

SE Town Board Regular Meeting Recap 6/21/07

Hi All,

As is typical for this time of year I am **way** behind in my recaps but on June 21st I attended a Regular Town Board Meeting. This was a real record breaker- even with all those pesky questions asked under New Business the meeting clocked in at just under an hour.

The earth shattering news here is, that 'As the Camera Turns... or Doesn't' has finally been resolved. While the video cam will not focus on speakers in the audience, there is now a splendid beaten-up podium hidden behind the Civic Center's ubiquitous center column. To complete the illusion of TV time for anyone with a question there is faux mike- which is not plugged into anything and whose cord uncoiled lies in wait to trip up any unsuspecting media hogs. Apparently if one stands far away from the podium (rendering it completely useless) the camera does catch some of the action. By the way, the exciting 'Podium Compromise' took about four months to figure out. And you wonder why I snap.

It was Lights! Camera! Action! for Councilwoman Mitts who, true to the status quo play book, got to stand in front of the dais to announce the Gold Star Awards. It'll be interesting to see if our Town Clerk enters the winner's names in her minutes. Apparently she omits all names under 'New Business' to protect all us 'questioners' from 'identity theft' or some such nonsense. Yet for some odd reason finds it AOK to enter the winner's names of the 'Mr. and Mrs. Snowman' contest for all the world to see. Yeah, throw the kid's names on the internet but leave off the adults. A brilliant piece of logic this.

As always the comments both above and below are only my jaundiced and fed-up take on life in our fair town. Any misspellings of names are completely unintentional and the comments and opinions expressed reflect no organization unlucky enough to have me.

REGULAR MEETING:

Review of Minutes: May 17th 2007

Approved 5-0

1) Correspondence-

Reading waived. Approved 5-0

2) Approval of Voucher List:

\$791,293 Approved 5-0

3) Motion setting Meeting Dates:

June 28 Work Session

July 12 Regular Meeting

July 19 Work Session

Approved 5-0. All are at the Civic Center and begin at 7:30.

4) Motion calling for the following Public Hearings:

July 12 at the Civic Center at 7:30: 800 Clocktower Commons Moratorium Waiver

July 12 at the Civic Center at 7:31: Route 22 Moratorium Extension

Approved 5-0

5) Motion for Approval of the Budget Transfers-

Approved 5-0

6) Resolution- Arborscape Wetlands (Permit)

Permit denied 3-2 (Bonanno, Mitts and Honeck voted 'no')

7) Zoning Board Appointment

Roderick Cassidy was appointed 5-0.

New Business:**Arborscape:**

I asked if fertilizer would be stored in the barn. Supervisor Dunford said that it didn't matter as the permit had been denied.

Millennium:

I asked about the Millennium Certiorari settlement. The TB said that there were no figures available.

Terravest:

I asked about an appraisal of the donated Lepler Terravest land. The TB said that the land was donated by LAD LLC.

New Zoning Regs:

I asked if the TB was going to try to over ride the County zoning recommendations as they might have a super majority. They were not convinced that they'd have a super majority.

Landfill:

I asked if there were any cost estimates. The TB said no but said that the entry road was in and a berm could now be built.

Sheriff's Contract:

I asked where the contract stood - the TB said contracts were not fully executed so the contract is not in effect yet.

Cedar Swamp:

Bob Zubrycki asked about the Great Cedar Swamp as far as being designated a critical environmental area. The Board said that the Town Planner was working on it.

Comment/Opinions:**ZBA Appointment:**

Rejected again...sigh. But the audience was assured that Mr. Cassidy was uber-qualified (and indeed his credentials are excellent, I do believe that he is an attorney- although you'll *never* convince me that this is necessarily a big plus). And everyone seemed positively thrilled when they discovered that Mr. Cassidy was a St. John's alum. Clearly an 'inside' joke we weren't privy to. My congratulations to Mr. Cassidy and my favorite Board. In a slightly related sidebar I'm hopeful I'll live long enough to see a qualified female on Zoning or Planning, because so far we've been relegated to the 'lite' advisory committees.

New Business:**Arborscape, Fields Lane:**

This one was baffling. After reading a resolution stating that the wetlands permit was unanimously granted the Board then voted 3-2 to deny it.

Millennium Certiorari Settlement:

The TB authorized the payment of this settlement on June 7th- I FOILed for the amount on June 9th- at this point more than a month later, and since I've still not received an answer, I have no idea what the hold-up is... unless it's some ungodly amount of money.

Terravest Ball Fields:

Yeah, it's drag out the hindquarter's time. Because it never did sit well with me that while the land was a 'donation' the 'rough grading' would be a credit towards rec fees owed on Mr. Lepler's Senior Housing units. The TB seems intent for us to know that the land donation came from LAD. It should be noted that Terry Hahn (Mr. Lepler's 'engineer' of choice) works for LADA in Connecticut.

Anyhow, in the July 9th edition of the Journal News Supervisor Dunford and Councilwoman Mitts claimed that the cost of these ball fields would be somewhere between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Yet when I finally received the FOILed Town Engineer's report the costs were in excess of \$1.3 million. A far cry from even the \$500,000 promised by the status quo.

The town engineer's report and estimate had first been submitted in November 2006 so it's not like it was an eleventh hour surprise. Look, either Supervisor Dunford and Councilwoman Mitts didn't feel the need to tell us the truth or they didn't bother to read the town engineer's report. In fact in the same article Mrs. Mitts said: "We're always worried about cost, and this was a cost-effective way of doing this."

Forgive me if I don't see this as a 'cost-effective way of doing things" unless Mitts considers low-balling estimates to her constituents 'cost effective' because she figures they're dumb enough to believe the unrealistically low figures.

Landfill:

See above. I'm pretty damn sure that there are some updated capping costs- it's just that the Town Board doesn't want to share them with us.

Sheriff's Contract:

The contract expired back in early November but what's the rush. I did FOIL for said contract on July 9th but (hold on to your hats) was told that since the contract is on its way to the county for signatures the Town didn't keep a copy. Scheesh, even Sybil Luddington could have delivered and returned the contract in less time than it's taken in 2007.

Anyhow, I was cheerfully and helpfully told to 'FOIL the county for it'. Having dusted myself off from that turnip truck fall I suppose I'll just wait until the town receives the fully executed contract back.

That's it from my desk. Again sorry for the long, long delay... Off to work on the July 12th Meeting. As always please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments that you might have.

Have a great weekend!

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt