

INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF PIERMONT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
November 10, 2009

Present: Mayor Christopher Sanders, Deputy Mayor Mark Blomquist, Trustees Joan Gussow, Audie Moran, Fred Devan, Walter Sevastian, Esq.-Village Attorney, Denise Ehrhart-Village Clerk-Treasurer

Mayor Sanders asked everyone to join the Board in a moment of silence in honor of those that lost their lives at Fort Hood as well as in recognition of the many veterans that have served our country.

Mayor Sanders called the meeting to order and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment:

Bob Samuels asked the Board about the possibility of installing speed bumps on the Pier to reduce the speeding. The Mayor said that this has come up often and that they are not legal. The Village Attorney clarified that they are not approved devices by the NYS DOT and there may be liability if there they are installed and there is an incident.

The Mayor asked if there is any difference that this is a park road and Mr. Sevastian said that a roadway in a park must also be maintained in the proper manner.

Trustee Blomquist was agreeable to looking into this request.

Trustee Moran said she has always thought they were good idea and the Village should try them.

Trustee Devan would like to speak with the Police Chief who is in charge of enforcement of speed laws. He added that enforcement on So. Piermont Avenue and Ferdon brought down the speeding.

Trustee Gussow said that the Board can speak with Chief O'Shea before he returns since the Board was told to call him if needed. She thinks speed bumps are OK.

Mayor Sanders asked Tom Temple to look into the issue in the meantime. Mr. Temple commented that humps, bumps or speed tables are needed in a series to slow down traffic. They can be asphalt, but most are portable devices. The temporary devices are better since they can be removed for plowing where asphalt is permanent. The Board also needs to consider emergency vehicles.

The Board will readdress this issue on December 15, 2009.

Ivan Szendro asked for more information on the Village's feelings about his proposal for a mythological festival. He is ready to start collecting personal legends from people who came to Piermont and does not want residents to consider these inquiries as personal. Ivan is looking for Village endorsement.

Trustee Gussow said she would be uneasy endorsing someone to perform in the streets and that this could set a precedent.

Mayor Sanders commented that he can't endorse the activities without knowledge of the events. This will be placed on the agenda and reconsidered on November 17, 2009.

Charlie Schaub, Building Inspector, recommended extending Rick Oliver's employment as P/T because of all of the benefits the Building Department gains from his experience and knowledge.

Trustee Devan would like to extend Mr. Oliver's status as temporary to the end of the Fiscal year. Trustees Gussow, Blomquist and Moran agree.

Trustee Devan made a motion to extend Rick Oliver as Temporary Part-time Building Inspector through May 31, 2010. The motion was seconded by Trustee Moran. Upon vote the motion carried.

Elyse Knight said she was concerned with the \$1.5 million listing of the Onderdonk House. The building is in very poor condition and she would like to see it salvaged and sold or used for historic purposes. She said that in the code the Village could prevent demolition. The house is on the national historic register. Ms. Knight would like the Board and the attorney to look into what could be done, for instance, a moratorium.

Charlie Schaub advised that the Village has no file on this property but that the County has an extensive file that they will be sending to the Piermont Building Dept.

The Mayor said that this Board and previous Boards want to see these historic buildings preserved, the challenge is what can be done to preserve private property. Also, there is a big difference in a property being "registered" and being a "landmark".

Trustee Blomquist is a member of the Nation Trust for Historic Preservation and could investigate getting money to at least repair the roof. He said he would be happy to take the lead in an effort to attempt to stop the deterioration. Trustee Blomquist will get details about who can apply for the grant.

Walter Sevastian said that the property owner has to come to the Village and ask for the historic designation.

Marge Guenther of the Piermont Historic Society said that they have a representative from Albany coming in January to again explain the Historic Preservation District. The Society would like to prevent destruction of the building and asked if the Village could adopt a moratorium on demolition.

The Mayor believes the Board would be agreeable to reopen the historic preservation district issue but in the meantime should consider a moratorium on demolition.

Mr. Sevastian stated that this would be zoning legislation but if it is declared an emergency, the Board could look at a temporary moratorium but should not target one piece of property. He will research further and discuss again on November 17, 2009.

Richie Stark thanked everyone for coming and said it was nice to see people at a board meeting. He asked if local law information in electronic form could be given to him before meetings. He also would like a list of department heads, their phone numbers and email addresses.

Frank Margini, owner of the post office building again asked about the flooding on Bridge Street and said that the valve is not working. He also mentioned the old fence that was removed and the two concrete blocks that were left behind. There is no curb cut to get to the back of the building; a tree was taken down and the stump was left; there is an oak tree with dead branches that needs trimming; Norwood has completed and Northvale to going to begin dredging the creek and he wondered how this affects Piermont.

The Mayor asked Mr. Margini for an itemized list that could be forwarded to the Village Engineer.

Trustee Moran made a motion to open a Public Hearing on a Local Law with reference to animals. The motion was seconded by Trustee Blomquist and upon vote the Public Hearing was opened.

The Village Attorney explained that the current local law only regulates dogs. This proposed section would add domestic animals to the code with regard to trespassing onto other people's property and to also add other animals (goats, chickens, roosters). It also proposes to raise the fine from \$25 to an amount up to \$500. The Board needs to declare this as a Type II action under SEQRA.

Greg McKillop supports this legislation since it gives everyone a tool to use if needed.

Carol Cameron said that she feels this would be impossible to enforce.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Trustee Devan seconded the motion and upon vote the hearing was closed.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to declare the proposed Local Law regarding animals a Type II action under SEQRA and to adopt as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee Devan. Upon vote the motion carried.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to open a public hearing on a Local Law to provide for the Codification of the Local Laws and resolution of the Village of Piermont into the Code of the Village of Piermont. The motion was seconded by Trustee Devan and upon vote the Public Hearing was opened.

No Board or public comments were made.

Trustee Moran made a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Trustee Blomquist and upon vote the motion carried.

Trustee Devan made a motion to adopt a Local Law to provide for the Codification of the Local Laws, Ordinances and certain resolution of the Village of Piermont into a Municipal Code to be designated the "Code of the Village of Piermont". The motion was seconded by Trustee Moran and upon vote the motion carried.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to open a public hearing on the proposed 2010 Assessments. The motion was seconded by Trustee Devan and upon vote the motion carried.

Mike Miller said that the Board and Brian Kenny had said the Village was already assessed at 100%. The new numbers show the Landing being left flat and asked if the reductions only affect private homes. He further stated that the condos would bear the burden of a tax increase because their assessments were not being reduced.

The Mayor commented that those whose evaluations are not changing will be shouldering the burden is correct, but the condos on the landing are not the only properties being left flat.

Brian Kenney said he is concerned with Market Value not taxes. The market is constantly changing and the law says he must chose a day and make that the value. He added that there is plenty of opportunity for owners to grieve. Where an assessment did not change the value was already correct. Mr. Kenny will continue to update the lists following informal hearings and/or grievances. Notices will be sent out showing what homeowners paid in 2009 and what they would have paid if the new numbers were in effect.

The Board will schedule appointments for informal hearings with residents to be held in December.

Trustee Devan stated that during the 15 minute appointments, residents can bring appraisals or any documents that would show values on their property.

Brian Kenny will provide a link to New York State Office of Real Property Services to Richie Stark who will post it online.

Trustee Moran made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the 2010 Assessments. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow and upon vote the motion carried.

Previously, the Board had discussed hiring a DPW employee at \$14/hr. part-time to the end of the year and then going full time June 1, 2010. Tom Temple would like to get something in writing. Trustee Blomquist could get something together in a week.

Trustee Devan said that this has been urgent for some time and he feels the Board should authorize Tom Temple to hire help. The new employee could be hired as a seasonal worker and then be changed to permanent June 1, 2009.

Trustee Gussow made a motion to authorize the Village Clerk to submit the Return of Unpaid Taxes in the amount of \$134,101.03 to the Rockland County Finance Department. The motion was seconded by Trustee Moran. Upon vote the motion carried.

A review of the membership of the Parks Commission will be tabled to the November 17, 2009 meeting.

Year-to-date Revenues and Expenses will be moved to the December 1, 2009 meeting and will include numbers through November 30, 2009.

Trustee Moran made a motion to approve the minutes of October 20, 2009. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow. Upon vote the minutes were approved with Trustee Devan abstaining due to his absence.

Trustee Devan made a motion to approve the Warrant in the amount of \$46,639.69. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow and upon vote the warrant was approved.

The Village Attorney will schedule a meeting with the Community Playgroup for Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 6:15 p.m. and will be discussed that evening at the Board meeting.

The Mayor advised those present that the Village has received the signed contract from New York State for the Municipal Parking Lot Grant. The first 25% check in the amount of \$56,250 has been received. The Board will discuss further at the November 17, 2009 meeting.

The Mayor reported that Charlie Schaub and Rick Oliver reviewed all restaurants and their parking requirements. It was determined that the Sidewalk Bistro had sufficient of parking with the spaces at Gerhardt's. The Harbour House has enough parking in front, back and in the triangle area. Frank Comito may have enough parking available on the Plasterfold property. A contract will be needed before Mr. Comito goes before the Zoning Board for approval of the proposed Pizzeria.

The PAL insurance issue will be discussed on December 15, 2009 when the Police Chief will be available.

Trustee Devan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gussow and upon vote the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.