

Huntington Hills, Inc.
Minutes of 2008 Annual Meeting
November 12, 2008
Irondequoit Town Hall

27 households present

Call to order

President Don Becker called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m., welcomed all present and asked attendees to introduce themselves by name and street. Don noted the presence of Marty Piecuch, Commissioner of Public Works and Highway Superintendent and the anticipated arrival of Town Supervisor Mary Ellen Heyman, both of whom were scheduled to address the meeting. Among neighbors attending the meeting were Hilmar Schellenberg (475 Hoffman) and Greg and Jennifer Hofmann (440 Hoffman) who moved to Huntington Hills in the past few months.

Approval of the 2007 Annual Meeting Minutes

Steve Wilde made a motion to forgo the reading of the minutes (which had been sent to the members in the pre-meeting mailing) and approve the minutes as written. Dick Sehlin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Monica Simpson presented the Statement of Financial Activity for the preceding year, followed by the proposed budgets for 2009 and 2010.

Ms. Simpson noted that the association made no outright payment to New York State for Corporation taxes for the 2007 tax year due to the fact that we had made an overpayment for the previous tax year and so had a "credit" with the State which covered the \$21 amount due for 2007. This leaves a balance of \$2 owed to us by the State.

Ms. Simpson announced that the association's current bank balance is \$4,413.

Ms. Simpson presented the proposed budget for 2009, which includes a one-year assessment of \$55 per household (\$27.50 for the one undeveloped house lot.) This assessment, which will bring in \$3,437, will enable the association to cover the anticipated \$3,370 of expenses in 2009, while also maintaining a surplus approximately equal to one year's expenses as a cushion against unanticipated costs. According to this proposed budget, we will come to the end of 2009 with a balance of \$4,120. With anticipated expenses of \$3,927 in 2010, the board recommends an assessment for 2010, the amount of which to be presented at next year's annual meeting. (Without an assessment in 2010, our bank balance at the end of that year is estimated at \$193.)

With regard to current unpaid assessments, Ms. Simpson reported that one '06/'07 assessment has not been paid, one '08/'09 assessment remains outstanding, and 2 households have paid 50% of the '08/'09 assessment. The total of the unpaid assessments is \$200. In none of these cases is the amount owed equal to the cost of pursuing payment through legal channels. These members have been notified repeatedly of their debt; some have made partial payments and in doing so have demonstrated their willingness to meet their responsibilities. Two households have not responded to any of the notices we have sent.

In reviewing the 2009 proposed budget, Ms. Simpson noted that the cost for liability insurance will increase from approximately \$540 to \$1,500 in order to secure Board and Officers liability coverage, which we currently

do not carry. Jeanne Colombo explained that the insurance we currently carry is a General Liability policy (“trip and fall insurance”), which protects the association against claims involving accidents and injury on the commons. Board and Officers liability coverage protects board members in the event of a lawsuit against Huntington Hills, Inc. and covers acts or mistakes of boards of directors. Jeanne explained that this type of coverage is standard for boards of directors.

Sue Rodgers asked if it might be possible to find a lower cost Board and Officers policy. Ms. Simpson explained that only one estimate had been obtained, from our current insurance agent. Mr. Becker said that the board will seek additional quotes in order to secure the lowest-cost policy possible. Sue recommended an insurance company (First Niagara) that she had found to offer coverage at a lower cost than others when she was shopping for a policy for her consulting work.

Steve Wilde asked if the increase in the assessment, from \$40 in 2008 to \$55 in 2009, was due to the additional insurance cost. Ms. Simpson confirmed this and stated that in order to cover the anticipated \$1,000 cost of the Directors and Officers policy, the assessment would need to be raised \$16 per household, which was rounded down to fifteen dollars. With an assessment of \$55 per household, we will be able to cover the increased cost of insurance and other annual expenses and maintain a “cushion” of available funds equal to one year’s expenses. These funds would be available in the event of an unanticipated expense like the legal fees related to the Toper lawsuit.

Steve Wilde asked if the Board had received any negative feedback on the proposed budgets over the past few years. Mr. Becker replied that there had been no negative responses; Mr. Wilde suggested that non-payment of the assessment might indicate dissatisfaction with the budgets. Mr. Becker agreed, but said that some people have historically been slow to pay. He added that the board is willing to work with any member who has difficulty paying the assessment.

Don Becker reported on the reassessment of the commons property by the Town in 2007. The initial reassessment was very high, and through the efforts of Jeanne Colombo and Sam Ruggeri, was challenged and lowered to a more reasonable level. In the original reassessment, the 9 parcels owned by the association were assessed at a combined value of \$208,100, up from the 2007 assessed value of \$23,100. As a result of the association’s appeal, the final reassessment amount was \$27,800. 2007 taxes on the property totaled \$1,261; in 2008 we paid \$1,341.

Dick Sehlin made a motion to approve the proposed budgets, with Steve Wilde seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers

Don Becker announced the slate of nominees to the Board, to serve a two-year term:

Dick Sehlin, President
Monica Simpson, Vice President
Dave Eckert, Secretary/Treasurer
Steve Greive, Director at Large
Adam Stein, Director at Large

Prior to the vote, Mr. Becker explained that the Board meets a few times each year and that Board Members work actively in the interest of the association, citing the reassessment as an example. He introduced the nominees, noting Dave Eckert’s previous service as a board member, Adam Stein’s creation and maintenance of the Huntington Hills website, and Dick Sehlin’s executive experience at Kodak. Continuity on the board was ensured by the continued service of Monica Simpson and Steve Greive.

Mr. Becker called for a vote, with slate passing with one opposed vote received by proxy. (A total of 7 proxy votes were received by mail.)

Ms. Simpson acknowledged the efforts of the outgoing members, especially with regard to the resolution of the Toper lawsuit and the Spring Valley flooding mitigation project. Jeanne Colombo made special note of Don Becker's work to develop a good working relationship with the Town on behalf of the neighborhood and presented him with a gift. Incoming President Dick Sehlin added his positive remarks, acknowledging the outgoing members' work and the new board's commitment to follow their example.

Spring Valley Flooding Mitigation Project and Other Town Public Works Projects - Marty Piecuch,
Commissioner of Public Works and Highway Superintendent and Pat Meredith, Deputy Commissioner

Prior to introducing Mr. Piecuch and Mr. Meredith, Don Becker noted the recent death of friend and former Conifer Lane resident Dick Murdy. As Don noted, Dick campaigned for many years to bring the flooding in the Conifer Lane/Hoffman Road/Spring Valley Drive to the attention of the Town and bring about a solution. Without Dick's early and sustained efforts, the resolution of the problem now being implemented would not have been attained.

Marty Piecuch thanked Don for his involvement in the flooding mitigation project, as active involvement from the neighborhood was key to the process. After years of planning, design, re-design, and negotiation with the DEC and Army Corps of Engineers, actual work "on the ground" has been going on for 3 months. By October 1, the stream that runs through the Spring Valley Drive area was re-routed. Additional work in that area will be performed after May 15, including grading of the north and south sides. Before work concludes for the winter, the vehicle turnaround destroyed by the project will be replaced and vehicle barriers will be installed. Also in the spring, the original creek bed will be partially filled in and additional willow plantings will be made. The permit for the project does not call for the complete filling-in of the streambed and old culverts, as the streambed might provide some drainage capacity. Mr. Piecuch believes that the utility of the streambed in this regard needs to be evaluated over time. If it appears that the streambed could be filled without any negative impact, the Town will apply for permit modification. Spring Valley Drive itself will also be repaired as needed in the spring of 2009.

Mr. Piecuch then moved on to a discussion of the work that has taken place on Hoffman Road and Conifer Lane, where the roadways have been elevated (using recycled asphalt) and a total of 20 by-pass culverts installed under Hoffman and Conifer. Domnika Ruggeri asked if the work would alter the wetlands in any way, to which Mr. Piecuch replied that the water would continue to flow into the wetlands from *under* the roadways, rather than *over* the roadways. This project will not change or define the course of the stream once it enters the wetlands, but will mitigate the flooding of the roadways.

Mr. Piecuch and Mr. Meredith reported that, as of November 12, all of the gravel sub-base road material had been put in place and rolled, and that the asphalt binder course had been applied to two thirds of Conifer Drive. Weather permitting, the binder course would be completed by November 21. Over the winter, the material will settle and set up, with final paving to take place in the spring. The asphalt plants could close down for the year by Thanksgiving, so the main thrust of the work at this time will be putting down the binder course. Some grading remains to be done and will be done once the asphalt work is completed, weather permitting. The project will be finished in the spring, with 2 to 3 weeks of work to be done.

Seed and straw have been put in place to stabilize the soil. While no vegetation growth will take place this fall and winter, once spring arrives, growth will emerge.

Mr. Piecuch recognized the work done by the Town crew and stated that the cost of the project would have been higher had a private firm done the work. He estimated the total cost of the project, including engineering and construction, at around \$250,000.

Adam Stein asked if the Town will make repairs to areas of his lawn that were disrupted by Town vehicles involved in the project. Mr. Piecuch assured him that the area will be restored in the spring.

Steve Greive expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Town crew to minimize the inconvenience experienced by residents during the course of the project. Other residents expressed similar appreciation for the quality of the work and the consideration of the crew.

Domnika Ruggeri asked where the asphalt came from. It has been a combination of millings from the 2006 Keeler Street/Route 104 project (which had been staged at the staging area at Routes 590 and 104) and gravel from the Town highway department.

Route 590 Upgrade

Work on the project will wrap up for the year soon. Paving from Durand Avenue north to the waterslides is underway at this time. From now until work ceases for this year, drainage work will continue, a fence will be installed on the west side of the road, and utilities will be relocated. No roundabouts will be installed until next year. The speed limit will remain at 45 miles per hour through the winter. The project is 2-3 months ahead of schedule and should be substantially complete by July of 2009.

In April, work will begin at the north end of 590, where the road will be re-routed to intersect with Culver Road next to Bill Gray's. To minimize disruption to the businesses in that area, the Town intends to complete that portion of the work before the summer recreation season gets under way.

Master Plan for the Town, Mary Ellen Heyman, Town Supervisor

Ms. Heyman thanked the association for the many positive comments about the work being done on the Spring Valley project. She commented briefly on the development of the Town's Master Plan through the use of focus groups and a consulting firm, and invited association members to participate by attending meetings and visiting the Town's interactive website. One of the advantages of using a consulting firm from outside the area has been that firm's ability to view the Town from a fresh perspective and to identify assets that local residents might take for granted or overlook.

Ms. Heyman reported on the current status of Medley Center. After 10 months of meeting with the new developer, she feels that their plan is a good one and that it will be followed through upon. As plans develop, the Town Board will be considering them. The current plan for mixed-use commercial development of Medley Center includes housing, convention space, retail space, a movie theater, and other businesses. Ms. Heyman praised the developer's flexibility in the process thus far.

The 2009 Town budget is due December 1. Ms. Heyman acknowledged that the current economic situation makes budget planning very difficult. The Town is fortunate that the Spring Valley and 590 projects were funded and under way prior to the economic downturn.

Regarding the 590 project, Ms. Heyman explained that the relocation of the Culver/590 intersection will create 3 acres of Town property which cannot be developed and will be turned into recreational space. The land will be re-graded to create a view of the water. In addition to the enhancements to this area and the improvements to 590, the Town has been making efforts to address quality of life issue in the Seabreeze community by monitoring businesses for code violations.

In response to questions from members regarding other economic development in the Town, Ms. Heyman reported that the K-Mart store on East Ridge Road will be replaced with a Price Rite grocery store. Aldi's would like to come to Irondequoit, but the property they want is not for sale.

The Titus Cooper commercial area is being considered in the Master Planning process. Due to the zoning of the area and access issues, the area is not attractive to developers. The strip mall needs repair but the owners do not want to struggle with neighbors over details. Ms. Heyman acknowledged that while many people dislike businesses like Walgreens, they do make a significant contribution to the tax base. Ms. Heyman was asked if façade restoration grant money was used or sought for the Titus/Cooper area. She responded that community block grant money was used for façades, but because not all businesses were eligible for funding, the façade program was abandoned and the community block grant money was used for sidewalks and other improvements.

With regard to the future of the 2 Irondequoit libraries, both of which are aging facilities with numerous problems, Ms. Heyman said that control rests with the library board, not with the Town. So for now, that question remains unanswered.

Sam Ruggeri asked about the possibility of consolidating the two Irondequoit school districts as a cost-saving measure. Ms. Heyman said that the Governor has also asked about this, but that without community support, consolidation will not be possible. Her experience with the libraries has shown her that consolidation issues are not easily solved. A member asked if it is not the Town's responsibility to serve the taxpayers' interests by consolidating the school districts. Ms. Heyman responded that the voters can influence this issue through the composition of the school board.

Mr. Becker thanked Ms. Heyman for attending the meeting and for the Town's support of Huntington Hills.

Garden Club

Stephanie Marsaryk-Morris, treasurer of the now-dormant Huntington Hills Garden Club, reported that \$586 remains in the club bank account. Jan Strine volunteered to spearhead the possible resuscitation of the club. Many people present expressed interest in reviving the annual Garden Club Christmas party.

Commons Committee

Sue Rodgers extended an invitation to all members to join the Commons Committee, which has been inactive for the past couple of years. Two projects which the Commons Committee might pursue are the identification of hazardous trees on the commons and locating all commons parcels in the neighborhood.

Website (huntingtonhillsinc.org)

Adam Stein offered to assist any clubs in the neighborhood with adding their information to the website and creating e-mail group lists.

At 8:55 Bill Bolte made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Wilde seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Monica Simpson, outgoing Secretary/Treasurer
November 24, 2008