

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
TOWN BOARD
April 12, 2007

The Town Board of the Town of Washington held its regular meeting on Thursday, April 12, 2007, at the Town Hall, Reservoir Drive, Millbrook. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Supervisor Florence Prisco with the following present: Councilmen Stephen Turletes, Allan Rappleyea and Robert Audia, Town Clerk Mary Alex, Highway Superintendent James Brownell, Attorney for the Town John Gifford, Bookkeeper to the Supervisor Laura Hurley, Recreation Director Warren McMillan and Assessor W. James Tyger. Councilman Murphy was absent due to illness.

Also present were: Dutchess County Legislator Margaret Fettes, Village of Millbrook Mayor Andrew Ciferri, Village Trustee Stan Morse, Rebecca Thornton of the Dutchess Land Conservancy, Howard Schuman, Art Collings, Frank Genova, Mitch Trinkka, Louis M. Prisco, Harry Baldwin, Tim Marshall, Jerry Baker and David Greenwood.

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

Supervisor Prisco opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Prisco congratulated Mayor Ciferri and Trustee Morse on their recent election to office and welcomed them to the Town Board meeting. Mayor Ciferri thanked the Board for their kindness on seeing them on short notice, and said that he hopes to have continued open communication and dialogue between the two boards. His purpose this evening was to advise the Town Board of the proposed increase in the fire and rescue lines in the Village budget which has a direct impact on Town tax payers. The Board has been aware of potential cost increases due to the paid rescue services provided to the community by Alamo. The Rescue Committee suggested that the Village Board put a minimum of \$150,000.00 in the upcoming budget to cover the increased fee. Mayor Ciferri said that in the past, as a Trustee he thought that a 0% tax increase was best for the community. He now sees that taxes have to be increased regularly or the Village will face substantial increases in the future. Mrs. Hurley said that the proposed Fire and Rescue portion of the Village budget is \$514,000.00. The town share for 2006 was \$226,000.00 and will be increased to \$414,000. The Board appreciated that Mayor Ciferri brought the information forward to the Town.

Mayor Ciferri advised the Town that the Village has a Cablevision system to air their Board meetings as well provide community messages. The town can place messages on that site if they wish.

Rebecca Thornton of the Dutchess Land Conservancy appeared before the Town Board to discuss a proposal to purchase Development Rights as a way to preserve open space within the Town. Along with Ms. Thornton was Harry Baldwin, Chairman of the Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board of Dutchess County, Margaret Fettes, DC Legislator and Board member on the Farmland Protection Board, Art Collings, Farmland Protection Board member and Tim Marshall, property owner.

Ms. Thornton presented each Board member with a folder outlining the specific proposal relating to Bos Haven Farm. Ms. Thornton said that the Dutchess land Conservancy was

established in 1985, with its goal to preserve land in Dutchess County. Over 25,000 acres of land in Dutchess County has been protected by the cooperation of land owners. There are conservation easements that are in perpetuity and another means of preserving land is through the purchase of development rights by a conservation easement.

New York State has initiated a program for the state to purchase development rights. They will fund up to 75% of the value. Dutchess County had been donating up to 25% of the land value; however they now would like the local municipalities to partner with the County to provide some of the money for the project. Donating a conservation easement has not been financially viable for farmers, and the purchase of development rights is a more palatable option. A farmer submits an application to the Dutchess County Farmland Protection Bureau, and the top ranked applications are sent to Albany for a competitive review. The state program is highly competitive, and it is an honor for Bos Haven Farm to have been chosen. Bos Haven Farm is 335 acres, and they are looking to sell the development rights on 270 acres, with a portion being in the Town of Washington and a portion in Union Vale.

Ms. Thornton explained that the County program is evolving. Dutchess County now has two requirements: 1. the town is required to put forth a portion of the funding, and 2. the property must be in a Greenway community. Now that the Town of Washington is a member of the Greenway Compact, Mr. Marshall can request that his application be moved forward.

Ms. Thornton said that while there is no definitive way to calculate what money the town must put in she is suggesting the following:

Project size:	270 Acres
T/O Union Vale (2/3)	180 Acres
T/O Washington (1/3)	90 Acres

Project Cost:	\$1,821,250.
NYS Grant	\$1,221,250.
Required Local Match	\$ 600,000.

Local Match Details

County Match Request (Pending, TBD)	\$365,000 - \$340,000
In Kind Contribution (DLC)	\$ 25,000.
Town Match (Washington & Union Vale)	\$210,000 - \$235,000
Local Match Request (Union Vale 2/3)	\$140,000 - \$155,000
Local Match Request (Washington 1/3)	\$ 70,000 - \$ 80,000

Ms. Thornton said that to date eight towns have provided matching funds, and the Town of Beekman has enacted an Open Space Bond. Harry Baldwin said that the Farmland Board is excited about this project. The state has particular criteria including development pressure, core area farmlands and specific soil qualities. Mr. Baldwin urged the Town Board to fund this project. Legislator Fettes said that the property does not come off of the tax roll, they still pay taxes.

Councilman Audia asked will the conservancy stand up forever. What is to stop someone from saying I will give back all of the money received for this project, in order to make more money developing the land. Ms. Thornton said that Dutchess County becomes the legal enforcing partner. If the DLC ceases to exist the State Attorney General can step in. Councilman Audia asked what is allowed to be done with the land. Ms. Thornton said that the property can be sold as a farm. The state is specific that it ensures that agriculture can continue. Barns or

structures for an agricultural farming venture would be allowed. Councilman Rappleyea said he would like the town to be conferred some rights for enforcement.

Mrs. Hurley asked can a town enter into a purchase agreement without a referendum. Also if a town has multiple competing applicants how does that work for the town. Ms. Thornton said that the state does not have a lot of money for this endeavor, so she doesn't see it as a competitive project. The Town of Red Hook has issued a 3.5 million dollar bond to match farmland protection projects. The Town of Dover used \$200,000. for the Old Stone Church project and did not go to referendum.

The next step for the Bos Haven Farm project is to submit the application to Dutchess County. The Town must make a financial commit in writing by July 31, 2007, in order for the application to be considered by Dutchess County. Payment from the town must be completed by October, 2008.

Mr. Marshall said he had a 13 lot subdivision outlay done for the property. He doesn't want to do that. Supervisor Hitsman has told Ms. Thornton that she thought this was a worthwhile project.

Councilman Turletes said that this might be a short sited question, but asked what would happen if the town didn't play into the plan. Ms. Thornton said that the state doesn't care where the match comes from. She doesn't know what will happen if the town doesn't fund the whole portion.

Mr. Genova said that he is in favor of this project. This is prime agriculture soils and from a conservation standpoint it is a worthwhile project.

Mr. Tyger asked can they stop farming the land after the transaction is completed. Ms. Thornton replied that it is about the land, not the farm. The state looks at the long term viability as a farm and makes its decision based on the protection of the land for farm production.

Supervisor Prisco thanked Ms. Thornton for the presentation. The Board will review the information presented to them, and contact Ms. Thornton if they have any questions.

Legislator Fettes said that earlier that day she attended the Open House for the new Church Alliance apartments on Alden Place. It is a beautiful facility, and already the waiting list is growing. This shows the need for more senior housing in Dutchess County.

Supervisor Prisco said that there is an Emergency Response Planning meeting on April 25th in the Town of Amenia. Supv. Prisco has been attending these meetings with former Mayor Briggs. The meetings have been very educational.

Mrs. Hurley presented the Town Board with the Bookkeepers Report. The first quarter has been completed. The funds from tax collection have been fully received, and penalty money will be fully received in June. The town has received 66% of revenues anticipated for the year, and the expense side is going smoothly.

Supervisor Prisco said that a zoning update meeting was held on Monday. The next meeting is scheduled for April 30th at 7:00 PM.

Regarding the parkland development, Supervisor Prisco asked that Councilmen Rappleyea and Murphy begin walking the property and putting thoughts together.

Recreation Director McMillan notified the Board that after the last meeting when he reported all was well at the Town Pool, he received a letter from the Dutchess County Health Department that their engineer had some concerns regarding circulation in 2006. The Town Engineer wrote a letter in response to her concerns and the town has received a new letter stating that the Health Department is allowing the pool to open and that circulation is not an issue at this time.

Mr. McMillan said that he is looking into getting an aerator for the non-swimming area of the pool. It would make it a healthier water environment. The cost is about \$1,200.00 for the unit and \$800.00 for the required electric installation. The Board asked that he provide them with information on the cost of operating the unit.

In other recreation business, Mr. McMillan reported that Carolyn Wilk has resigned from the Recreation Commission. She is a very energetic woman, whose efforts have increased the youth soccer program, and she will be greatly missed. The Recreation Commission is seeking a replacement for Mrs. Wilk.

Mr. Prisco commended the Recreation Department for the flashlight Easter Egg hunt. It was incredible to see all of the children running around with flashlights. Mr. McMillan said there were between 125 and 150 children participating.

Registration is still open for summer camp programs. The Board will see vouchers for refunds to several families. They are for youth softball and baseball programs that did not have enough participants, and summer lacrosse camp that the town couldn't get an instructor for.

Trustee Morse said that he was impressed to see 12 -15 children recently in the village hall playing chess under the guidance of Mr. McMillan. He was glad to see the program being offered.

Mr. Genova asked who he should speak with about extending the village watershed boundary. Mayor Ciferri suggested he speak with the Village.

Supervisor Prisco thanked Jim Brownell, Ed Wheeler and Tom Coy for the recent renovation of the handicap ramp. The wood has all been replaced, and a center joist was added.

Highway Superintendent Brownell said that he has had some ongoing computer problems. The Town consultant advised him it was time to purchase a new computer. The cost with shipping is about \$1,000.00 through the NYS contract. On a motion made by Councilman Rappleyea and seconded by Councilman Turletes the Board approved the purchase of a new computer for the Highway Superintendent, at a cost of \$1,000.00. All ayes were recorded.

Supv. Prisco said that Councilman Audia has replaced Councilman MacDonald as the liaison for building projects. She asked that he contact Mike Kohut regarding the painting of the fire escape. Also Councilman MacDonald had started to look at the painting or siding of the soffets and window trim on the town hall. Another problem area appears to be the portico by the front door. Water is dripping down through the bricks and ceiling. Councilman Audia said he would touch base with Councilman MacDonald and then move forward on these projects.

Mr. Baker said that there is an application before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a temporary tower at the IES. He asked if there is a definition for “temporary.” Supv. Prisco said they could discuss this at the April 30 meeting.

David Greenwood asked that he would like to be on the agenda each month to give the Historian’s Report. At this time, he is working on a brochure for the history of the Town Hall.

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

General Fund A	\$76,651.26
General Fund B	\$1,473.68
Fund DA	\$480.00
Highway Fund DB	\$79,754.92
SF Fund	\$226,819.00
T Fund	\$1,925.00

All ayes were recorded.

There being no other business, on a motion made by Councilman Rappleyea and seconded by Councilman Turletes, the meeting was closed at 10:00 PM. All ayes were recorded.

Mary Alex, Town Clerk