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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>

Date: Sat Oct 2, 2004 6:26 pm

Subject: SE Town Board Meeting Recap 9/30/04

Hi All,

Below please find a commentary on the Town Board meeting last Thursday.

As the only item on the agenda was the new Zoning Code I have very little reporting to do. If you want to avoid my snippy comments altogether I suggest you log on the link below which will take you directly to the proposed zoning changes:

http://www.townofsoutheast-ny.com/Public_Documents/SoutheastNY_TownBoard/Proposed%20Local%20Laws

All I have left to do is be my caustic self and vent away.

COMMENTS:

There was a lot of talk about Political Signs. Why this topic was a hotbed of controversy I have no idea. There seemed to be some hang-up over including the name and address of the party responsible for placing the sign so there would be some recourse if the signs were left up too long. It was finally decided that since Southeast is not yet a densely populated metropolis it would not be difficult to apprehend the sign-leaving culprits in under an hour. Fortunately Political Signs will be allowed up for only 3 weeks rather than 50 days- and, frankly, two weeks would be ample. I'm quite sure that the residents of Southeast can absorb a few names in under 21 days.

The other hot topic seemed to be the Putnam County Savings bank Temp/Time sign. This icon was one that one Board member was particularly loath to give up. But it was pointed out that you couldn't write zoning law to protect a single entity.

Hmmm, oh no? If memory serves this Board wrote a brilliant piece of legislation which will allow a local towing company to relocate in an ED-2 district, complete with gas pumps (for their own use only). A more accommodating law you couldn't find. So instead of having to seek a variance (and they have been before the ZBA and Town Board before) now the business will only have to ask for a 'Special Permit'. And you know how tough it is to get one of these in Southeast. Oh right, this Board's rarely met a 'Special Permit' it didn't like.

Finally, signs. I have one word. CAVED. Back in August while discussing signage Supervisor Dunford said, 'We don't have the guts to do anything

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about anything.' And to his self-deprecating and amusing credit, he was right. The sign regs which were slightly too stringent then have been trashed to accommodate big business now. The best example of this: A sign in the March 11th DRAFT that was limited to 32 sq. ft. then has since morphed to 120. So much for encouraging 'a more coordinated and attractive community.'

By the way, back in March local business was given three (3) years to comply with the new ordinance now it's seven (7). Apparently that 'attractive community' can wait. But I'm guessing if we keep growing at the present pace the signs will be the least of our problems. And besides, in seven years (although I'm betting less) when we're all stuck in traffic we'll have all those super new signs to look at. See, there's a silver lining in every cloud.

On my current wish list: Since Southeast's zoning is still being rewritten now would be an excellent time to revisit our less than ideal 'Senior Housing' law. Unlike our 'strictest in the universe' wetlands regs our 'Senior Housing' law might just be the most 'lax in the universe'. If Southeast could adopt a law like Patterson's we would be much better off. Patterson's law states that a 'Senior Facility' must be licensed by NY State. This law would preclude almost all the fake 'Senior Housing' that being shoved down our collective throats. But, if I were a betting woman, I'd guess that nothing will be done about this until after the 'Senior Housing' at Terravest is green-lighted.

Oh, and while you're at it, a tree ordinance would be nice too.

That's it from here. Please feel free to e-mail me with any comments or questions that you may have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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