

**Village of Walden
Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
September 1st, 2009**

Mayor Brian Maher called the special meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 7:00 pm.

On roll call the following were:

Present:	Mayor Deputy Mayor Trustees	Brian Maher Susan Rumbold Mary Jean Norman Richard Hurd Roy Wynkoop Marcus Millspaugh Edmond Leonard
Also Present:		James C. Politi, Village Manager
Absent		Kevin Dowd, Village Attorney

Mayor Maher explained that the board is discussing the possibility of land acquisition. This is an executive session item. It has been brought to their attention by the Village Attorney and has been told to our Village Manager as well as the Board of Trustees. He called NYCOM and although it seems a little bit unfair that certain things have to be kept confidential for what ever reason that will be the process that they will be going about doing and it is accordance with New York State Law. The revitalization of certain parts of the village is truly important. As elected officials the residents entrust the board with certain things and of those things is why they go into executive session, they do what's in the best interest of the village. They do not sneak around and try to spend taxpayer's dollars in a liberal way. It's not what they want to do and it's not what they intend to do. When they go into executive session they will be trying to serve the residents as best they can. Any other questions anyone has can meet with the mayor to discuss them further in full detail at any moment. Since everyone has made the effort to come here, although its unorthodox they may not be able to answer any questions, but if anyone would like to make a comment for the record they are more than welcome to as long as they know the board won't have any kind of answer for them because it is executive session.

Maureen Howard, 20 Edmunds Lane stated that she opposes the purchase of this property. Her concern is the quality of life for her children and her neighborhood. Proposed at the end of her block is to put up 300 condominiums which will draw traffic to her block. Her concern is the train station being at the bottom and people running late for their train. There are no sidewalks on her street. They have property that is over grown onto the street and no one has taken care of that problem. She is concerned with the safety for her children with the train station being there. Cars speed up and down now. There will be more traffic with condos. The safety of her children is her biggest priority.

Mayor Maher stated that they are only discussing the property acquisition.

Ms. Howard stated that it wouldn't be a good idea for the village to spend that kind of money when they don't know if the train will be coming. This is a lot of money. She doesn't feel it will bring business to town. We can't fill Main Street. Parking is an issue. Two years ago she was told the Oak Street parking lot would be paved and that hasn't been done. We should take care of what needs to be taken care of now before we take on anything else.

Jim Hiller, 195 S. Montgomery Street stated that purchasing the property is pretty much land speculation on the part of the village. If it's such a good deal they, the LDC, can buy it on their own. If they don't want to buy it on their own, develop it and resell it.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos, 17 Wileman Avenue asked why is the train going to come to Walden.

Mayor Maher stated that this is about land acquisition. He could meet with Mr. Panagiotopoulos and apprise him how they are doing and the steps they are taking.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos stated that if they have insurance that the train will be coming to the village then they can discuss the acquisition of the building. Discussing it now is way too premature.

Frank LaMacchia asked what the plans are for that building. Will it be a train station or something else?

Mayor Maher stated that a lot of what was in the paper was misinformation.

Becky Pearson 167 Walnut Street stated that she believes there are many issues in the village that need attention before purchasing the building. She is pretty sure there was a bidding war on that building. There were other people interested in that building and if that is what is happening she believes they

should go ahead and buy that building. It shouldn't be a building the village buys and fixes up. Stimulus is something you won't see. MTA is broke, and New York State is broke, where are we going to get the money from? How much is it going to cost to clean up? We don't know if there is asbestos in that building. We don't know about the environmental cleanup. The LDC will put that all on the village residents. Why should that happen and you may not get your money out of it. There are many things in the village that needs our attention, the sewer plant, roads, catch basins, roof, and buildings. You have to think seriously about spending money on that building. At the last meeting the board voted on something, what was that motion.

Mayor Maher stated that the minutes are on line.

Ms. Pearson stated that if it was to move forward there was no mention of money going for it. Without an attorney here tonight she wanted to know what they were going under for executive session. It sounds like they are already in the process of purchasing this property.

Mayor Maher stated that they will be going into executive session to discuss future land acquisition.

Ms. Pearson stated that she heard there will be a presentation.

Mayor Maher stated that the information is executive session material. They are just complying with New York State Law and Village Code.

Mary Ellen Matise, 21 Clinton Street stated that referring to LDC and the New York Conference of Mayors booklet outlining the duties, responsibilities and the options that a local development has and a municipality might not. In this case the LDC has the same power that the municipality has, to borrow money and to issue negotiable bonds and notes and other obligations therefore. Their main objective is to create jobs and to create economic development. So now why is a local development corporation which is legally established as a not for profit organization coming to village taxpayers and wanting the village taxpayers to front the bond.

Trustee Millspaugh stated that there was some inferior road work done last week. His request is to make a motion that the engineer be involved in any remedial work that is done to make sure that doesn't happen again.

Mayor Maher stated that it's his understanding that the village engineer was involved in the roads.

Manager Politi stated was and will be in the repair. He will be present and will direct that work.

Mayor Maher stated that this is not on the agenda so the board cannot discuss this.

Trustee Leonard moved to hold an executive session pursuant to 105-(h), land acquisition, of the Public Officers Law. Seconded by Trustee Norman.

Trustee Millspaugh stated that when he got the notice that there would be a special meeting he asked why does it have to be a special meeting and not done at a regular meeting. His second point was, why should it be executive session when it's out in the public. It was said from the start that the public would be involved in any approval. Why wouldn't they be involved at this point. He strongly objects, he feels they are sneaking around closed doors with this. He doesn't see why it can't be public.

All ayes with the exception of Trustee Millspaugh and Deputy Mayor Rumbold voting no. Motion carried.

Trustee Millspaugh moved to reconvene the special meeting. Seconded by Trustee Norman. All ayes. Meeting reconvened.

Mayor Maher read the following statement: The village is going to negotiate for an option to acquire a portion of this property excluding the building. It will be done in phases. At each point in the phase the village will have the option to opt out. The first phase will cost a minimum of \$20,000. The LDC is supposed to generate economic development. It will be part of the agenda for next Tuesday's meeting. He will do every effort possible to do all the research he needs to figure out what information they can dispense to the public for public discussion before they figure out exactly what they will do when it comes to the acquisition.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos asked what the purpose of purchasing anything.

Trustee Wynkoop stated that they are just looking into the possibilities right now. Nothing is definite.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos asked what the purpose was.

Mayor Maher stated that they are trying to revitalize the community. No one has voted to expend any taxpayer's money as of right now.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos stated that he thinks the revitalization would be to fix the sidewalks and curbs. Also, fixing this building. He feels they are going in the wrong direction. The village shouldn't be in the business of buying properties they should be in the business of making the community better.

Ms. Matisse asked what the \$20,000 is for.

Mayor Maher stated that the village attorney isn't here so he can't answer the question. He cannot tell her exactly what the \$20,000 will be for. He will find out and see if they can talk about this.

Ms. Pearson stated that at the last meeting the Mayor said it will be part of the agenda, what will be part of the agenda.

Mayor Maher stated that it will be land acquisition.

Ms. Pearson asked if there will be a presentation.

Mayor Maher stated that he doesn't know if there will be a presentation.

Ms. Pearson asked if there will be information on spending \$20,000.

Mayor Maher stated that he doesn't have specifics he just knows it will be on the agenda. Without the attorney he doesn't know what he can or cannot talk about.

Helen Schoonmaker stated that this is our money that you are going to be spending to buy a piece of land that they don't know what they are going to do with. Why can't he tell them anything about it?

Mayor Maher stated that if the attorney was here he could tell them.

Mrs. Sonner stated that they can't answer any questions.

Mayor Maher stated that he understands that they are frustrated and he is frustrated too. He would like to answer the questions, but without an attorney they do not know what they can say after coming out of executive session. Next Tuesday this will be on the agenda. He will work as hard as possible to find out what can be discussed. He would like to discuss everything.

Mr. Pangaiotopoulos asked how often is the attorney supposed to be present.

Mayor Maher stated that he is supposed to be here at all times.

Mr. Panagiotopoulos asked if he gets paid for this.

Adjournment

Trustee Wynkoop moved to adjourn and reconvene next Tuesday and answer the people's questions. Seconded by Trustee Hurd. All ayes. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Mitchell
Village Clerk