

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**  
**TOWN BOARD**  
March 13, 2008

The Town Board of the Town of Washington held its regular meeting on Thursday, March 13, 2008, at the Town Hall, Reservoir Drive, Millbrook. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Supervisor Florence Prisco with the following people present: Councilmen Stephen Turletes, Allan Rappleyea, Michael Murphy and Robert Audia, Town Clerk Mary Alex, Highway Superintendent James Brownell, Bookkeeper Laura Hurley, Building Inspector Jack Neubauer, Assessor Jim Tyger, Attorney for the Town John Gifford and Associate Attorney Rebecca Valk.

Also present were Tom Beaumont, CJ Tyger, Michael Hagerty, Trustee Stan Morse, Didi Barrett, Frank Genova, Howard Schuman, David Daniele, Elizabeth, Morgan and Cameron Baravalle, Kate Farrell, Anthony and Eleanor Sloan, Julia Widdowson, Mayor Andrew Ciferri and Steven Fabrizio.

Monthly reports were received from the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Court Clerk, Building Inspector and Zoning Administrator.

Supervisor Prisco opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. She asked for a Moment of Silence in honor of Ken Lilley, a long term employee of the Town Highway Department, a volunteer on the Board of Assessment Review, a man that loved his family dearly, a Veteran and someone that always took an interest in his community. Ken died unexpectedly on March 6<sup>th</sup>. He will be missed by many.

On a motion made by Councilman Murphy and seconded by Councilman Audia the public hearing on Local Law No. 1 of 2008, A Local Law of the Town of Washington, Dutchess County, New York adopting the exemption for Cold War Veterans was opened. All ayes were recorded.

Ms. Valk explained that this exemption would allow for qualified Cold War Veterans to receive an exemption from Real Property Taxes to the extent of 15% of the assessed value of such property: provided that the exemption shall not exceed the lesser of \$12,000 or the product of \$12,000 multiplied by the latest state equalization rate for the town. There were no comments or questions.

In other business, on the recommendation made by the town's insurance carrier, the town established a policy that all external vendor checks greater than \$10,000 require two signatures. Supervisor Prisco asked if the Board would consider raising the amount to \$25,000 for practical reasons. The insurance company does not have any recommendations on amounts; it is a security measure they are suggesting. On a motion made by Councilman Audia and seconded by Councilman Murphy the Board moved to raise the amount to \$25,000 for all external checks requiring two signatures. All ayes were recorded.

Supervisor Prisco advised the Board that Dana Lopergalo, Court Clerk, has been notified that the Town Court's request to the New York State Justice Court Assistance program for upgrades to the Town court room has been approved in the amount of \$16,619. Supervisor Prisco said she is appreciative of Ms. Lopergalo's initiative in securing state funds on behalf of the town.

Supervisor Prisco said that the Town must seek a volunteer for the Board of Assessment Review. Grievance Day is the fourth Tuesday in May and the person will be required to attend a training class. Notice will be given to the Poughkeepsie Journal and the Round Table seeking volunteers.

In regard to the request previously made by Peter Nikic, changing a portion of Daniele Drive to Great Oaks Lane, the request has been withdrawn as not all neighbors were in agreement. Mayor Ciferri advised that the Village will be placing additional signage on Nine Partners Lane for Daniele Drive and Daniele Lane.

Supervisor Prisco said that she was to tour the county infirmary site with Legislator Fettes, however the site manager cancelled. The construction work is supposed to be completed the end of May. Supv. Prisco did not have information on when staffing might occur.

Building Inspector Jack Neubauer presented the Board with information for Building Department software from Business Automation Systems (BAS). Price wise the system is comparable with other software systems, however the BAS program is the easiest to use and has the best support. Currently there is \$5,500.00 in the budget for the software; the cost for the program is \$7,320.00. The cost may be spread across two years. The benefit of the system is that all records forward will be tracked. It has the ability to do municipal searches, track violations, inspections and photographs. It would also be linked to the Assessor's office eliminating the duplication of entry work by the clerks. It would be helpful to the Assessor while completing road reviews, as it ensures that up to date information will be included. After a brief discussion, the Board requested that Mr. Neubauer contact BAS and see if there is any negotiation of the price.

Assessor Tyger was present to provide an update to the Board on the annual update of properties. By participating in the state program the town is required to keep the properties at 100% and visit 1/5 of the properties each year. He has been ensuring that values are in line by neighborhoods and following up on resident requests. Some properties require a walk thru and others might be a quick site visit. Some values have been adjusted down and others have gone up. Building permits also generates a property review.

Mr. Tyger indicated that last year there was an average increase of 3 %. This year most adjustments will remain at the same level as last year. The analysis is showing that sales are pretty flat. One of the things to remember is that the sales period that is being used is July 2006 – July 2007. He said that all properties will be visited within the 5 year period. Not all properties will be entered; some will just be a site visit. Mrs. Barrett

asked if this includes the village. Yes, Mr. Tyger is the sole assessor for both communities.

Mrs. Hurley presented the Board with the bank balances through Feb. 29, as well as the revenue and expense reports. Tax revenue is at 100% bringing the total town revenue to 63%. She noted that Dutchess County has been raising flags about the reduction in Mortgage tax revenue. To date the Town has 32 % more in anticipated revenue for mortgage tax, but it will be monitored closely. Mrs. Hurley advised that the Village expects to have a budget meeting with the fire company and rescue squad in early April.

Supervisor Prisco said that the Poughkeepsie Journal has been working on a comparison of salaries of elected officials. The reporter called to inform her that she is the lowest paid Town supervisor in the region, and will be featured in the article.

Mayor Ciferri said he appreciated the communication between the two boards. He wanted to thank the highway department for their assistance over the weekend during the heavy periods of rain. The fire department has been busy on pump detail, assisting residents with removing water from their basements.

Michael Hagerty said that he was pleased to join Supervisor Prisco in Albany when the announcement was made that the Town of Washington had received \$10,000.00 from the Greenway Compact towards the update of the Comprehensive Master Plan. He enjoyed working on the grant for the Master Plan Committee, and believes that he will be able to assist the town in securing additional funds for the Master Plan Update and other projects. He talked about funding opportunities through the Environmental Protection Agency, Dutchess County Open Space Institute and ongoing grants from NYS Ag and Markets and NYS Parks and Preservation for the park expansion. Supervisor Prisco invited Mr. Haggerty to put forth a proposal to the town for additional services. She added that at this time the Town will gratefully accept any donations that people might wish to give towards the park expansion.

Supervisor Prisco said that Anthony Sloan had asked to be able to address the Board. Mr. Sloan read the following statement into the record.

**“STATEMENT OF ANTHONY SLOAN TO THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON  
BOARD  
March 13, 2008**

Good Evening. I am Anthony Sloan. I am a resident of the Village of Millbrook. I am here to discuss “growing pains.” Ours. Let me begin by reading several excerpts from a story of the September 12 *Journal News*:

“It was just five years ago that Putnam County – with its rural charm and large, inexpensive houses -- was seen as a sanctuary from Westchester’s rising taxes and home prices.

Those were the days.”

The article then goes on to detail the rising housing costs and property taxes. Near the end, the piece turns to the remarks of Putnam County Executive Robert Bondi. I again quote from that Journal News article:

“Bondi said Putnam’s population growth, and transformation from an agrarian county into a suburban one, has created a greater demand for services. Higher taxes are necessary to pay for expanded services, including police, emergency operations and facilities to care for an aging population.”

Bondi went on to say, “The number one change that is going on in the county is the growth. We’re trying very hard to move this county along and to make sure we have all the infrastructure in place.”

For Bondi, that meant at the time of the article planning for a 31 percent increase in the county tax alone. And all this is coming from a county executive with a background that includes a Ph.D in corporate finance and economics. It’s a safe bet he knows what he’s talking about.

But there’s more. Let’s jump to February 29. That’s when New York DOT held a transportation goals and needs forum in Poughkeepsie. Executive Deputy Commissioner Stan Gee described the \$100 billion shortfall his department faces. Not good if you are trying to cope with crumbling infrastructure as New York DOT must. Make no mistake about it: DOT’s fiscal dilemma will surely affect us.

And if you are still not persuaded that growth comes at high costs, you should have heard a lower Westchester County official at that DOT forum saying that developers should pay more of the transportation costs. Sounded to me like a plea for impact fees.

So much for growth reducing the impact of public costs on taxpayers.

To the contrary, this is not the time or circumstances for plans emphasizing growth, especially growth dependent on the car. Not with oil reaching, even if briefly, \$110 a barrel as it did yesterday.

My recent emails to you, the Town Board, as well as the Village Board of Trustees and your Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, also make this point. My February 8 (resent February 13) email provides information from *The Wall Street Journal*, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the *Atlantic*, focusing, as you recall, on such issues as planning for driving less and the possibility of McMansions becoming our next slums. My March 3 email advises you of the page-one *Wall Street Journal* story, “Americans Start to Curb Their Thirst for Gasoline.” That email also includes a brief summary and news-article link regarding the New York DOT forum in Poughkeepsie.

So here we have diverse and highly respected sources saying that change is both needed and coming in how we live and travel.

Yet, we are aware of the interest your chairs of the update committee appear to have in developing what they refer to as “hamlets” in the Town. Is that why, at the last update workshop, not one word was said about my February email submission and that email and its attachments not distributed?

Remember, we the public may not speak at these meetings, and now the chairs of this committee are apparently acting as informational gatekeepers on written and email submissions as well.

It would seem in keeping with all the material I emailed you that your planning effort should include a low “vehicles-miles traveled” (reduced driving) scenario. Yet I do not see that happening.

What do your chairs know that leaders in this field fail to grasp? Do they realize the grave risks their apparent growth-oriented direction could pose?

Imagine the possible impact on the Village business district if competing stores develop in the Town. Look at the attachment, “Selected Retail Thresholds: The General Idea.” It shows the number of people to support certain types of retailers. Now if it takes, for example, roughly 6,000 people to support a drug store and that’s about our combined Village-Town population, then one more drug store, especially if it is in the CVS mode, is going to pose a serious threat to Vincent’s in the Village. Do you want that? Do our citizens want that?

Are we talking about a growth agenda more ambitious than any of us realize?

At that workshop, there was discussion of the Village and Town embracing each other in their respective comprehensive planning efforts. For that reason, I am providing the Village Board of Trustees copies of this statement.

I close by asking you to direct that all the information I have submitted, including this statement, gets to each member of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee immediately. I also ask that you, as the Board, talk with this committee about holding open public workshops to discuss all this material and its implications for our community.

Let us not find ourselves in five short years from now, looking back regretfully as many now must in Putnam County. You recall that line I read from the Journal News:

“Those were the days.”  
Thank you.”

As there were no comments from the public on Local Law No. 1 of the Year 2008, on a motion made by Councilman Rappleyea and seconded by Councilman Murphy, the Public Hearing on the Cold War Veterans exemption was closed. All ayes were recorded.

Ms. Valk advised that the proposed local law is a Type 2 action and does not require SEQ. R.

Councilman Rappleyea, seconded by Councilman Audia, introduced the following proposed local law, to be known as Local Law No. 1 of 2008, entitled a LOCAL LAW OF THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON, DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK ADOPTING THE EXEMPTION FOR COLD WAR VETERANS.

BE IT ENACTED by the Town Board of the Town of Washington as follows:

Section 1. The Town of Washington Town Board hereby adopts the exemption for Cold War Veterans to read in its entirety as follows:

#### EXEMPTION FOR COLD WAR VETERANS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this article is to adopt the Exemption for Cold War Veterans allowable pursuant to S 458 – b of the Real Property Tax Law.

2. Statutory authorization: exemption

Pursuant to the provisions of Subdivision (2) (a) and (2) (b) of S 458 – b of the Real Property Tax law of the State of New York, the Cold War Veterans exemption from real property taxes allowable pursuant to S 458-b of the Real Property Tax Law is established as follows:

A. Qualifying residential real property shall be exempt from taxation to the extent of 15% of the assessed value of such property: provided, however, that such exemption shall not exceed the lesser of \$12,000 multiplied by the latest state equalization rate for the Town of Washington.

B. In addition to the exemptions provided by Subsection A of this section, where the Cold War veteran received a compensation rating from the United States Veterans Affairs or from the United States Department of Defense because of a service-connected disability, qualifying residential real property shall be exempt from taxation to the extent of the product of the Cold War veteran's disability rating; provided, however, that such exemption shall not exceed the lesser of \$40,000 or the product of \$40,000 multiplied by the latest state equalization rate for the Town of Washington.

Section 2. This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing with this state's Secretary of State.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk shall file a certified original of this local law in the office of the Town Clerk and one (1) certified copy in the Office of the Secretary of State, State of New York, such certified copy to have attached thereto a certificate executed by the attorney for the Town of Washington that it contains the correct text and that all proper proceedings have been had or taken for the enactment of this local law.

The foregoing resolution was duly to put to a vote which resulted as follows:

Supervisor Prisco	Aye
Councilman Turletes	Aye
Councilman Rappleyea	Aye
Councilman Murphy	Aye
Councilman Audia	Aye

This resolution was duly adopted.

On a motion made by Councilman Rappleyea and seconded by Councilman Turletes the meetings of February 7, 2008 and January 14, 2008 were accepted as presented. All ayes were recorded.

Councilman Murphy reported that the Wetlands Committee has held a workshop meeting, which was attended by Dr. Michael Klemens. It was a very informative session. Dr. Klemens said that with his permission, the town can use his copyrighted material. The next meeting will focus on the administrative portion of the law.

Councilman Audia advised that he believed that the Master Plan Committee was moving along well. He said that there are some people who are worried that they are not being heard. Everyone will have an opportunity to speak when they begin holding Public Hearings. Mrs. Barrett said she is supposed to be on the Cultural Affairs committee, but she hasn't heard from Chairman Baker. Mr. Audia will follow up on that. Mr. Genova said that the Natural Resources Committee is on target. Mr. Schuman advised that the Open Space committee has been meeting, as well as doing individual research. He thanked Mrs. Hurley for her assistance in providing data to his committee. Mr. Audia said a sub-committee is working on an RFP for a professional consultant to assist the Master Plan Committee.

Mr. Schuman expressed concern about the development of Hamlets as part of the Master Plan update. Councilman Rappleyea said that Mr. Sloan talked earlier about Hamlet development. It is too bad Mr. Sloan left. Councilman Rappleyea said that the town isn't looking to develop hamlets, when there are vacant storefronts in the village. He expressed concern about the perception of the difficulty of doing business in the village. Trustee Hurley said that the Village has heard the concerns of the business people and are making efforts to address their issues. Mayor Ciferri added that the Village Board is meeting with the Planning Board and ZBA to streamline some of the concerns that have been brought forward. Councilman Audia said he attended the

Village meeting that was well attended by many of the local business people. He felt it was a productive meeting.

Mr. Genova said that the Town Master Plan is a blue print for the community. This is the structure for the next twenty years.

Trustee Morse advised that the Village Board will be having 3 meetings to provide information and gather information from the residents on their concerns. The meeting dates are April 2, May 1 and June 2, to respectively discuss water and sewer, general information and the Comprehensive Plan mission statement.

Resident Steve Fabrizio asked the Board if they would consider a reduced permit rate for the transfer station. The permits expire on June 30, so he wouldn't get the privilege of using the facility for the full year. After a brief discussion, the Board did not honor his request, as other people have been in the same situation and have paid the full rate.

Supervisor Prisco reminded the Board that there is a special meeting on March 31<sup>st</sup>, at 7:00 PM, to discuss the parkland expansion.

On a motion made by Councilman Rappleyea and seconded by Councilman Murphy the following claims were accepted as presented:

General Fund A	\$57,803.23	
General Fund B	\$1,433.86	
Youth Rec Fund	\$7,100.14	
Highway Fund DB	\$72,151.70	
Other Funds TA	\$1,751.50	(Planning Board Escrow)

There being no other business, on a motion made by Councilman Murphy and seconded by Councilman Rappleyea, the meeting was closed at 10:30 PM. All ayes were recorded.

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Mary Alex, Town Clerk

