

7. TOWN OF SOUTHEAST- Wetlands Permit

This permit is for the Lake Tonetta In Line Skating Rink. Southeast Highway has done a lot of the grading here. Also on the 8/19 agenda.

8. INSITE ENGINEERING

This will authorize Insite to manage Southeast's Drainage Districts. A 'universal' Drainage District form will be created.

9. SODOM RD/OLD MILLTOWN ROAD: Right turn only

A resolution must be passed to install 'Right Turn Only' signs. Councilman Honeck again suggested that Sodom Road be closed. Supervisor Dunford indicated that a traffic study would need to be done before this was possible.

10. VILLAGE REQUEST TO USE WELLS PARK:

Mayor Cesar asked that the Wells Park parking lot be used for commuter parking while the

waste water treatment plant is being built. The Board indicated that this would not be possible.

NEW BUSINESS: Interviews will be set for the soon to be formed 'Open Space Committee'. August 21st and August 28th were the chosen dates.

Councilwoman Mitts would like to have a work session with the DEC, Town Engineer etc. to iron out 'communication problems'. This is in response to the continued (3 year) storm water pollution of 3 ponds on Welfare Road.

COMMENTS:

1. PUTNAM SEABURY: (The Campus at Fields Corner) My guess is that private meetings have gone swimmingly as no questions were asked.

2. ROOT AVENUE:

It was kind of sad not to have Peder Scott obfuscate around penetrating questions. Oh right, there were hardly any questions, penetrating or not, asked of any applicants. Besides Mr. Scott was a 'no show'.

3. TURK HILL ROAD EAST:

What I particularly enjoyed here was the project attorney's assertion that this application had approvals from all local Boards. Not quite the truth. It has, indeed, been in front of the appropriate Boards but the Conservation Commission has not yet voted on whether or not to recommend that a wetlands permit be issued. At this point CC Chair Fasano looked truly puzzled. C'mon Steve, speak up, you're among friends. It would have been good for the Board to know that the Commission hasn't yet voted on this permit.

As for the 'Financial Hardship.' Although \$30,000 or \$40,000 is definitely a chunk of change it probably does not establish 'hardship' of any sort. Obviously if your net worth is \$50,000 you have a problem but in the grand scheme of things this didn't seem like an inordinately large sum to spend on a 5 lot project that's been in the hopper less than a year.

4. WATERVIEW ESTATES:

Ah, the project everyone loves to hate. Poor sight lines, steep slopes, ledge and the list goes on. A lot of pressure on this one. But if the applicant proves financial hardship well, then all bets are off.

Councilwoman Mitts indicated that she was far from impressed with the hardships submitted. Supervisor Dunford seemed less than pleased with her observation. Can the developer turn in more financials this week? Stay tuned.

5. PALAZETTI:

I'm so through with this abomination. I'm sure my audience will completely snap I make one more 'Office Park 1' reference- Sorry, couldn't resist.

6. LAWES CONSTRUCTION:

I still predict the property owner will use 'construction damage' to pawn this beauty off on

the town. Oh well, we'll minimally have a year and a half of suspense leading up to this thrilling conclusion.

7. TOWN OF SOUTHEAST- Wetlands Permit

The In-Line skating rink at Lake Tonetta in the wetland buffers. Do I really need to 'drag out the hindquarters again? Nah.

8. INSITE ENGINEERING-

Yippee! After two years of relentless nagging we will have Drainage Districts put into place and managed by Insite Engineering. So developments that have drainage districts will start picking up the tab rather than the rest of Southeast residents. Of course if you stop building on such steep slopes and stop fooling around with wetlands these districts would probably not be necessary.

9. SODOM/ OLD MILLTOWN ROAD:

Oh dear God, make a decision and run with it. Even 'Cats' eventually closed.

10. VILLAGE REQUEST TO USE WELLS PARK:

Mayor Cesar's presentation was virtually incomprehensible and most of my notes contain the word 'Huh?'

There was some talk of a seven story, 500 space parking garage to be built behind Bob's Diner. Huh? (see what I mean). Wells Parking Lot for commuters. Huh? I mean, isn't this lot almost always in use. Anyhow the Board wisely said in a very nice way that they didn't feel that this use would be viable.

NEW BUSINESS:

Apparently there are numerous residents who would like to serve on the Open Space Committee. It is really terrific news that the public has shown so much interest. I would love to know how large this Committee will be and which Town Officials and/or Board appointees will serve as well.

Thanks to Councilwoman Mitts for arranging to have the DEC, Town Engineer et al at a Town Board Work Session. It will help immensely for clarification on how communications work (or in the case of Welfare Road, how they don't) between all the agencies. I would still contend that proper development of this site or for that matter any other (i.e. not allowing septic on steep slopes etc.) might have made this item moot.

As always please don't hesitate to e-mail me with any questions or comments that you might have.

Have a great weekend.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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