

**Special meeting** of the Town of Chester Town Board was held at the Town Hall, 6307 State Route 9, Chestertown, NY, at 7:00 pm on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014. The purpose of the special meeting was to hold a public hearing on DEC's plan for the Ice Meadow Tract on the Hudson River.

**Roll Call:** Mike Packer, Edna Wells, Frederick H. Monroe, Karen DuRose, and Steve Durkish.

**DEC attendees:** Ben Thomas and Chuck Kabrehl.

**Guests:** David DeLorme, Barbara Farr, Linda & Paul Little, Barbara & Phil Arthur, Jean Rew, Al & Linda Muench, Michael & Silvia Strich, Lisa Carpenter, Larry Estill, Yvonne Nixon, Stephen & Joan Butler, Kathy Vanselow, Sarah Kuntz, Cameron Daley, Jessica Kuntz, Harold Penistan, and Mary Lou Dopyera. Letters had also been received from Judy Harry, Frances Brzozowski, Michael Stritch, and Kathy Vanselow.

**Supervisor Monroe** explained, before the public hearing, that the State had obtained this parcel recently, and it will now need to be classified by the Adirondack Park Agency, either as wild forest, or wilderness. APA will be holding hearings on this, and it most likely will be classified as wild forest, as wilderness classification must be 10,000 acres or more, which this is not. Following this classification by APA, DEC will then begin to work on a unit management plan which will determine what facilities will be on the property, what the access is, how the property can be used, etc.

The purpose of this public hearing is to offer those residents of East Hudson River Drive the opportunity to be heard with regard to the usage of East Hudson River Drive as an access point to the State land. It is not required by the Town, as APA and DEC will be making all of the decisions regarding the property, and we are doing it simply as a courtesy.

Mr. Monroe then gave a brief history of the property, how it came to be in State hands. He stated that the property had been purchased by the Nature Conservancy in 2007.

Due to issues that local governments had had with purchases of State lands in the past, Senator Stafford had obtained for us, (local governments), the right to veto the purchase of State land. Initially, the town did exercise the right to veto this purchase, mainly in order to have discussions with DEC and with the Nature Conservancy on the use of the property, whether it would be purchased by the State, or whether we wanted some tracts to go into private hands. We also had held several hearings in order to obtain public input as to what the town and the public wanted us to do. The hearings indicated to us that the people favored the State purchasing it. There were concerns about accessing it from the Campground Road, so, we withdrew our veto, but we said that we did not want access to be from the Campground Road. The State had not purchased it until this year.

Ben Thomas, DEC, explained that parking lot size usually limits access use. He and Ranger Chuck Kabrehl were in attendance to hear what some of the concerns might be. He stated that there are two deeded ROW's that came with the property, one from Palmer Pond, and one from Friends Lake Road.

Mr. Monroe stated that the Campground Road, (East Hudson River Drive), is a town road, and is 9/10<sup>th</sup>'s of a mile from Route 8. Because it is a town road, the public can use that 9/10<sup>th</sup>'s of a mile. There is also an easement with the deed from when it was Finch land. The use of that easement is up to DEC. He then opened the public hearing at 7:12 pm.

Steven Butler, 196 E. Hudson River Drive (hereinafter known as EHRD), concerned as to the actual name of the road, whether it be Campground Road, or East Hudson River Drive.

Kathy Vanselow, 226 EHRD, owns land adjacent to State land. Opposed to road being made public, and the portion of the road that is private being maintained by whom? There is no room to pass another car, and a lot of the homes are right on the road. Concerned also about garbage issues, security issues, etc. Thinks access should be either through Palmer Pond or Friends Lake.

Al Muench, Hill Park Road, feels that Friends Lake would be similarly impacted, and thinks that Palmer Pond tract would be better utilized.

Mary Lou Dopyera has a house on the EHRD and her house is only 3 feet from the road. She is concerned that people coming in won't realize how close the houses are, and she does not want to have to worry about her grandchildren stepping out the door and being hit by a motor vehicle.

Phil & Bobbie Arthur also on EHRD, last house before the gate. Stated that the road is a narrow, one way road, privately maintained, and thinks a trail should be cut from the Palmer Pond tract as access, not using EHRD. Kathy Vanselow stated that there is already a trail. The elevation on the map indicates that Palmer Pond is at 1400 feet, and the Ice Meadows tract is at 900 feet.

Mike Stritch, 266 EHRD. Stated that he has no power or amenities at his camp, they bring in anything that they need. They do not want the road opened, feels that by opening it up to outside traffic, no amount of patrolling or cleanup will maintain the quality of life that they now enjoy.

Larry Estill owns a lot south of the river, and stated that he has used the Palmer Pond Road at times to get into the State land. Sometimes, he continued, the Palmer Pond Road is impassable, and he doesn't feel that the maintenance of it should be the town's responsibility. He wanted to know what resources would be available for it's maintenance. He added that you could control the number of people in there by the number of activities that you support. He suggested that the State needs to have a policing policy in place to keep the garbage, etc. at bay, to maintain the quality and character of the road.

Harold Penistan, Frederick Road, told the Board that he owned property on both sides of the access road that comes in from Route 8. Concerns over what will happen there.

Mr. Thomas, from DEC, thought the property would likely be classified part of Lake George wild forest. Amendments would therefore be made to this plan to accommodate this particular parcel. He empathized with everyone's concerns over their road being used for access to the parcel. He admitted that staffing was down within the department, and they had low resources with regard to maintenance of what they already have. He continued that there is the possibility to obtain funding for contracting out work by entering into an agreement with the various towns to provide maintenance. He thought the parcel may well be used for hiking, fishing, hunting, have some outhouses, and maybe some primitive tenting sites.

Paul Little, 4682 State Route 8, would also like the name of the road clarified, (My note: checked with E911, and name has been changed to East Hudson River Drive). He and his wife have lived there for 42 years, and at one time, he had his name put on a list as a caretaker for the property, under Finch, in order to be able to use it. His concern was over possible development occurring. He has seen "no parking" signs on both sides of the road, and George Ilg, who owns the ROW to Camp Socozy, could possibly stop everyone from driving no further than their own driveways. Ultimately, he feels that 75% of the people who use the property would be local, and he does not foresee hordes of people using the road.

Mr. Monroe stated that DEC may still maintain the official right to use of that road. Road maintenance seems to be the #1 issue.

David DeLorme, 122 EHRD, and President of the Board of Directors of the Epworth League, hopes the town will maintain their position of "no access" over the road. He thought a temporary access could be instituted on a trial basis.

Mr. Thomas, DEC, stated that they could erect a parking lot right through the gate, or within the 500 foot area around the lease cabins that currently exist on the parcel for the next 4 years, and will be vacated following that period, after which (in 2018), Nature Conservancy will have control for one more year.

Public hearing was closed at 8:15 pm. Mr. Monroe thanked DEC and EHRD residents for their attendance.

**Appoint Town Engineer and authorize contract for engineering services related to the Schroon Lake Watershed Grant.**

At our June meeting, we had appointed Tom Suozzo of Cedarwood Engineering as our Town Engineer. However, we need a storm water engineer in connection with the Schroon Lake Watershed plan, and Tom is not the engineer in that firm that does that. Therefore, it would make sense to hire the entire firm of Cedarwood Engineering.

**RESOLUTION #85: APPOINT CEDARWOOD ENGINEERING AS ENGINEERING FIRM FOR THE TOWN OF CHESTER.**

Introduced by Mrs. Wells, seconded by Mrs. DuRose, appoint Cedarwood Engineering as the official engineering firm of the Town of Chester.

AYE 5 NO 0

**RESOLUTION #86: AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR SIGN CONTRACT WITH COOK'S SEPTIC SERVICE LLC FOR SEPTIC PUMP OUTS FUNDED BY THE SCHROON LAKE WATERSHED GRANT.**

Introduced by Mr. Packer, seconded by Mrs. Wells, authorize Supervisor to sign contract with Cook's Septic Service, LLC for Septic pump-outs for \$160, half of which would be funded by the Schroon Lake Watershed Grant. The other half of the cost would be paid by the homeowner.

AYE 5 NO 0

**Pellet boiler bids.**

We still need the plans and specs to be approved by the USDA, as we don't have them yet.

An email came to the Supervisor from the NYS Power Authority, who had elected to finance our boiler project, but we had chosen to go with USDA. They asked how we were doing with it, and Mr. Monroe told them that we had asked to have the law changed to have the time extended that we could finance it. Senator Little had drafted a bill which passed in the Senate, but not in the Assembly. The end result is that we can only finance for 10 years, and the payback period is for 12 ½ years. The next day, the Governor's office emailed a message from Greg Hale, who the Governor had appointed as head of the "Green Bank" which is for financing of environmental projects. He asked whether we had considered applying through this renewable HEAP New York project. Mr. Monroe countered that this project had not even been rolled out yet, and Mr. Hale replied that they were working on it, and thought the plans would be done by the end of July. He then involved NYSEERDA, and we are wondering if we will still be eligible if we sign a contract. They don't really know, so we will wait until we hear the plan for renewable energy before proceeding.

**Pickle Ball.**

Linda Muench discussed playing Pickle Ball on the tennis court. She had spoken with Mindy, who used to use the courts for tennis instruction. Mindy has no objection, since she now uses the school's tennis courts. Lines will have to be put in the court for the game, taped or painted, and Jason was asked to perform that task. The court can still be used for tennis.

**RESOLUTION #87: APPROVE USE OF TENNIS COURTS FOR PICKLE BALL.**

Introduced by Mrs. Wells, seconded by Mrs. DuRose, approve use of the tennis courts for Pickle Ball.

AYE 5 NO 0

Mr. Packer asked whether we had any quotes on the 2-way radios for the pump houses. We only have one, because we have not located a second vendor. Jason and Fred will get together to write up the specs and continue from there.

Debbie Burch had requested bottles and cans from the Transfer Station for September through November to benefit the Brant Lake Wesleyan Church. The Board stated that Brant Lake had a transfer station, and perhaps she could obtain cans and bottles from them, as the board wants to limit the collection of bottles and can to Town of Chester resident's children's activities.

On a motion by Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Packer, meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Town Clerk