

MINUTES BOOKTOWN OF COEYMANS
January 21, 2016 – Town Board Workshop – 6:00pm**

**A Town Board Workshop was held Thursday, January 22, 2016, at 6:00pm at Town Hall,
18 Russell Avenue, Ravena, New York**

PRESENT: Philip A. Crandall, Supervisor
Thomas E. Dolan, Councilman
Kenneth A. Burns, Councilman
James Youmans, Councilman

ABSENT: George E. Langdon, Councilman

ALSO PRESENT: Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk

Supervisor Crandall opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING COMMENT

Supervisor Crandall stated that the record should reflect that there is a full Town Board in addition to Town Clerk Millious.

AGENDA

- Recycling Law
- Proposed Local Law #1-16 – Planning Board
- Fares Road Proposed Business
- Authorize Municipal Bookkeeper
- Establish Environmental Conservation Board
- Establish Housing Task Force

PRESENTATION

Proposed New Business – The Stables, Testing and Training Facility

Supervisor Crandall stated that there is a guest present, Steve Conklin and asked him to address the Board.

Mr. Steve Conklin introduced himself to the Board and stated he is from Saratoga Springs and does a lot of corporate work for companies such as GE, Northwest Mutual and many other corporations who hire him to do driving events, whether it is fun driving events or training as well as doing EVAC training for emergency personnel. He added that he is at the Schaghticoke Fair right now and about a year ago it got to the point where the business got too big and he had too many clients to deal with at the fairgrounds so he started looking at places to put a testing and training facility and they looked at a number of places and around November a piece of property on Fares Road became available. He continued by saying that because there was an election, he decided to wait until after it and after Supervisor Crandall was sworn in he met with him to talk about this particular piece of property, he had looked at 3-4 different properties but this property works perfectly for him logistically with easy access because a lot of his clients are in the Albany area. He continued to point out on a diagram/map existing right-of-ways, the existing house with the hangars and garage and stated that there is a run-way that they will keep in place for EVAC training and skid pad training. He then outlined who will use and how they will use the property and what he proposes to do to the property as follows:

- It would be a semi-private club but if people wanted to join and learn how to drive they can accommodate them.
- The property would be used for corporate events and EVAC training.

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- Renovations would be upscale to the existing buildings.
- They would provide everyone from the R-C-S school the ability to take what is called a Drive and Thrive Class, which is more of an advanced Driver's Ed course and normally would be \$400.00. EVAC training would be provided to the local police, fire and ambulance at no charge.

He concluded by saying that he has been working on this for a year and then asked if anyone had any questions.

Discussion ensued amongst the Town Board, members of the audience and Mr. Conklin relative to the proposed plan for the property on Fares Road. Key points were:

- When referring to motor sports it includes vehicles such as Porsche's & Ferrari's, police vehicles such as Tahoe & Crown Victoria's and for corporate training they typically use Mazda MX-5's & MX-8's
- It is a testing and training facility, there will be no races, it is a semi-private facility and on any given day there will be 50-60 people.
- An Environmental Assessment will be done as part of the process and it will go before the Planning Board.
- There will be minimal noise.
- Zoning would remain the same at R/A, which includes schooling, this is a training facility.
- There will be a Public Hearing.
- The facility will not be used as an airport.
- It will be a seasonal operation, typically shut down early November and open for business May 1st.
- An existing garage would be used for storage.
- There will be a clubhouse for catered events.
- There will be classroom settings.
- There will be three lanes for training in vehicles with cones for tight maneuvering, lead-follow training and for testing new vehicles.
- There will be approximately 12 part-time and 3 full-time jobs with preference to local people.
- They work directly with B.O.C.E.S and provide internships.
- The company has partnered with the Wounded Warriors Project and Make a Wish Foundation.
- One car is handicapped equipped for training clients with special needs.
- 60% of training is in the classroom, 40% is on the track
- Classrooms will hold 20-30 where they will teach the dynamics of how a vehicle responds to turns and braking situations when driving emergency vehicles.
- Credit on insurance will not be given for taking the Driver Education Course because it is not recognized as a sanctioned course.

DISCUSSIONS

Recycling Law

Councilman Dolan stated that at the end of 2015 there was a Proposed Local Law called the Landfill Law, which was intended to amend change and get rid of two sections of Town Code, one being Chapter 138 – Solid Waste , which includes recycling and the other was Chapter 109 – Landfill Law. He continued by saying that he would propose looking at them separately and see what changes they think should be made.

Supervisor Crandall interjected that they definitely want to change it so no one brings garbage into town and store or incinerate it, so they have to close that loophole.

Councilman Dolan continued by going over Chapter 138 and noted the following:

- Legislative Intent is fairly solid.

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- Under non-recycling waste it refers to a Recycling Coordinator, he would think that unless they are going to appoint and compensate a Recycling Coordinator, it should say Town Board.
- There are approximately 20 references to Recycling Coordinator that can be stricken from the Law or they can substitute with Town Board.
- Under Section 138-4 A., this is the section of Town Law that says each house and business in Town needs to have garbage and recycling services, which he thinks should not be changed.
- Under Section 138-5 where it talks about permits, he does not believe there are permits issued for people who collect garbage and recyclables and they need to come up with a permit, how they are going to enforce it and what it is going to cost.
- Under Section 138-6 it refers to a Recycling Center, which does not exist.
- Under Section 138-12 it says that only materials generated inside the Town of Coeymans will be accepted for recycling and the title is Recycling Center limited to town-generated recyclables and should be stricken from the Law.

Discussion ensued amongst the Town Board and members of the audience relative to Chapter 138, key points were.

- The law was written when recycling was a fairly new concept.
- Whether or not they should have permits, which they did have at one time and it was \$50.00.
- Benefits of having permits such as making sure the hauler has the necessary qualifications and insurance, and knowing where the waste is going.
- Previous discussions about having a Transfer Station at the Highway Garage.
- The difference between a Recycling Center and Transfer Station.
- Cost for haulers to haul from the Transfer Station.
- Setting fees to residents for disposal.
- Taking Recycling Center completely out of the law.
- A Transfer Station should be a service provided and not in the law.
- A Recycling Center would require sophisticated equipment and someone to oversee the facility.
- Surveying the public to gauge interest in having a Recycling Center.
- Frequent calls from residents asking where they can get rid of items, suggested places have been Coxsackie and Westerlo for a fee or the Port of Albany or Port of Coeymans who pay for scrap metal or arranging with a private hauler for an extra fee.
- Fines for dumping.
- Cost control for what haulers charge.
- Possible formation of a Co-Op for waste collection with the Board being liaison.

Councilman Dolan continued on with Article II of the law, Prohibition Against Waste Generated outside the Town and noted the following.

- This part of the law was introduced in reaction to Albany trying to site a landfill here.
- It came up during the discussions on the Proposed Landfill Law of 2015 and it specifically banned burying solid waste in Town.
- Buried, incinerated, stored, stockpiled and sorted should be added to solid waste.
- Broadening the definition of solid waste to include hazardous waste in the form of liquid waste – such as oil.

Councilman Dolan stated that based on what they discussed so far about specific changes, maybe at the next Board Meeting they can discuss it further and allow more input before they set a Public Hearing.

Supervisor Crandall stated that he is not rushing on this and he does not want anything coming into our town that is going to harm the environment or anyone's life.

Local Law – Planning Board

Councilman Dolan stated that at the last meeting he introduced a Public Hearing to change the Planning Board from 5-7 members and it is on the agenda to see if anyone wants to discuss it

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further. He added that February 11th is the date of the Public Hearing at 6:30pm. He then asked if there were any comments, hearing none Supervisor Crandall moved to the next item on the agenda.

Authorization to Hire Municipal Bookkeeper

Supervisor Crandall stated that he would like authorization for Town Clerk Millious to advertise for a Municipal Bookkeeper for the Town.

Councilman Youmans stated that they have committed to not taking action at Workshop Meetings but this requires action and it is not controversial. He then offered a motion.

MOTION

On motion of Councilman Youmans, seconded by Councilman Dolan, authorizing the Supervisor to advertise for a Municipal Bookkeeper in the Ravena News Herald, Albany Times Union and any other place he sees fit.

VOTE – AYES 5 – NAYS 0 – SO MOVED

Councilman Burns questioned whether it would be a Civil Service position.

Councilman Youmans stated that they don't currently have a list, which would make it a whole lot easier if they could call people off the list. He added that they need someone with very specialized knowledge in municipal fund accounting experience and just because someone was a bookkeeper in a business setting does not necessarily qualify them for this position.

Supervisor Crandall interjected that there are certain laws from the State Comptroller, Attorney General and Home Municipal Rule for counties and towns which don't apply to regular business bookkeeping and this is what they need.

Town Clerk Millious stated that the motion authorized him to advertise and then asked if he wanted her to advertise.

Councilman Youmans stated that he would amend the motion to say: authorize the Supervisor to direct the Town Clerk to advertise for the position.

Town Clerk Millious stated that she would have to go over with the Supervisor's Office what the ad should say.

Re-establish Environmental Conservation Board

Councilman Dolan stated that they had on the books an Environmental Conservation Board, which he doesn't think had been filled for many years and added that there are some very specific things that an Environmental Conservation Board can and should do with one main function being to provide technical assistance to the Planning, Zoning and Town Boards. He continued by saying that in addition to an Environmental Conservation Board there is also a Conservation Advisory Council, which can do the same thing with the exception of one thing. He went on by saying that one of the things that an Environmental Conservation Board is responsible for is an inventory of open space in town and offers opinions to Town Boards and other informal boards that are going to act on projects that affect the open space.

Discussion ensued amongst the Town Board and members of the audience, key points were as follows:

- Opinions would be for environmental issues.
- Opinions would be advisory only.
- Article 12 of General Municipal Law spells out Advisory Council, 239Y talks about moving one into a Conservation Board.
- The Environmental Conservation Board was taken away in 2012 and hadn't been filled for several years prior so it was taken off the books.
- An advisory board would complement all of the work that the non-board and other Boards do.

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- Different perspectives amongst the Environmental Conservation Board, Planning or Zoning Board.
- Have all Boards report to the Town Board to give their views and have the Town Board be the ultimate decision maker.
- Town Board having legal authority to make determinations.
- Encouraging the Boards to have open minds when there are differences in opinion.

Establishing a Hamlet Housing Task Force

Councilman Dolan stated that it would probably be more like an Ad-Hoc Committee than a Task Force and the idea behind it is to try and assemble some different groups of people to look at the housing issue in the Hamlet. He added that he doesn't have a grand plan, work has been done but he thinks it suffered because the plan was too grand and little got accomplished along the way and one of his goals is to do something that was recommended to them in fairly quick order. He continued by saying that he was thinking of asking to serve on the committee, someone from the Building Department, someone from the Police Department, Nelson Perry, Director of Beautification, someone from the Neighborhood Association, someone in County Government, and residents of the Town along with Judy Eisgruber from Albany County Rural Housing who has agreed to serve to help them look for grants and offer expertise in looking at some of the Code Enforcement issues in the Hamlet, which impacts the value of housing in the Hamlet. He went on by saying that the idea is not to come down with a heavy fist with people in the Hamlet but to work with them and they would also notify absentee landlords who aren't complying with Building Code and to work gently with homeowners who may need some guidance. He added that police enforcement in the Hamlet can be helpful in housing and in speaking with Nelson earlier in the day; he had some good ideas about sprucing up some of the vacant property, which can only help improve the overall aesthetics of the Hamlet. He continued by saying that periodically the Neighborhood Association over the years has worked with Nelson and the Beautification Department to do clean-ups in the Hamlet and there are some quality of life issues. He went on by saying that they can try to seek some money for homeowners who want to improve their homes maybe looking to do some painting or siding and Mr. Lawler had been helpful over the years with some grants for improvements. He concluded by saying that he would like to bring these people together who are willing to do this and see what ideas they have to generate, they will work on some long term goals but also focus on some things particularly that the Town Board has some sort of control over that can help make a difference.

Discussion ensued amongst the Town Board and audience, key points were as follows:

- Focusing primarily on the Hamlet and leaving a large tract of people out when people in other areas can bring things to the table too that may need some of the same things and reaching out to other people might help them out.
- People from other areas of the Town enjoy the riverfront as much as people who live there.
- Eliminate the word Hamlet and add Town of Coeymans.

Councilman Youmans stated that the Town sold a piece of property to Mr. Laraway and then asked if there was a time limit to tear it down.

Ms. Ross stated that it was 90 days

Councilman Dolan interjected that it has been longer than 90 days

Supervisor Crandall stated that he would speak with the Code Enforcement Officer.

Discussion ensued amongst the Town Board and audience relative to the building, key points discussed were:

- Concern with what will be done to fill in the space.
- Safety concerns with how a building will be torn down and protecting other buildings.
- Discussion with Mr. Laraway relative to taking it down.
- Deterioration of the roadway with water coming down the hill.
- Foundation of the house being below the roadway.

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Beautification Director Perry stated that as a former Deputy Highway Superintendent, before anything can be done with the building, there must be a UFPO by law, all public utilities must be located, there has to be a perimeter set-up, there has to be bales of hay that are staked, there has to be a construction fence set up and there are a lot of things that have to be done before you can take a building down. He continued by saying that you have to take into consideration other buildings, if the building is leaning, water has to be capped and shut off, gas mains have to be located so there is no accidental puncture of a line, State Telephone has 911 lines underground, and there may be fiber optics for people who have computers. He reiterated that a lot of things have to be filed before you can start taking a building down.

Councilman Dolan interjected that he knows that Mr. Laraway has applied for a Demolition Permit to tear it down.

Councilman Youmans stated that he has no doubt that he is planning on doing it right and he is sure that there is insurance coverage for all those kind of things but his main concern is, once the building is gone, what can they as a Board do to facilitate improving it as opposed to just tearing it down.

Mr. Lawler stated that to do things singularly without a plan for the whole Hamlet makes it problematic.

Councilman Youmans suggested that they reach out to Mr. Laraway because he may have a plan that they don't know about and added that he will give him a call and ask him about it. He added that the building has a negative impact now because it is condemned and falling down, so that problem is solved but he doesn't want to further deteriorate the quality of life for the people in the area.

Mr. Lawler interjected that Councilman Dolan's suggestion to have a Housing Task Force makes a lot of sense and this is where that kind of group could get together and look at and in turn make recommendations to the Board.

Supervisor Crandall asked that Councilman Youmans reach out to Mr. Laraway and then offered a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

On motion of Supervisor Crandall, seconded by Councilman Youmans, the Town Board Workshop was adjourned.

VOTE – AYES 4 – NAYS 0 – SO MOVED

Time – 7:15

Respectfully Submitted -

APPROVED –

Diane L. Millious, Town Clerk