

These notes from the Public Information session on Oct. 7, 2010 are for your convenience:

Present: Mike Armstrong, Karen Doyle, Marie Early, Anne Impellizzeri, Marshall Mermell, Anthony Phillips, Catharine Square. Absent: Cathryn Fadde, Michael Reisman

Comments from Oct. 7, 2010 Public Information Meeting:

Q: (Mike Turton, philipstowndotinfo) – Will the Special Board dissolve after the recommendation is made to the Village Board?

A: No, we'll go on to the LWRP. We have received a grant of \$50,000 for LWRP funding which expires Nov. 2011; this is for the first phase of the LWRP.

Q: (James Hartford) – Consolidated services can cause problems; it may require greater oversight. For example, code enforcement consolidation with Carmel can cause local considerations to be lost. Since this is a Cold Spring Village code, we need MORE local participation. The current Building Inspector pays for himself.

A: This is something to be considered. Some Data Base information, such as from the Property Tax rolls, could be consolidated and shared with the Town.

Q: (James Hartford) – We might want to offer these services to other areas to make money.

Q: (Anthony Phillips) – How will written comments be evaluated?

A: The person who submits written comments will need to provide their name and address and their comments will become part of the public record. The Special Board will read the written comments and consider them.

Q: (Anthony Phillips) – We'll have to make sure the writer is a part of the community.

A: We will have to get their phone number and email address for clarification if required.

Q: (Bob Leonard, Consitution Drive) – Lunn Terrace and an access Road will create more traffic, more parking, more Metro-North people, more congestion. I don't want it to become like Beacon where at 5pm you can't get out onto 9D.

A: Yes, it's a challenge. Whenever roads are improved, traffic fills them. There must be careful thought about how it can be managed, with screening to minimize the impact at Forge Gate.

Q: (Bob Leonard) – The Boulevard and Forge Gate and Constitution parking is already building. Garrison is clogged and people Garrison people are parking and commuting from Cold Spring. We don't need more traffic.

Q: (Dick Turner) – Has thought been given to utilizing the Haul Road?

A: Scenic Hudson is working on a plan to use the parking area on the southeast corner. The Haul Road is a difficult road -it has very sharp curves, it is very steep and may not be practical for access but it would be another way in that would bypass Main Street. Traffic in the Marathon area calls out for a solution. There is no slam dunk solution is available. Scenic Hudson was specifically designed for weekend traffic. Very careful traffic analysis is required at different times of day and different days of the week – weekend and weekdays, evenings. What we're trying to do is determine what seems to be the most reasonable approach.

Q: (Bob Leonard) – If Scenic Hudson sees a Lunn Terrace road, they'll use it.

A: (from Anthony Phillips) – The Haul Road was built by the EPA; it was very seldom used by the EPA during the Superfund cleanup. The Village tried to remove it, unsuccessfully. It will never be usable. You have trouble walking it, let alone get a vehicle up it.

Q: (Elliott Hammond) – Testing is still being done at Marathon. Do you know what is going on with it?

A: Michael Reisman is our expert on this topic; he's not here tonight. There are current issues that need to be addressed. They are trying different methods to clean up the plume. It may take 3 or 4 years to get the cleanup done.

Q: (Elliott Hammond) – They were just there 2 weeks ago with markers.

A: Parts of the property are more toxic than others. There may be a piecemeal approach – for example, these 5 acres are generally OK, these 2 acres need cleanup – you put any buildings on them until they're corrected. The Village could get revenue if building is possible on the site.

Q: (Anthony Phillips) – The Village and the DEC are only looking at 20% remediation at New Street.

Q: (Pete Henderson) – What extent, if any, do you expect to be revising the draft plan based on the comments you receive since there is only one weekend between the last Public Hearing and the vote by the Special Board?

A: We want to get the issues on the table.

Q: (Pete Henderson) – I see things that are missing based upon research that I did or that someone else did or are being interpreted differently. I want a chance to make my feelings known and to have them considered seriously before the plan is voted on.

A: After we hear everything, we may modify our thinking. Long periods of time of discussion are not necessarily productive. Deadlines help to focus people on the issues, and clarify them. However, if there is far more than we can consider, we will evaluate a different date.

A: (From Anne Impellizzeri) – We look forward to comments either orally now or written comments.

Q: (Arnie Saari) – There are a lot of very good ideas. There are a lot of big ticket, costly items – the new Lunn Terrace road, the Loop – does the Loop entail bridges?

A: The Loop goes over the Little Stony Point Bridge. We have ideas for other bridges – we looked at a bridge from Dockside to the Village Garage but that was not practical to do. There may be some other access points further along that could be explored - they haven't been well defined but there is a possibility that something along that line could be done. Crossing the railroad tracks is an engineering challenge; the most logical location would be from the Dockside rock because you've got the height. The problem is that there is private property on the other side. An engineering study is called for to determine what's feasible, what makes sense.

Q: (Arnie Saari) – These are tough economic times; this is not a wealthy community.

A: This is a good, big idea. It can be magnetic. Property taxes will not be used to do this; grants are the only way to fund it (bridge or causeway) – federal or state.

Q: (Arnie Saari) – You're missing school taxes; over 60% of the tax bill is for school taxes. You address reducing property taxes. Young families and seniors - these two groups are hurt the most with the tax situation. Don't you think it would be a good idea to include in here a goal of reducing, not just controlling, property taxes?

A: We do not address school taxes directly. The authority of the Village is not the governing body that controls school taxes. There is not much that the Village can do to reduce school taxes. We do have a section on property taxes and address some things that can be done to control Village taxes. This is an important issue, and we take it seriously. Most Comprehensive Plans do not have a section on property taxes; we do. There are far more seniors in the Village of Cold Spring than in Putnam County. There is wide disparity between Garrison's school taxes and those at Haldane. But not something we can address through the village government. The issue of school taxes must be addressed through the agency of the school districts.

Q: (Arnie Saari) – There is unhappiness in the country with the way the government is working in Washinton. November will be a telling point. I would think it would be beneficial to include a goal to address it. There were some great ideas on this in the paper.

A: (from Anne Impellizzeri) – Actually, the Comprehensive Plan does address school taxes in Section 6.3.5 with a liaison to the school system (and then Anne read that section).

At this point, Mr. Saari had spoken for more than the allotted time.

Q: (Matt from Orchard Street) – Do you address composting?

A: We'll go back to see if it is mentioned. (Note from Marie after the meeting – 5.8.8 mentions composting stations at dog walking areas; 5.14.1 talks about locating the Community Garden next to the Community Composting area – but there is no mention of the Composting area.)

Comment from Marshall – Pete, Matt and Arnie, put your comments in writing. If you put them in writing I, as one Board member, will take them under advisement and be very serious in understanding if these pieces are actually in the Comprehensive Plan.

Q: (Bob Leonard) – Scenic Hudson, a bike trail, a walking trail, the park – that's to bring in tourism, I guess –bringing people here to spend money to get sales tax which we don't get?

A: Lots of residents want more access to the river and the RiverWalk idea. The concept was more of a resident thing. Where the tourists came up – there is a problem that the walk that tourists take to the trailhead along Route 9D is dangerous. So the RiverWalk is an attempt to find safe passage, but also give residents something they have told us they want. The RiverWalk idea was very popular at our Spring Forums.

Q: (Bob Leonard) – It seems like an awful lot of money for 2,500 residents, not including tourism. If tourism is included, you included more people.

A: Village money will not be used to construct a RiverWalk. Federal and State money will be obtained. The key is to make it work for the residents, where it's not a problem for the residents, where it's a positive thing for the residents.

Q: (Bob Leonard) – We don't need to go from 5,000 people a month who come to Cold Spring, we'll go to 30,000 people a month.

A: We discussed this a lot on the Board. The goal is not more people. The goal is to have a vital economic community and that means having certain kinds of visitors, visitors who stay overnight and spend money in a certain way. It was their behavior that was important so that it was be non-disruptive, it would be low key, it wouldn't be a lot of volume. Visitors who come in by automobile – that's a problem. We want to encourage visitors who arrive by boat – that's where the boating thing came in; visitors who come in by train. How the Village markets itself is very important, to get the right kind of visitors – those that have a low impact on our infrastructure.

Q: (Robbie Smith) – I am very enthusiastic about the RiverWalk and the Garage site. What contamination is there?

A: (from Anthony Phillips) The Garage site was a garbage dump for the Town of Philipstown for 100 years. You could go down one foot, 18 inches and you'll find contamination. The site would need to be evaluated.

Q: (James Hartford) – I read an article about the Walkway over the Hudson, how it is an economic driver. It is an important example that we can look at. The opportunities are big. It was created from old infrastructure and grant money. It was a big idea which paid off.

Q: (Arnie Saari) – Parking meters are going to bring in \$180,000 per year. Where does that money come from – residents? Or do the studies indicate most of the money is going to come from non-residents?

A: The parking subcommittee looked at what experts say; they did a study. They inventoried the available parking in 3 zones. There are 1,600 on-street spaces and 900 commercial off-street spaces in the village. Cars were counted at 6 different times, both weekdays and weekends. The times were structured to capture commuting patterns, visitor patterns and we constructed a detailed spreadsheet so we have a good idea of the occupancy of the spaces and the use of the spaces. We did a study of the impact of pricing on the demand for parking and heavily referred to "The High Cost of Free Parking". We don't know yet what the precise impact will be, but you set the price to yield the access you want – a vacancy rate of 1 in 7 is what you want and you adjust the price to yield that. The weekday rate may start at \$.50/hour and the weekend rate would be different set at \$1/hour. It is likely that non-residents will provide most of the meter revenue, given the fact more visitors come on weekends. There are 99 spaces on Main Street, and business owners and their employees may take half of them – this is a big problem. What we think would happen if parking were metered, we believe these people would park farther away leaving spaces for non-residents.

Comment from Anne Impellizzeri: Main Street needs to be vibrant for residents, not just visitors; this helps maintain property values. There is a hierarchy of values of different types of development - open space and light industry buildings are most beneficial for tax revenues; residences that produce large families are least beneficial. We are citizens of Philipstown as well – we should pay attention to what is happening there as well.

Q: (Elliott Hammond) – Three story buildings bring in apartments and kids; they cause uneven roof lines; they destroy the character of the Village of Cold Spring.

A: Form-based codes talk to the character of a specific street. So, Morris Avenue has a number of tall houses and that's part of the character of that street. Lower Main Street has some tall buildings so a three story building there would not be weird.

Q: (Elliott Hammond) – Three story buildings change the character, the architecture, the facades.

A: Form-based zoning may be a way to address the issue of building height. Where there are existing tall buildings and allowing more may make sense.

Comment from Anthony Phillips: I am in favor of an influx of young people with children. It's a great thing.

Q: (James Hartford) – The trailer park in Fishkill will affect our school system. How do you accept more people without affecting the infrastructure? That's the challenge. There are illegal apartments in Cold Spring. We need to learn how to balance. How do we accept more people without changing the character of the Village. That's the hard thing.

Q: (Fran Pergamo) – As for private streets – our street is private and we don't get any services. It isn't plowed; we have to bring our garbage pails at the entrance to the street.

A: If the village plowed, if it offered that service, the village could charge and potentially generate more income and the residents get value.

Q: (Rhoda): I agree with Anthony and disagree with others. We need to allow children. Seniors selling their homes and they have no where to go. There is no place now for the kids to play ball.