TOWN OF STANFORD TOWN BOARD  
TOWN BOARD MINUTES

AUGUST 8th, 2024

The Town of Stanford Town Board met for their monthly meeting on Thursday, August 8th, 2024, at the Town Hall. Supervisor Burton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Frank Grasso.

This meeting was dedicated to Richard Bell, who is resigning from the Recreation Commission after serving on it for 15 years. Supervisor Burton said that Richard was a man who worked behind the scenes and was also on the Rec. Campaign Committee and on the Comprehensive Plan but was not a public figure. He and his wife moved to Virginia after selling their beautiful home overlooking Buttercup.

Roll call: Wendy Burton – present

Julia Descoteaux – present

Eric Haims - present

Nathan Lavertue – absent

Theodore Secor - present

Also in attendance was Town Attorney Robert Butts.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA: Wendy Burton made a motion to accept the agenda with Councilman Secor seconding the motion. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

LIAISON REPORTS: Councilman Secor said that the Climate Smart Community Task Force meets on the 3rd Monday of each month and discussed their compost survey that will also be at Community Day, along with gardening activities. The Haunted Fortress committee met last night and were finalizing scenes and discussed a new marketing campaign. A work crew will be there this Sunday from 10 AM to 3 PM. From the ZBA, they will be meeting next week regarding the Charwill Drive Court remand as well as another public hearing that was postponed from last month.

Councilman Haims reported that the Planning Board discussed two applications at their July 31st meeting: a lot line alteration on Wendover Road and a lot line consolidation on Sisters Hill Road. Both of these will have public hearings at their September 25th meeting.

Councilwoman Descoteaux, CAC liaison, spoke of the Iroquois Pipeline issue that runs from Canada through Dover Plains and on to New York City and Long Island, and was hoping that the Town Board would send a letter to the Governor asking, along with other towns, not to expand this pipeline. The issue is still in the DEC permit process. The Town’s Natural Resource Inventory draft still needs assistance with editing, formatting and the design. The CAC is also looking for another member as Chair Greg Williams has moved away. The Sisters Hill trail was cleaned up on August 3rd and will have another clean-up in October. Supervisor Burton added that the Iroquois Pipeline was only going through a few towns in Dutchess but not through Stanford.

Supervisor Burton discussed the Fire Commissioners meeting from last month where they were negotiating a new ambulance service contract. We have budgeted $850,000 for 2025 with Northen Dutchess Paramedics to get to a higher level of service, but we have no control over their charges, and all northern Dutchess towns are in the same position. They also opened bids for an accountant and Ted Eglit was the lowest bid. She added that she highly respects all of the Fire Company members for the remarkable job they do, such as the Kemmerer Farm fire. The Zoning Commission would be discussing the “right to farm” law; the Town is starting the budget process and departments’ estimated budgets are due next week. This is an arduous task, especially when additional services like video-taping the ZBA and Planning Board meetings are requested that we should do, but it could be costly. The Nursery School is gone from the Town Hall, bittersweet, but they had no luck finding a new home, and the Town needs that room, especially for the November election. The laundromat has been torn down but Jacob Angell and Halton Construction will be building a beautiful new one with apartments upstairs.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Johanna Shafer, 21 Decker Road – asked about the Iroquois Pipeline: who receives the gas and where is it being sold? Councilwoman Descoteaux thought it was for New York City and Long Island. Mrs. Shafer also thanked the Board for looking into the Right To Farm Law as it’s been discussed for many years.

Town Board Minutes

8/8/24, page 2

PUBLIC HEARING:

PROPOSED LOCAL LAW #8 OF 2024:

AMENDING CHAPTER 164 OF THE TOWN CODE TO ALLOW ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS

Motion to open the Public Hearing on Proposed Local Law #8 made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Eric Haims. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

Supervisor Burton explained that this proposed local law was the first issue that the Zoning Commission worked on. It was at the top of the list in the Comprehensive Plan to come up with ways for more rental opportunities for young and old. The current zoning law only allows an apartment over a garage for a relative. The Zoning Commission met with the County Planning Department and after a few changes by the Board, the most recent iteration of the law is presented here.

Manny Gonzalez, 195 Hunns Lake Road – thought the Board should hold for a month as he was surprised by the “ADU” law and would like to better understand it. He also had questions about “attached” vs. “detached”, would it have to follow a certain footprint, setbacks, ZBA approval from the neighbors? The unit needs a kitchen, a bathroom, living facilities? A studio apartment? What about a hot plate? A clustered development, a subdivision? Tom Angell, zoning commission chair who was in the audience, briefly explained a cluster subdivision: 20-acre parcel with 5-acre zoning = 4 lots. Mr. Gonzalez asked about short-term rentals. Supervisor Burton responded that the Airbnb’s would be a separate law, with Attorney Butts adding that this law does not address short term rentals. An accessory dwelling unit can only move forward if the Health Department says there’s room for a well and septic.

Anthony Sarnicola, 25 Hunns Lake Road – supports this law and the Comprehensive Plan as it provides additional housing, but asked if there were any loopholes or gaps that a developer could take advantage of? Any provision for an owner of the principle dwelling? Could it be an LLC or a management company? Any limits on the size? Attorney Butts replied that the primary residence and the ADU must be on the same property, and Supervisor Burton added that the owner could swap out the original residence for a smaller one.

Richard Kaufman, 80 E. Hunns Lake Road – asked if an ADU could be on .78 of an acre? He had been told that 1 ½ acres was needed. Attorney Butts stated that under the law an ADU has to meet certain zoning standards without a variance. Mr. Angell responded that he could have an ADU, depending on the location and Board of Health approval and meet the setbacks, but the septic system might be an issue. Mr. Kaufman wanted his wife to speak in favor of this so he could get his own studio, workshop or “mancave.”

Renee Richard, 6 Drake Road – read excerpts from a letter from Pat Hancock who lives at 10 Hoag Drive. Mr. Hancock was a Wappinger Falls teacher, a real estate appraiser, also on worked with the DLC and Scenic Hudson, has lived in Clinton and Stanford and is currently on the Planning Board. His comments included thanking the Board for looking into the affordable housing issue but this is not the solution and could have unintended results: there could be crowding of dwellings, could even double them and then after 5 years, have many short term rentals; mentioned “affordable” housing, the Town has many bodies of water that can cause problems with septics as well as density issues such as in Bangall. Supervisor Burton noted that that this is not being called “affordable housing.” Pat’s letter also asked about the Governor’s program for affordable housing certification and what is the criteria for this certification and how would the town be able to possibly use these funds?

Walt Czachorowski, 7 Hoag Drive – as president of the Upton Lake Homeowners Association, spoke of the water quality issues at Upton Lake with algae growth and is worried about more people and more septic issues. He felt that the Health Department doesn’t care about the lake and doesn’t do adequate reviews regarding septics.

Kathy Zeyher, 158 Shelley Hill Road – had two questions: an ADU without a primary dwelling? Would the applicant have to go to the ZBA for a variance? Ms. Zeyher listed certain use schedules in the zoning and subdivision laws. Attorney Butts stated that a footnote might be needed, principle use not accessory use.

Charlotte Grasso, 5918 Route 82 – mentioned wastewater issues, wildlife issues with trees taken down; driving on Rt. 82 is a problem now with speeding. Mentioned the electric grid with electric cars and it could drain it; was also worried about the scenery.

Debbie Dillinger, 171 W. Hunns Lake Road – had not read the new law but had questions: 1) talking about affordable housing and renting only to family, could it be long term rentals? Councilwoman Descoteaux added that the law was addressing the housing shortage and that short term rentals were not part of it with further discussion about mini homes, attracting

Town Board Minutes

8/8/24, page 3

younger families and this is a first attempt to do something. Ms. Dillinger then spoke about septics of the existing home, if that could fulfill for an accessory unit. Where could we have affordable housing such as modular homes, clustered together, at affordable costs?

Renee Richard – Asked why the Planning Board does not determine these ADUs? The Building Inspector issues a building permit, then a CO, why not the Planning Board with the SEQRA process for something different on the property? Mr. Angell responded that it would be a right to have two-family houses without double the acreage and no Planning Board input like guest cottages are now and thought to equalize the small landowner vs. large landowner with no Planning Board expense. Mrs. Richard mentioned checks and balances with Mr. Angell answered that this removes the expense and time and allows you to do what you want with your property. Mrs. Richard asked about having this in all zones, and slow and steady growth in certain zones would be best. Supervisor Burton said the Zoning Commission discussed apartments over garages and wanted everyone to be able to afford this with no overlay over certain districts so we could consider this. Councilwoman Descoteaux added that this is for aging parents, younger families, a tipping point in the future but might be prohibitive to build with the current cost of materials; with no central water the Town’s footprint is limited. Mrs. Richard added that she was glad to hear you will monitor so as not to let things get out of control.

Debbie Dillinger – how would two houses on one parcel be taxed? Attorney Butts replied that that would be for the Assessor to answer but it would be less than two homes on two parcels. Ms. Dillinger also asked about the consequences for the Town if there are more rental units by only one owner.

Diane Czachorowski, 7 Hoag Drive – agrees with Renee that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Opening it to all zones, you must be careful as there are concerns with septics and the Department of Health; had worked for the State and has seen locally that follow-ups are lacking, regulations not followed and not checked up on. The Building Inspector would have all the work and could be open to abuse. Please consider all in finalizing the law.

Johanna Shafer – asked Councilwoman Descoteaux about the availability percentages of rentals that she had mentioned, 18.9% from the Comprehensive Plan, but Pine Plains had no available units for rent in their plan.

With no other comments heard, a motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Eric Haims, to close the Public Hearing. Supervisor Burton recommended that the Board does not vote on this Local Law tonight but examine the issues brought up. She thanked everyone for their comments.

1. LOCAL LAW #8, ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS: Tabled, as mentioned above.

2. RESOLUTION #8A – TRANSFER FUNDS FOR CELL TOWER GENERATOR: The following resolution was offered as follows:

**RESOLUTION #8A of 2024**

**TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS ACCOUNT NY CLASS NY 01-0010-0009 AND MOVE THE FUNDS TO THE GENERAL FUND #3900018**

Motion made by Wendy Burton

Seconded by Julia Descoteaux

**Whereas the Town of Stanford** will be investing American Rescue Plan funds to pay for a backup generator for the Communications Cell Tower on Quarter Horse Way, and

**Whereas** the NY Class Account 01-0010-0009 American Rescue Fund Account contains funds for this purpose, and

**Whereas** the Town of Stanford will transfer funds from NY Class Account 00-0010-009 American Account to the Millbrook General Fund Account 3900018 to purchase this generator,

**Now therefore be it resolved**, the Supervisor is authorized to complete the following budget modifications and transfer the funds from the American Rescue Funds Account to the General Fund.

00-510 Estimated Revenue +$1999.00

00-4089 Federal Aid ARPA +$1,999.00

00-960 Appropriations +$1999.00

00-01-1650-20 +$1,999.00

00-200 Cash +$1999.00

Town Board Minutes

8/8/24, page 4

00-209 Cash- ARPA -$1,999.00

The foregoing resolution was voted upon with all Board members voting as follows:

Wendy Burton, Supervisor – Yes; Julia Descoteaux, Councilwoman – Yes; Eric Haims, Councilman – Yes; Nathan Lavertue, Councilman – Absent; Theodore Secor, Councilman -Yes.

Certified this 8th day of August 2024 by the affirmative votes of the Town of Stanford Town Board members present. *Ritamary Bell, Town Clerk*

3. RESOLUTION #8B – EMERGENCY AC REPAIR: The following resolution was offered by Wendy Burton, seconded by Theodore Secor, as follows:

**Resolution # 8B 2024 EMERGENCY AIR CONDITIONING REPLACEMENT**

**Whereas** circumstances may arise when the Town Board is faced with an emergency that was neither anticipated or budgeted for, and

**Whereas** the Town has funds in the American Rescue Plan account which can be utilized for such an emergency

**Whereas** the air handler unit between the Supervisor’s suite of offices and the Town Court’s suite of offices has failed, and caused flooding in the area between the two suites, and

**Whereas** the failure has been temporarily mitigated but continues to intermittently fail, and

**Whereas** the summer has been brutally hot and our workspace must be airconditioned and flood free,

**Now therefore be it resolved** that the Town Board of the Town of Stanford authorizes the Supervisor to enter a contract with Bottini Fuel in the amount of $31,850.00 to evacuate and remove the old air handler/condenser and install a hot water air handler in the ceiling space between the Supervisor -Bookkeeper’s offices and the Court Offices, install the equipment specified in the contract as well as the necessary line sets, drain lines, signal wire and outdoor pad.

**Be it further resolved that** the Supervisor is authorized to complete the following budget modifications and transfer the funds from the American Rescue Funds Account to the General Fund.

00-510 Estimated Revenue +$31,850.00

00-4089 Federal Aid ARPA +$31,850.00

00-960 Appropriations +$31,850.00

00-01-1620-20 +$1,999.00

00-200 Cash +$31,850.00

00-209 Cash- ARPA -$31,850.00

The foregoing resolution was voted upon with all Board members voting as follows:

Wendy Burton, Supervisor – Yes; Julia Descoteaux, Councilwoman – Yes; Eric Haims, Councilman – Yes; Nathan Lavertue, Councilman – Absent; Theodore Secor, Councilman -Yes.

Certified this 8th day of August 2024 by the affirmative votes of the Town of Stanford Town Board members present. *Ritamary Bell, Town Clerk*

4. POST OFFICE ISSUES: As there have been many complaints about the Post Office, the Supervisor went and spoke with the Postmaster Ed. He explained that they had lost two postal workers, Herbie and Bruce and Pine Plains lost one as well and haven’t been able to hire new people. After trying to reach the Pine Plains post office by phone, she went and spoke with the postmaster there as well. Ms. Burton suggested that since important mail hasn’t been reaching residents in a timely manner to stop your mail delivery and have it picked up in Pine Plains and doesn’t know when this issue will be resolved. She also contacted Pat Ryan and he was unable to help as well. Councilman Secor had also had a short conversation with the Pine Plains Postmaster too and heard much the same thing. He asked the Postmaster if he would address the problem publicly and was told no. He added that the suggestions given were the same as Wendy heard. Ms. Burton added that we can’t oversee the Post Office as it is Federal and not taxpayer funded.

5. PROPOSED SUMMER CAMP FOR 2025: Rec. Director Lauren Osterman had given a proposal to the Board for their feedback and will look for more feedback through an online

Town Board Minutes

8/8/24, page 5

survey as well as one at Community Day. Any costs incurred should be covered mostly by payments for the day camp, which would run for a month, or by the week.

6. ACCEPT RESIGNATION FROM RICHARD BELL FROM THE RECREATION COMMISSION: A motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Eric Haims, to accept Richard Bells’ resignation from the Recreation Commission with regret. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

7. APPOINT LORELEI CHRISTENSEN TO THE REC. COMMISSION: A motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Julia Descoteaux, to appoint Lorelei Christensen to the open position on the Rec. Commission to fill the unexpired term of Richard Bell until 12/28.

8. APPROVE CROWN ENERGY PROPANE TANK INSTALLATION: A motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Theodore Secor, to approve the installation of the propane tank at the Town hall in the amount of $15,726. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

9. APPROVE HOBSON WINDOW REPLACEMENT PROPOSAL: A motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Eric Haims, to approve the proposal from Hobson Windows to replace all if the windows on the rear side of the Town Hall – offices of the Town Clerk, the Historian/Planning/Zoning and the Assessors. The cost is $25,499.70. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Minutes of the July 11th Town Board meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Julia Descoteaux. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

11. APPROVAL OF AUGUST ABSTRACTS #8 FOR 2024: A motion was made by Wendy Burton, seconded by Julia Descoteaux, to approve the payment of the August Abstracts as follows: General Fund, check #s 7890-7938 in the amount of $55,570.75

Highway Fund, check #s 4587-4613 in the amount of $68,526.87

Highway Vehicle Reserve fund – check #4610 in the amount of $71,423.20

Ambulance – check #7916 in the amount of $62,500.00

Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR: Renee Richard, 6 Drake Road – thanked Supervisor Burton for her “Notes from the Supervisor” newsletters, adding that she thought the proposed summer camp and Arts & Crafts was a great idea, and asked if they had done a bid for the Bottini Fuel air conditioning project. Supervisor Burton replied that since this was an emergency repair, Bottini was contacted as they were already working here in the building for the new HVAC system and their prior bid for that project was the lowest bid received.

With no other matters to be discussed, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:36 PM by Wendy Burton, seconded by Theodore Secor. Motion carried with all present voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Ritamary Bell

Town Clerk