

SE Town Board Recap 4/12/07

Hi All,

On Thursday night I attended a Southeast Town Board Work Session. The meeting didn't start on time- which is rather unusual but there seemed to be some serious seat jockeying going on as Councilwoman Mitts changed places with Councilman Johnson, who then took Councilman Bonanno's seat. Hmmmm, I'm thinking... musical chairs...what's up with this. And then it came to me. Election year, face time... could it be??? Well maybe, because it looks like Councilwoman Mitts will no longer be seen in profile. Nope, instead it will be a dead-on camera shot. We'll know for sure next week when the cameras roll... I'm ready for my close-up Mr. Rotchford...

After this things moved along at a rather nice clip.

There was an important presentation from Kevin Bailey of the Putnam County EDC regarding the proposed Empire Zone for the Village of Brewster. You can just imagine how well this went over with the Town Board. I'm guessing they'll try to wrangle an additional zone for the 'Leplerville!' section of Route 22.

Ah, but I digress, the always coveted 'Award of Irony' went predictably to Councilman Johnson who had the unmitigated gall to ask if we'd be allowed to exempt certain 'businesses' within the Empire Zone. This way, he reasoned, we could ensure that offices actually went into our Office Park zones. Ugh, now I really wanted to blow my brains out. Here I've sat through meeting, after meeting after meeting where warehouse after warehouse after warehouse are blithely OK'd in our Office Park zones- namely Fields Lane. And now, because the village might be included in an Empire Zone first, Mr. Johnson suddenly gets religion. Lord have mercy.

As has become his wont, Town Attorney, Willis Stephens, seemed pretty engrossed in his Blackberry for a good part of the meeting but looked up long enough to make a decent point on the Brewster Heights Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Gosh, before I write something I might regret I'll disclose that as always the predictable, jaded and caustic opinions and rants expressed are mine and mine alone. They reflect no group unlucky enough to have me.

AGENDA:

1. Lake Tonetta Smoking Ban on Public Beach Petition:

85 children signed a petition asking the town to ban smoking on the beach. There will be a designated area for smoking.

2. Brewster Heights Sewer Capacity Report- M. Levine:

Supervised Life Styles had asked for permission to hook into the Brewster Heights Waste Water Treatment Plant so Special District's manager Michael Levine was asked to report on present capacity.

Supervised Life Styles (corner of Route 6 and Bloomer Road) is looking to add a 44 bed residential facility. They presently cater to those with psychological disturbances. The new building will have cooking but no laundry facilities. The average patient uses 87 gallons of water per day outflow was estimated at 3228 gallons per day. The existing buildings on the site will remain tied into septic systems.

Right now the average gallons per day running through the BH system is 125,000 with the high of 141,000 gallons reached in November of '06. The maximum allowed is 150,000 per day so with SLS tied in there could be overages which could induce heavy fines from the NYC DEP.

SLS (represented by Insite Engineer's, Theresa Ryan) asked if the plant could be expanded. SLS also offered to provide an 'overflow' tank. It was thought that the DEP would not want to set a precedent by expanding capacity. Town Attorney, Willis Stephens thought that capacity was limited for a reason thus expansion might not make any sense.

Supervisor Dunford said he would set up a joint meeting between SLS and some members of the Town Board.

3. Establishment of Performance Bond for Mt. Ebo Lot 6:

A bond of \$140,000 will be set at the Regular meeting next week.

4. Putnam County Legislature- Empire Zone- Village of Brewster:

Kevin Bailey (head of the County Economic Development Corp) gave a brief presentation. Major concerns, (70% of Putnam County residents work outside the county) may be addressed by approving an Empire Zone. There are excellent payroll tax breaks used as incentives thus 1000-3000 jobs could be introduced if the zone is approved.

The Board asked how big an EZ could be. Two square miles (1280 acres) and 7 separate Empire Zones are allowed in a county. The Board felt that they needed to see a map of the proposed zone.

Councilman Johnson asked if certain businesses could be exempt so that offices would be attracted. Answer: Yes. The Board needs to approve this in a timely fashion as there is a July deadline.

5. Road Name- High Meadow Lane

This will be on next week's agenda. It was difficult to hear but this road will serve three houses and I believe is for the High Meadow Farm subdivision off Welfare Road.

6. Brewster Plaza- ARB Recommendation:

Again difficult to hear.

7. Request to Sweep School Lots:

An Intermunicipal agreement will be needed to share services. Highway Superintendent Lawler thought that this was the right way to go- especially given the MS4 regulations.

COMMENTS/OPINIONS:

Brewster Heights Sewer Capacity Report: M. Levine:

There was a lot of sewage capacity chit chat regarding Supervised Life Styles and the Brewster Heights Wastewater Treatment plant. Lots of fun figures. What became crystal clear to me was the tried and true adage that you **really** can't fit 10 Lbs. of sh... oh, never mind.

Seriously, increasing capacity at this plant really does set bad precedent... although I believe that other SE plants have upped capacity so there might be a fine line to walk here. In any case, and I'm no math whiz, I don't see how SLS could be hooked into the existing plant without surpassing allowable limits and then incurring hefty fines.

This is a project perched right above the already impaired Middle Branch Reservoir so it seems to me that SLS should have to scale back their plan considerably and dispose of their waste on site- like all other businesses along Route 6.

Empire Zone:

This was an interesting dance and I wasn't buying how little the TB professed to know. At one point Councilman Honeck mentioned that he'd known about the Empire Zone designation for one or two

months. But this concept has been in the pipeline for well over a year so it's not like it's been a well kept secret.

Right now there are 9800 certified businesses in Empire Zones. These businesses employ 380,000 and there are 82 Empire Zones in New York State. The Village could certainly benefit from such a plan so I can't imagine any good reason that the TB wouldn't want to approve it. In fact, it'd be pretty difficult to come up with any bad reasons. Hopefully we won't be treated to any 'unforeseen delays' that seem to sometimes plague this Board and would jeopardize this designation.

Road Name/Brewster Plaza

The mumbling on agenda items 5 and 6 was annoying to say the least. So much so that I didn't even realize we'd moved onto lucky number 7. Scheesh, I hate the thought of moving up to the front row permanently- reminds me too much of fifth grade when the teacher thought I'd be less of a problem seated next to his desk.

This solution never lasted longer than two days as it quickly became just too masochistic for the poor man.

That's it from my desk. As always please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments you might have. Have a great weekend!

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt