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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Sat Apr 15, 2006 6:14 pm
Subject: SE Town Board Work Session 4/13/06

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Hi All,

Last Thursday I attended the Town Board Work Session. This was a really quick (about an hour in length), low key meeting with only one really interesting item. Well, I suppose road improvement would be considered riveting by some but once I hear no dirt roads are to be paved I kind of zone out. Seriously, the Highway Superintendent's report was important as it will certainly affect future taxes.

Number 7 on the agenda was billed as 'Emergency Management'. But, in fact, it seemed to revolve around the fire at Fieldstone Pond with everyone tiptoeing around the subject.

As always the comments below are strictly my own. They represent no Boards on which I serve or anyone else's world weary view on life in Southeast.

Agenda:**1. Blackberry Park Capital Project:**

This project will start with the playground. It will be on the 4/20/06 Town Board agenda.

2. Wetlands Permit- Landau Subdivision:

This will be on the 4/20/06 Town Board agenda.

3. Town of Southeast Road Improvement Capital Plan:

This plan will help preserve the current road infrastructure. Highway Supervisor, Jim Lawler, would like to repave 2 to 3 town roads per year. The CHIPS program will be used to subsidize this.

\$300,000 of Federal Money will be used to repave 3 heavily used roads. Starr Ridge Road, Brewster Hill Road and Federal Hill Road. Roads that haven't been paved for ten years are also being considered. Sodom Road and Allview Avenue are under future consideration.

There was talk of dividing the town into quadrants to ensure equitable improvements.

4. Bond Resolution Highway/Roadway Rehabilitation:

The Highway Department looks ahead 5 years as far as equipment replacement. Larger trucks cost around \$90,000. A new sweeper is needed as our current sweeper is 26 years old. Need a town maintenance truck and a vehicle for the Tax Assessor.

5. Veteran's Real Property Tax Exemption:

This must be done every year. On 4/20/06 agenda.

6. Real Property Tax Service Contract with County:

On the 4/20/06 agenda.

7. Emergency Management:

A meeting will be set up so Fieldstone residents will have an opportunity to have questions answered. There were questions re. tax assessments and the condominiums destroyed by fire.

The woman who owned the condominium where the fire allegedly started (due to rags that allegedly spontaneously combusted) said that she does not believe the fire started because of the rags. She condemned the newspaper for prematurely reporting the cause.

Another woman said that she didn't feel fault or blame need be assigned but it was more important to examine the 'series of events' that led to the loss of their homes.

COMMENTS:

3. Road Improvement Capital Plan:

Scheesh, now I really can't believe that the Town Board seriously considered paving Maple Road less than a year ago. And we paid for that glitzy power point presentation. What were they thinking. Because the prognosis here was not remotely rosy. And that's just for roads that need repaving. Mr. Lawler (whom I believe to be a dedicated and superb Highway Superintendent) really laid it on the line. And as our town adds subdivisions (thus roads) and grows we're going to need a lot more money for road maintenance. Be it snow removal, salting, street sweeping, repairs or paving. Simply the price of progress.

7. Emergency Management:

I'm not exactly sure what's with the heading here. Because, truth be told, this seemed all about the Fieldstone Pond fire- albeit more cryptic than some WWII codes.

And this topic really has been the elephant in the living room. I mean, how many rumors have **you** heard?

I've heard everything from: no water hit the fire for the first half hour because there was little to no water pressure in the hydrants to the fire's cause was arson but because the site was bulldozed too quickly we'll never know. **Again, and bear in mind, all unsubstantiated rumors.**

My concerns are simple. Rumor or not, I would assume that all water districts in SE are tested on an ongoing basis for adequate water pressure. And in light of this fire it may behoove the Town Board to enact stricter standards for firewalls.

I know that there are dedicated Brewster firefighters on 10509. But I don't know whether they can comment on any of this or not. I believe that litigation has been alluded to or was the reason given for an Executive Session held since the fire.

I would hope that if a meeting is held regarding 'Emergency Management' it would be open to all residents of the town. I know that in the past several Town Board members have met with Fieldstone residents (re. a town-wide issue-Route 22) and other residents of the town were not notified. But then again, Fieldstone Pond's a mighty big voting block.

That's it from here. Happy Easter to all who celebrate and a wonderful weekend to everyone. As always feel free to e-mail me with any comments or questions that you may have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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