

**Ancram Planning Board**  
**Meeting Minutes – February 5, 2009**

**Present:**

James Stickle, Chair  
Dennis Sigler  
Terry Boyles  
Madeleine Israel  
B. Docktor  
Colleen Lutz  
Suzanne Bressler, Clerk

**Absent:**

Jamie Purinton  
Don MacLean

**Also Present:**

Keith Morey  
Donna Hoyt

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 PM. Mr. Boyles made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting with changes, Ms. Docktor seconded the motion, all were in favor and the minutes were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The clerk announced that the Board had received a sealed letter from Ms. Purinton with a note asking that the clerk read the letter to the members of the Board. The letter was read and is entered as follows:

*February 1, 2009*

*Dear Ancram Planning Board Members,*

*Some Town Board Members have stated that they replaced chairpersons from our planning and zoning boards as a result of public complaints. If true, let's air those complaints, evaluate them and make necessary changes. I propose we invite the community to a public session to express their expectations for our board at our March meeting.*

*Attached is the list of everyone who submitted an application or attended our meetings in 2008. According to the minutes of 2008, our board voted unanimously, without a nay, on every action. Our record is one of agreement in our interpretation of the subdivision regulations. I have heard no negative complaints while chair. On the contrary, numerous people on this list thanked us and expressed appreciation for how we handled their applications and subdivisions in their neighborhood. These positive exchanges often took place outside of the meetings, and in retrospect, I wish I had shared them with you so that you would know how your work was appreciated by many people that we served.*

*If there is consensus with this idea, we need to announce an invitation to the public with a spirit of openness and with a desire to serve our community well. This open public session should in no way be a political battleground. I continue to feel badly that some of us were treated by the Town Board as if we were their enemy. As your former chairperson, I want to tell you that as volunteers, each of you continue to make a genuine and valuable commitment to Ancram.*

*As a last note, I want to affirm that I did my best for 11 months to represent and fairly hear the entire board. Serving as chair made me fully appreciate Don Maclean's work over the previous seven years. It was not as easy as he made it look. He was a hard act to follow. Thank you Madeleine for serving as vice chairperson and thank you everyone for your help and patience while I was learning this job.*

Sincerely,

Jamie Purinton

An attached list of Planning Board applicants and attendees from the previous year was appended and follows:

*ATTENDEES AT PLANNING BOARD 2008*

*Subdivision Applications*

1. Westfall LLC- Mark Graminski Engineer, Scott Weaver, Nathan Turoff, John Marvin Attourney.
2. Sigler- Dennis Sigler, Tal Rappleyea and Brent Stack, Columbia County Attorneys
3. McDermott: Joseph and Marie McDermott
4. Ancram Fire Department , Terry Boyles
5. Segalot- Armand DeBiase (Architect), Marc Graminski (Engineer)
6. Emily Sartor and James Wright
7. Mcmanus – Barbara and Herb McManus
8. Weisel- Andrew Weisel
9. Reed- Marc Reed
10. McCarthy- Elaine and Lester
11. Wiggers - Edwin and Elaine Wiggers
12. Carol Kraft
13. Weiner, Eric and Lorraine

*Zoning Board Referrals*

1. Bishop- Linda Chernewsky, Morris Associates
2. Baraz
3. Bryant Mine

*Walk -in Help*

1. Douglas Nicholson

2. Bob Matthews

3. Keith Morey

*Public Members who attended our public hearings or meetings:*

*Timothy and Taryn Cocheo*

*Melanee Mayville*

*Barbara Snyder*

*Marguerite and Tom Gumm*

*Edward Hough*

*Cosimo Lizzi*

*Building Inspector Ed Ferratto*

*Donna Peck*

*Danny Hoysradt and Noreen Hoysradt*

*Franklin and Jennifer Nickerson, Westfall Rd.*

*Jonathan Shramko, Westfall Road, Tagkhanic*

*Maureen Mueller, Westfall Road, Tagkhanic*

*Nancy Rudder, Westfall Road Resident*

*James MacArthur, Highway Superintendent*

*Jimmy Stickles, Michael Citrin, Bob Matthews and Colleen Lutz (re serving on the board)*

*Moisha and Bob Blechman – Westfall Neighbor*

*Robert Roberts- Student Observer*

*Abraham Kells (question re condition of downtown buildings)*

*Tom Dias (re Westfalls road condition)*

*Chris Thomas (Westfalls)*

*Victor Stang (Westfalls)*

Tad Higgins

## Consultants

*Paul McCreary (Westfalls)*

The Chair said he didn't have a problem with Ms. Purinton's request.

Mr. Sigler said he wasn't clear on whether or not past complainants should be invited to a Board meeting, or an open Town Board meeting to address planning and zoning concerns, and all Town departments. Ms. Israel said it sounded to her that Ms. Purinton was suggesting in her letter that the Board should hear from the people who came before the Board while she was Chair to hear what they were complaining about.

Mr. Sigler said he believed most who were likely complaining are those who never even came before the Board. Ms. Israel said she had a bad reaction to what Bob Mayhew had said last meeting (post-adjournment, about complainants), and that she went out to campaign with Mr. Mayhew and Ms. Hoyt most of the time and never heard one complaint. She said she was sure that historically there were people who weren't happy with the decision the Board had come to regarding their case, but that there are rules. Mr. Sigler said a lot of people don't like the process, but the Board can't change the rules.

Mr. Morey said you get one bad person who felt wronged who then talks about it and the story gets changed around and then one person on the Board is pinpointed as a bad person, and everybody is against them and eventually it's the whole Board.

The Chair suggested the Board wait and discuss Ms. Purinton's request when she returns from out of town and is present to address her thoughts that prompted the request. Mr. Boyles agreed. Ms. Docktor said she's been on the Board for nearly two years and never heard any complaints. Mr. Sigler said the Board had gotten positive feedback.

## **WESTFALLS LLC**

The Chair updated the Board, letting it know that the final bill from the engineer was approved. The Board agreed that when Westfalls LLC comes back to show they've met conditions required for final approval, remaining funds in escrow should be returned.

## **OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER**

As the *Independent* has folded, Mr. Boyles made a motion to make the Register Star the Board's official newspaper of record. Ms. Israel seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

## **KEITH MOREY**

Mr. Morey submitted a note from Ed Slater authorizing him to act on his behalf at this meeting.

Mr. Boyles reminded Mr. Morey that, by rule, the note needed to be notarized.

The Chair said Mr. Morey should get the notarization, but that the Board would hear from Mr. Morey at this meeting so as not to hold up his case. Mr. Morey submitted to the Board the deed, a description of the property, and copies of canceled checks to Ancram and to the surveyor.

The property measures 18.4 acres.

Mr. Boyles said he visited the property to see it and Mr. Morey's request does not appear to be a difficult undertaking. Mr. Morey said he'd see if he could track Mr. Slater down again and have the note notarized officially. The Chair said Mr. Slater's brother said the Board should check to see if the landowners on the other side had a right of way given to them when the original owner had donated their property to them, so they'd be able to access the property. He said if they had a right of way given to them, that would solve the issue. He told Mr. Morey to see if it's in the deed from that time by consulting the County's records department. Mr. Boyles said he'd go too to

help, and that between March and April he and Mr. Morey could take the time to do that. Mr. Morey said he'd have to check, because the people around now wouldn't know, unless perhaps his father might know. Mr. Sigler said Mr. Morey has to read the deed and Mr. Boyles said the map would tell. Mr. Sigler told Mr. Morey to come back before then if he couldn't find Mr. Slater, and the Board could proceed, expecting that the note would come. The Chair said the Board would know more when it received the Open Area Development Law (OADL) opinion from the Town Attorney. Ms. Hoyt told Mr. Morey that banks have notaries too. The Chair will check for larger maps in his own files. Mr. Sigler said it would have to go to the Town Board so before Mr. Morey has to spend money the Board and the Town Board should both look at the case and give an opinion on whether or not it can be approved. Mr. Boyles said Mr. Morey should also have the backhoe and do the percs all at once.

## **TERRY BOYLES**

## **TOWN LINE ISSUE**

(See last month's minutes for history on this case. Also please note that prior to this meeting, the Town Board had put Mr. Boyles' Town line and tax issue on its agenda for investigation and resolution.)

Mr. Boyles brought maps in for the Board to review and explained that he had spent a lot of money at the time, did a title search, and did everything the Board at the time had told him to. Now the Towns (Ancram and Gallatin) have a different line that splits his property into two Towns, thus causing him to have to pay taxes in two Towns. He had 5.12 acres, subdivided 3 acres and sold a piece with a right of way. His daughter rents a piece but he eventually wants to sell it to her, yet he can't if the property is measured and situated this way. A perc test was done in Gallatin, but the septic is in Ancram.

Mr. Boyles also presented a County letter showing the County approved everything for him at that time. The Town Board has copies of all the documents. Mr. Boyles is being taxed for 1.6 acres in Gallatin and 1.4 acres in Ancram (or less – he's only being taxed on 2.64 and he has 3.12 acres). He said he doesn't have enough land now.

Ms. Lutz said this could be due to human error, because while entering data and graphics into computerized mapping systems, a foot's worth of discrepancy can make a huge difference.

Mr. Sigler said the Board at the time did everything it was supposed to. Ms. Israel said based on that map the Board had indeed done everything correctly. Mr. Boyles asked if the Board sees the Town line on the maps showing the property in Ancram. Board members indicated they did.

## **BUDGET**

The Chair gave everyone a copy of the new budget for the Board.

## **ALTERNATE MEMBERS**

A discussion ensued regarding the issue of alternates. The Chair said that originally when the Board was set up (9/9/65) the rule called for seven members, then later the Board added in an eighth member. He explained that the Association of Towns' attorneys are talking with our Town attorney, and indicated they think the Board wasn't supposed to add an eighth. Mr. Sigler said ever since he's been here, for thirty-something years, it's been an eight-member board. The State says it should be a seven-member board, one of which can be an agricultural member, but the Town Board in 1965 interpreted that as seven plus one agricultural member. The point is to have an odd number on the Board so you don't have a split, Ms. Hoyt explained. The Board currently has eight voting members.

Mr. Boyles motioned to adjourn, Ms. Israel seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.