

CAC-West Minutes

February 2, 2012, 7:00 - 8:45 PM

(Meeting location has been changed to the Westhampton Beach Free Library Feb/Mar/Apr).

Present: CAC-West Members: Hank Beck, Janet Beck, John Bouvier, Frank Moschetti, Joy Flynn, Andrea Spilka, Carol Corcoran, Sharon Frost.

Guests: Sandy Sullivan, SH Town Hall Rep. Tom Granville, Dave Gallo, Steve Rosemarin, John David, Emily Sanz, Jeffery Miniliane, Rodney Way, Joseph Ventimiglia, Forest Markowitz, Peggy Kinane, Mott Pirozzi, Peggy Kinane, Matt Pirozzi and Tina Pirozzi, Denise J. Terry, Ellen Cea, Chris Kent, David Wilcox, James Schaffner, Richard L Branco, Geri Sparacino.

Hank Beck introduced the members of the CAC-West who were present and explained the purpose of all the Southampton CACs and where others in the town are located. Other guests introduced themselves at the start of the meeting.

There were many guests in the audience who were there to hear about some of the issues discussed during prior meetings. Of utmost concern was the proposed development of the "Castle" property on North Phillips Avenue by Jay Kopf. Many of the guests live on Sophia Place (Sherri Court), east of the property Mr. Kopf has proposed for development. Of major concern is his proposal to break through from North Phillips with a road connecting to Sophia Place and the apparent bland look. Some asked why the town did not purchase the land for the housing authority

Hank Beck answered some of their questions, but suggested they attend the March 8th meeting when Jay Kopf is expected to be in attendance to further present his proposal. Hank said he would forward all material supplied by Mr. Kopf to those interested and suggested the next meeting (March 1, 2012) would be a good time to hear the proposal and to ask questions directly.

There is a pre-submission conference proposal for an ATT/Elite cell tower at 19 Seabreeze Avenue, on the property of the Westhampton Motel. Last year there had been another proposed tower from TMobile. That proposal was withdrawn since it did not adhere to the town code concerning the construction of cell towers. We will follow up on this proposal.

The Suffolk County Legislature may be putting open space and land purchases on hold through a proposal by Suffolk County Legislator Kara Hahn (5th District; N/W Brookhaven). The County, through a referendum, does not use tax anticipation bonds like most other communities do. We are particularly concerned with the purchase and preservation of Bailey's Field which has been in negotiation for years and is apparently dependent upon cooperation with Suffolk County. Buying land now when prices are depressed seems like the smart thing to do.

Hank prefaced the next topic with the recent change in PDD legislation which brought about several much-needed restrictions on PDD approvals, making it more difficult to approve massive developments without substantial community benefits and requiring a super-majority of Town Board approval. He reviewed a few local PDDs and some others throughout Southampton Town. He also complimented the work done by many of the Civics and CACs initiated by Supervisor Throne-Holst to change the PDD legislation.

The latest proposal brought before the CAC-West, the Strebel Proposal, is on 10 acres of a 24 acre tract of land belonging to the Strebel family. It is behind the Strebel Laundry. They are proposing a Senior (55 and older) Affordable Housing development of 75 rental units. The Strebels' have brought in Whitney Capital Company, LLC a company that specializes in the development, renovation, acquisition, management and operation of affordable housing.

David Gallo of Georgica Green, based in Jericho, and Tom Granville, of Whitney Capital, distributed photographs and literature about the developments they have worked on including the "Riverhead Landing Apartments" behind the Mall on CR58 (Middle Road and Osborne Avenue) in Riverhead.

Mr. Gallo and Mr. Granville talked about the proposal and fielded questions from the audience. They explained that NY State requires a determination of median income formula of income level, and requires the project to remain affordable for at least 30 years. There is an income requirement for residents but not an asset test. As of this date no formal plans or applications have been filed with the town.

Steve Rosemarin asked if it wouldn't be better to build workforce housing, rather than senior rentals. There is nothing in the area for senior rentals, but plenty for Senior Condos. Another person suggested a hybrid of Senior and work force rentals be combined, providing for both populations.

Andrea Spilka said that as-of-right building is 9 to 10 units. This project proposes 75 units, quite a large increase. What is the plan for the balance of the site?

The Strebel family would keep the other acres. Questions were also asked about energy efficiency, green initiatives and LEED certification.

Would local contractors be used for construction of the project? Gallo and Granville both said they prefer building locally, with competitive bidding.

Many questions were asked. What kind of services would be available for seniors, and how would they get to stores. Not all seniors drive.

In terms of density, other projects were 156 units on 50 acres, and 200 units on 50 acres.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

The next regular CAC-West meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on Thursday, March 1, 2012 at the Westhampton Beach Free Library.