

SE Town Board Regular Meeting Recap 4/19/07

Hi All,

Better late than never, I suppose. My apologies for the long overdue recap- spring is such a busy time.

In any case, on April 19th I attended the Southeast Regular Town Board meeting. This was really, really, really long- no thanks to me and my eight billion questions. But the new Zoning Amendments were on the table as was a Public Hearing on the Pegasus Equestrian Center. Plus the always delightful 'New Business'.

Before you start lunging for the No-Doze with espresso chaser, I promise to keep the zoning portion to a minimum. If anyone wants additional 'Concerned Residents of Southeast' comments please feel free to e-mail me and I'll be happy to send you our recommendations. Gosh, I hope all those requests don't crash my Dell...

I'm also going to give Pegasus a kind of short shrift as I feel I've covered this endlessly in ZBA and Planning Board recaps. Basically, just on principle, this project should never have been granted a variance- then we wouldn't be in this pickle. I just can't seem to let this one go.

I guess the highlight was once again the always priceless 'As the Camera Turns' or in this case: doesn't. So much consternation on such a negligible item. Should the Comcast camera focus only on the Town Board or... should the camera be allowed to swivel to catch audience participation as well. Even Supervisor Dunford couldn't believe we were wasting time on this topic...again. Best actor in this ongoing mini-series went to Councilman Johnson who displayed a 'fit of pique' flawlessly right down to the tightly pursed lips and flared nostrils. Co-starring, in an equally absorbing and challenging role, was Councilman Honeck's well crafted 'snit'. It really was pretty amusing. You know, I used to want to write a screenplay about Southeast- but now I'm thinking... musical.

Oh yeah, and for the first time in recent memory the audience seemed to have a few Town Board 'groupies' (who knew?) thrown in. These guys seemed to have nothing specific to say except an overall 'Way to go on the new Zoning! Huh? I'd suggest that you catch the action on channel 8 but then you'll only be able to see the Town Board beaming beatifically at all the adulation. Damn you... stationary camera.

Finally, if you're in the mood for 'sketchy' and 'under the radar' all rolled into one enjoy the latest twist in the Temple/Courthouse scenario

As always the over-the-top, uncalled for observations are my opinions only. They reflect no Board on which I serve.

Public Hearings:

Pegasus Therapeutic Riding:

Theresa Ryan gave an overview. She stated that water was no longer running over Peach Lake Road. There will be storm water basins and they will have to be approved by the DEP and the DEC.

Basically, all questioners agreed that Pegasus is a wonderful organization. But there were repeated concerns about storm water run-off ending up in Peach Lake.

Residents were assured that manure would be collected from the open fields.

Increased traffic was a concern but Ms. Ryan insisted that the former owner, a vet, probably had more traffic.

The 30 horse limit will run with the property. Councilwoman Mitts asked if the forested areas could be put into conservation easements. Ans. Possibly.

There is a ten day comment period.

Public Hearing:

Zoning Amendments to Chapter 138:

The three most important suggestions or questions went as follows:

CRSE asked: From page 1: Why is Route 22 designated as 'the main shopping district within the Town?'

Answer: It's in the Comprehensive Plan.

CRSE asked: From page 13: [1] Natural building materials including but not limited to, clapboard and shingle siding, brick or stone is *preferred* over synthetic material."

Could the word 'shall' be substituted for 'preferred'?

CRSE asked: [2] When a 'Large Retail Establishment' abuts a residential area a buffer of minimally 100 feet is proposed, "unless the Town Board determines that a larger buffer is required."

Judging from the approximately 100' buffer in the case of 'Patterson Crossing' 100' is not nearly enough. We would encourage that this setback be raised to at least 250'.

There will be a 10 day comment period.

1) Review of Minutes: January 25, 2007

Approved 3-0 with one abstention.

February 15, 2007

Approved 3-0 with one abstention.

March 22, 2007

Approved 3-0 with one abstention.

2) Correspondence

Accepted 4-0

3) Approval of Voucher List

\$436,869 approved 4-0

4) Motion setting Meeting Dates:

May 3, 2007	7:30 Civic Center	Work Session
May 10, 2007	7:30 Civic Center	Work session
May 17, 2007	7:30 Civic Center	Regular Meeting

5) Motion- Approval of Budget Transfers- Attached

Approved 4-0

6) Motion Lake Tonetta smoking ban on a Public Beach

Passed 4-0

7) Resolution-establishment of Performance Bond for Mt. Ebo Lot 6

\$2,095,700 passed 4-0

8) Resolution- Road Name- High Meadow Lane

Passed 4-0

9) Motion authorizing IMA with Brewster School District regarding sweeping School Lots

Passed 4-0

10) Motion- Supervisor sign real property tax service contract

Passed 4-0

11) Motion- Appointment Wetlands Consultant

Bludot Inc. was appointed 4-0

12) Resolution Regarding Temple Route 22

The Temple will be purchased with surplus earmarked funds.

Approved 4-0.

13) Acceptance of Highway Bids

Approved 4-0

Empire Zone Resolution (not on distributed agenda)

Approved 4-0

The Board voted to approve the 'Empire Zone' within the Village of Brewster. The Zone follows present boundaries with conservation areas exempt. Kevin Bailey thanked the Board.

New Business:

Paul Johnson held up the January garbage flyer and noted that Condominiums now have double the containers.

Landfill:

Supervisor Dunford then followed upon on some of last month's questions: To date the Landfill has cost us \$301,000. Nothing else new.

Sheriff's Contract:

There was a meeting scheduled with Sheriff Smith but it had been cancelled. Will reschedule. No contract signed.

Westchester Tractor:

John Lord asked if the Town Board had followed up on last month's question regarding Westchester Tractor. Supervisor Dunford said that the resident had not dropped off the flyer in question. I said that it was my fault that I hadn't done so- although I did mention that it's not like I'm salaried to do what I do. The Board did say that they had sent over a Zoning Code Enforcement Officer but hadn't heard back.

Camera:

I asked about the camera focusing solely on the Town Board. Supervisor Dunford and Councilwoman Mitts agreed that it would be fine to go back to the camera focusing on both the Town Board and the audience. Councilman Honeck and Johnson like the stationary camera and think that audience members are intimidated when the camera focuses on them.

Brad Schwartz said that the camera trained only on the Town Board makes the meeting difficult to follow on TV. Supervisor Dunford said he couldn't believe how much time was being taken up on this topic. A straw vote was taken (2). I suggested that those in the audience who wanted to be on camera could come to the front to ask questions. Johnson didn't like this as his back was to the questioner. This will be resolved when Councilman Bonanno breaks the tie next month.

Temple/Courthouse:

I asked how much the project would cost. No figures are available as an appraisal hasn't been done.

UJA Property:

I asked why the Open Space Committee wasn't really involved with the purchase. Ans. Because the February meeting was canceled.

I said that, according to the January OS Committee minutes, there was supposed to have been a Public Hearing and a PR campaign. Ans. There was no time.

I said that given almost one third of the property is in wetlands, it is zoned commercial and runs along Interstate 84 that it didn't seem like a wise purchase for open space. Ans. The TB disagreed.

I asked if the property would be open to hunters. Ans. No, because of horseback riding.

Cathy Croft mentioned that there are now openings on the Planning Board , Zoning Board and Open Space Committee.

Comments/Opinions:

Garbage Flyer:

Why on earth Councilman Johnson feels compelled to pimp for AWS every month is beyond me. Really, we get it Paul. Despite the guilty pleas that keep rolling in like the Croton River last week we all know that AWS is saving us a ton of dough. Now, if you could just point me to the closest shower...

Pegasus:

I love the way that this was listed as 'Pegasus Therapeutic Riding' rather than Pegasus Equestrian Center-Because the Equestrian Center 'Special Permit' is the reason there was a Public Hearing.

What bothers me, aside from obvious run-off problems into Peach Lake, is that Pegasus has only 21 acres rather than the required 25. I thought that this was a major variance to grant- and while Pegasus does 'good works' I'm not sure that other Equestrian Centers, wanting the same variance, can be denied.

I also found the 'less traffic than the former owner' argument tough to swallow. Pegasus admits to having 200 clients going in and out for riding lessons. I mean, honestly, how much traffic did one vet generate?

Zoning:

I just love that because our 7 year old 'Master Plan' states that Route 22, north of Milltown Road, should be promoted as our 'main shopping district' we have to abide by this ill-founded, harebrained concept as though it was one of the ten commandments.

In my mind's eye I saw dark roiling skies, blinding slashes of lightning and heard the deafening crash of thunder as the always natty Harold Lepler (dressed in monogrammed Ralph Lauren toga) descends from Mt. Ebo complete with stone tablets and a deed to a certain large parcel on the east side of Route 22. Completely coincidentally where our 'main shopping district' is designated. See how nicely this all dovetails. Gosh, rather than wetland permits or bridge building perhaps we can simply 'part' the detention basins for easier access to 'Leplerville'.

Wetlands Consultant:

Congratulations to Don Cuomo. If he's half as tough as he was on the Conservation Commission we might even be able to save a few wetlands around town. The only remaining mystery is why it took the town 11 months to make this appointment.

Resolution Regarding the Temple:

So now we're buying the Temple on Route 22. Where on earth do we have this kind of money lying around in 'surplus funds'? Or better yet, since we have no appraisal how do we know we have it lying around? I really want to blow my brains out as it's so obvious the town is packing their bags to ditch the village ASAP. And just wait until the new Town Hall at Mt. Ebo is unveiled.

This is like that really bad breakup that you could see coming for months. Oh sure, you dieted, frosted your hair, wore light blue Yardley eye shadow, stopped flirting with his friends, for god's sake, you even bought 'Sugar and Ice' lipstick...and all for what... He still took off with your trumpy best friend, you know the one who smoked menthols and drove a beat-up red Mustang convertible.

Route 22... Please.

Lights, Camera, Inaction!

I'm not sure how I'll be able to contain myself until the tie breaking vote next month. What a nail biter! Obviously, I'd better get on the horn to lobby Councilman Bonanno- big time. Thank God, Pat's one of the more sensible Board members- and he might even get a chuckle out of the absurdity of it all.

The Landfill:

I love that we've spent \$301,000 and we're really no closer to capping this thing than we were back in the late '80's. Although at least we've gotten really creative with the excuses. I mean, whose garbage is this anyway?

Sheriff's Contract:

This was supposed to be signed last November. So a canceled meeting was the 'excuse de jour' for April. How about this for a suggestion. Let's try to find the two guys in a station wagon who did the job before, without incident- or 'patrol car' smoke and mirrors, for whole lot less money.

Westchester Tractor:

Thanks to John Lord for bringing this up. And Mea Culpa. I forgot to get the February flyer to Supervisor Dunford so heaven forbid they investigate on my say so. Well, actually the Board said they did. They just don't have the report back. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

This project has been a complete farce from the get-go. No 'servicing' on site (even though there are 14 bays). No retail (even though they advertise and sell tons of different equipment). But, gee, it does look pretty on the ridgeline and how on earth does one say 'no' to any project ushered in by Mr. Lepler.

They don't.

UJA Land:

You know, I should have known better that to have entrusted this Town Board with \$5 million of our money. What was I thinking? It was all so obvious. Of course our Town Board would consider 166 commercial acres with almost a third of it wetlands, highway noise up the ying-yang, not to mention the enticing aroma of exhaust fumes, a perfect \$2.1 million candidate for 'Open space'.

Someone should have broken my arm before I walked into that voting booth last November.

That's it from my desk. Enjoy the rest of this weekend- and as always please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments you might have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt