

**VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**MAY 15, 2012**

A Regular Meeting was held by the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, May 15, 2012 at 7:35 p.m. in the Meeting Room, Municipal Building, 7 Maple Avenue.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Peter Swiderski, Trustee Marjorie Apel, Trustee Meg Walker, Trustee Nicola Armacost, Village Manager Francis A. Frobel, Village Attorney Marianne Stecich, and Village Clerk Susan Maggiotto.

**ABSENT:** Trustee Bruce Jennings

**CITIZENS:** Five (5).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On MOTION of Trustee Walker, SECONDED by Trustee Apel with a voice vote of all in favor, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 24, 2012 and the Regular Meeting and Executive Session of May 1, 2012 were approved as presented.

**APPROVAL OF WARRANTS**

On MOTION of Trustee Walker, SECONDED by Trustee Apel with a voice vote of all in favor, the following Warrants were approved:

Multi-Fund No. 71-2011-12 \$ 35,017.09  
Multi-Fund No. 72-2011-12 \$ 50,275.72  
Multi-Fund No. 73-2011-12 \$203,108.56

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**John Gonder, 153 James Street:** I guess I do not make myself clear. Maybe it is my age, I am not sure. But I did not communicate too well last time. On the agenda you have Buffer Zone - Next Steps, so I will not talk about it, but Meg Walker's person from Bosnia did an outstanding job.

We have a statue outside from Mr. Lipchitz, "Heaven and Earth." I am almost 78. To me, it was not heaven on earth, but maybe the next best thing, Hastings. Lipchitz really thought about Hastings, and that is why he gave you the thing. This place was heaven on earth. But we are slipping a little, and this buffer zone is great. I think all the residents are for it. But we also have to look at the streets. When we see trailers, boats, buses, campers it negates all the things you want in a village. We had laws about it in the '70s. I think you have to make

new ordinances to eliminate these things. I hope I am making myself clear. I called this village going downhill like a honky-tonk village. That was like a cheap nightclub or dance hall. We are going downhill a little. We do not want to go like Dobbs Ferry, the problems they are having. We want to keep our community the way we believe it should be.

**Tim Downey, 520 Farragut Parkway:** I would like to hand out something I wrote about the quarry site. I will continually resist against it becoming a park. I see it as a valuable Village land asset that could be put to better use than another park. I see paper bags by the curbside filled with grass, dirt, potting soil. Our sanitation trucks pick up dirt or soon-to-be future dirt, and then we cart it to Yonkers, paying that vig and all the time involved with that. As I explain here, we could be, as we are asking our Village residents to do, composting it, not using the facility as a dump and forgotten about, which was the practice in the past, but doing it an environmental manner, where we are turning it over, creating inventory for the future for the waterfront or for the Village, saving ourselves half, or greater, of our current disposal fees and costs. I also go into more detail about this soil and rock material there, if we were to do something similar to what Dobbs Ferry did and utilize that footprint off Washington Avenue for a new DPW facility in the event plan A, merging with Dobbs Ferry, does not work out and we get a strong bid for the waterfront location, or the waterfront gets underway. Now we have this high-desired piece of land with this blight of the DPW, which folks across the tracks are not going to look at.

**34:12 AUTHORIZATION OF TAX CERTIORARI SETTLEMENT – 445 BROADWAY**

**Village Manager Frobel:** Mayor, you and the Board heard last meeting from special counsel the recommendation for passage of this resolution settling this tax certiorari matter.

On MOTION of Trustee Apel, SECONDED by Trustee Armacost the following Resolution was duly adopted upon roll call

**WHEREAS,** petitions having been filed by the property owner, below challenging real property tax assessments on the Village's assessment roll with respect to the following parcels:

<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Address Description</b>	<b>Year(s)</b>
<b>445 BROADWAY HASTINGS REALTY CORP.</b>	<b>445 Broadway Section 10, Block 624, Lot 5</b>	<b>2008- 2012</b>

**WHEREAS,** petitioner's court challenge is now pending in Supreme Court Westchester County; and

**WHEREAS,** the Village and the property owner have reached a mutually agreeable resolution with regard to the assessments at issue in the Court challenges; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED,** Counsel to the Village Attorney is authorized to execute a settlement on behalf of the Village for assessments for no less than the following:

<b>Years</b>	<b>Current AV</b>	<b>Reduced AV</b>	<b>AV Reduction</b>
2008	DISCONTINUED		
2009	260,525	210,000	50,525
2010	260,525	203,500	57,025
2011	260,525	230,900	29,625
2012	260,525	230,900	29,625

The refund of Village taxes amounts to \$37,881.46.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>
Trustee Bruce Jennings	Absent	
Trustee Marjorie Apel	X	
Trustee Meg Walker	X	
Trustee Nicola Armacost	X	
Mayor Peter Swiderski	X	

**35:12 HISTORIC HUDSON RIVER TOWNS – SUPPORT OF GRANT APPLICATIO**

**Village Manager Frobel:** Mayor, as you are aware, the Village is part of the Historic Hudson River Towns. That is the group of communities on both the east and west side of the Hudson from Albany to Yonkers. It was originally Historic River Towns of Westchester, and we entered into an IMA back in 1994. They have put together what sounds to be a very creative program, a grant that they are looking to submit to the Greenway Compact, which the Village is also a member of.

This is a \$50,000 grant. It will require a match, but the match will be funded, as we understand it, from private sources which they will be raising on their own, as I think I understand, to develop what should be a very interesting hotline regional itinerary type program, where the user will go online and, I guess, essentially map out an itinerary for himself, visiting some of the communities up and down the Hudson River.

They are looking for our support. They need a certain percentage of the members of the Greenway Compact communities to support it. We are looking for the Board to pass this and offer our support. There is no financial obligation on the part of the Village in terms of this application.

**Trustee Walker:** May I add just one comment? The Web site already exists, and they are just really making it a lot more robust. I do not have the numbers in front of me, but they have discovered that they get a significant number of hits. So when people are looking to come to the Hudson Valley it is one of the first things that comes up.

So it really is, actually, a very useful Web site for all of us to drive tourism to our communities and to list our events on. we did not realize that until recently, when they kind of let all the members know how much traffic that Web site was getting.

**Mayor Swiderski:** And, Meg, you are speaking as part of the River Towns Tourism council. There is a desire there, I know, to coordinate and work with that.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, thanks for mentioning that. The goals are kind of different. Because our little tourism board is really just focused on three villages and on very specific events and a very specific kind of promotion. You know, it is a smaller-scale kind of effort, and very localized. This is a larger effort.

Even though Historic River Towns is reaching out to communities all the way up to Albany, they still have no members outside of Westchester County. They have reached across the river, but it really still just consists of the river towns in Westchester County. There has been some interest on the part of, oh, Hudson and Kingston and Beacon, but I do not think they have ever actually joined. So I just wanted to clarify that. It is intended to be much grander, really encompassing much of the Hudson Valley, but it does not yet.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Right. Well, anything that drives people to take a train up here or to visit, our stores could use it.

**Trustee Walker:** Oh, yes.

On MOTION of Trustee Armacost, SECONDED by Trustee Walker the following Resolution was duly adopted upon roll call

**WHEREAS,** the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson hereby acknowledges and supports the Historic Hudson River Towns grant submission to the Greenway Compact Grant Program for partial funding for a project entitled “HudsonRiver.com: Online Regional Itinerary Building”; and

**WHEREAS,** the Historic Hudson River Towns has historically operated on an intermunicipal level to assist and promote a member municipality’s tourism and economic development activities; and

**WHEREAS,** the grant application for implementation projects requires that at least 50% of the member municipalities that benefit from the grant are Greenway Compact Communities; now therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the Mayor and Board of Trustees of Hastings-on-Hudson hereby approves the Historic Hudson River Towns grant application under the Greenway Compact Grant Program for a project known as “HudsonRiver.com: Online Regional Itinerary Building.”

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>
Trustee Bruce Jennings		Absent
Trustee Marjorie Apel	X	
Trustee Meg Walker	X	
Trustee Nicola Armacost	X	
Mayor Peter Swiderski	X	

**VILLAGE MANAGER’S REPORT**

**Con Edison Line Repair**

**Village Manager Frobel:** Mayor, the gas line repair project that Con Ed started last week is moving along nicely. They expect to have most of the excavation work done perhaps as

early as tomorrow. Obviously, they will have to go back with some additional work, but a high percentage of the work has been completed.

We did find out today, however, in our job meeting that the company is looking to work on it tomorrow evening. It is really unavoidable. Obviously, we would prefer not to work in the evening hours, but they are looking to work at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Southside, traveling about 700 feet south, ending at the machine shop on Southside.

What they are going to be doing is actually installing, in the main, another line; in other words, supporting it with a replacement line. It is going to require quite a bit of work and it is going to be very disruptive for the traffic. So consequently, they are going to have to completely shut it down. The only way to really get it done effectively is during those evening hours.

Now it may take all night, or it may be finished sooner than that. But beginning at 7, they hope to be finished in the early morning hours with that. We certainly apologize to the neighbors that will be disrupted by the noise, although we are led to believe the noise will be minimal, aside from the lights, obviously. The only other tool being used is the type of backhoe which actually drags this pipe through a pipe which will have some noise. But there will be no backup horns, et cetera that should be as disruptive as you might be typically expecting in the construction job.

Other than that, they should be finished shortly. Once that is finished, they are going back and making the service connections. All the work has moved rather smoothly.

That is everything.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS**

### **1. Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee**

**Trustee Apel:** This is the proposal for the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.

"The Comprehensive Plan was passed by the Board of Trustees in March, 2011 after two years of work by the Comprehensive Plan Committee. The Village would like to begin a process to review, schedule and begin implementation of the plan.

The effort should be shepherded in by a new Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee ('the committee'), composed of seven residents selected by the Board of

Trustees for the effort. The committee will be charged with reviewing the Comprehensive Plan with the objective generally to prioritize and schedule the strategies contained in the plan.

The steps would include:

1. Review plan. The committee would review the Comprehensive Plan and generally prioritize the recommendations within each chapter.
2. Schedule. The committee would loosely schedule which priorities would occur in which year over a five-year period. Some projects may be scheduled beyond that, or dropped entirely.
3. Public input. Hold a public meeting and reach out to the community by e-mail to get input on the prioritization; adjust prioritization, where appropriate, based on public input.
4. Assign responsibility. Identify the entity responsible for implementing the recommendation. This could include a Village committee or a board, the Board of Trustees, the Village government, or the committee itself.
5. Cost estimate. Roughly assign a cost to the project scheduled for the next two years.
6. Trustee approval. Submit the project to the Board for review.
7. Distribute work. Meet with the appropriate committees and distribute the first projects.
8. Monitor project implementation, and report out to the Village and Board.

Large efforts of this sort usually require a dedicated champion to push the process along. Trustee Apel would lead the effort, assisting the committee where needed and ensuring that communications necessary with the Board and other committees or groups would happen in an expeditious manner."

When we brought this up last week, one of the suggestions was to have an understanding that committees are already formed and are working on some parts of the Comprehensive Plan. It is not the intention of this newly-formed committee to stop everybody from doing what they are doing, but to survey what we are doing so far, look at what we have not done already,

come out with a timeline spread sheet of all the possible projects, and come up with suggestions, as it was recommended in this sheet, as to how we might go about it.

Do we need additional committees? Do we have committees that are already working that could be tasked with taking these particular things on? Also, thinking in terms of scheduling, whether we want any of these things to start next year, two years, three years, five years, and which ones are going to cost us money. That is part of the strategic plan. If it is high on the priority list and it is going to cost us money, we have to know about that and budget for it. So what we were hoping for was a discussion with the Board or people in the Village and then we could have a resolution.

**Trustee Armacost:** This is a very sensible idea. At the time that we disbanded the Comprehensive Plan Committee, it was with the understanding that we would constitute a different committee with not necessarily the same people, but people who had a set of skills that would be able to support this. I was not here last time; did you discuss the skills sets?

**Mayor Swiderski:** Not yet.

**Trustee Armacost:** I am very happy that there is a consideration of the budget. It is important that the group understands that it is making recommendations, not all of which will be followed. Its goal is to provide advice and input to the Board, but there may be a number of considerations that would mean even if a certain set of activities was scheduled for, say, 2013 they could not happen that year for financial reasons or other reasons. So as long as that is clear to them, I do not think anything that you have said is problematic.

**Trustee Walker:** We do need this committee to take into account that a lot of efforts are already underway. It would be good to have somebody monitoring the whole. This committee can reach out to these groups that are in the process of implementing or carrying out some of the ideas and keep on top of them, keep pushing them along, checking in on budget items, and maybe have a checklist that they use when they check in, whether it is the Conservation Commission or a downtown group, if we have one. I think that would be very effective. There should be a charge specifically.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I understand what is attractive here is the prioritization, because last year we looked at it and in some terror backed away from it. A bunch of things began rolling out anyway because they were good ideas that had community support. But that overall prioritization we missed, and I welcome that. The responsibility of oversight that you are discussing implies a couple of things. First, it implies that this group will be around for years to monitor it. I want to confirm that that is the intention here. This is a three or four year, at least, effort. Do we want people to sign on for that, and is it realistic or fair to ask that, and is



it appropriate to have that oversight responsibility, when they are not just another committee, but they are not the ones charged with implementing it. Is that the charge, or is to monitor?

**Trustee Armacost:** My understanding was a setting the stage kind of thing. Monitoring is important. But whether that should be done by an outside body? To me, that is the job of the Village Manager to monitor it. If there is a list of activities, his responsibility in having other people involved in that decision-making is maybe very inefficient, but the set of recommendations is very sensible to have from a group of interested citizens. When I look at the Comprehensive Plan, a number of things have been achieved. So setting up a document which lists the activities and has status on the side, completed, pending, in progress or something, is a useful contribution. Instead of someone on the committee permanently ticking those off, that seems a more sensible job for Village staff.

**Village Manager Frobel:** I saw it similar to what Bruce put together for our green team, for our sustainability plan. It is very helpful. He has that matrix, and I can turn to that, where there is an action item and a responsible party. That is a very helpful guidepost for me.

**Trustee Armacost:** But having the committee design that would be a useful contribution and involves that prioritizing activity.

**Mayor Swiderski:** To the cut on prioritizing, queuing up, determining who is going to do it. If we had more hours the Board could do it. But we have not.

**Trustee Apel:** The problem with being frozen is just let us get started on it and get it done. The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed every five years, so we are going to have a committee one way or another. Whether this is committee one that sets the stage and gets us going, and then it morphs into something else, or another committee takes us to the next stage, we can see that as we go along. For now, let us get this committee together that will prioritize and schedule and make recommendations and put out a spread sheet. Let us get started, review what we have done, see where we need to go.

**Mayor Swiderski:** That charge is well-defined and I completely agree with you.

**Trustee Apel:** And then we will worry about who is overseeing it. When we get to that point, if we need a committee to oversee it then we will decide. But let us at least get to something so we know what we are overseeing.

**Mayor Swiderski:** So we agree on the charge. What about a time frame? What is realistic to expect them to do a first pass and a prioritization?

**Trustee Apel:** They are going to need six months. If we started now, if we were able to even get people, if they can get together over the summer that is great, but in earnest in the fall, then I think by the end of the year we should have something, at least a review of what is going on. We have very intelligent people in this community and a lot of project managers. They would be able to put this together. If they get it done before then, fine.

**Trustee Walker:** Let me express my concern again. If you go through the Comprehensive Plan, there are dozens of things that are underway that committees are working on. This committee has to interact with the people who are in the process. Then if there is some prioritization, then maybe pull back on this and push on that. We can make that decision also. Then we will determine who tells these committees. Maybe it is not this group. But I see this as prioritization, organization of the effort that is ongoing.

**Trustee Apel:** Definitely we have to see what is going on.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Agreed.

**Trustee Armacost:** Yes, exactly.

**Trustee Apel:** A lot of people do not realize that these things are going on. So if we had one big sheet and it said we are already doing it and we only have this little part left, that would be great. Let us get it out there so the community knows that we have started on these things, that they are in the plan, the plan is being implemented, it was not something that is sitting on the shelf, but at the same time, we still have this to do or that to do.

**Trustee Walker:** That is fine.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I think that is well-defined. I think we can take a whack at skills sets.

**Trustee Armacost:** There are the various sections of the Comprehensive Plan that imply a certain set of skills. There is a set of skills relating to parks, a set of skills relating to transportation, a set of skills relating to downtown.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Project management.

**Trustee Armacost:** Clearly, project management skills. So you would want to see those kinds of things. We received a number of CVs for the waterfront committee, and we had a surfeit of amazingly qualified architects, for example, who would be excellent for this.

**Mayor Swiderski:** How big a committee are we talking about?

**Trustee Apel:** We said seven.

**Trustee Armacost:** Is that too small?

**Trustee Apel:** No. You get too many people and then you cannot get a decision.

**Trustee Armacost:** The Comprehensive Plan Committee was how many?

**Mayor Swiderski:** Eleven.

**Trustee Apel:** I think we could start with seven. If the committee finds that they need additional assistance they can call on additional people, specialists in the field if they think they need a specialist.

**Jim Metzger, 427 Warburton Avenue:** As a former member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, I am thrilled that this is finally starting to gel and take a form that is going to help the Village move forward. As Meg said, there are so many of these projects that we have identified over the last three or four years that are moving ahead, I take that as an incredibly positive step, that the inertia has been overcome, and we are starting to move forward with a lot of these things.

Two things that we need to clarify. Having thought about this, and I will be putting my résumé in for the committee, is that the committee does not necessarily need to have skill sets to do the implementation; they need to identify the problems, and then figure who has the skill set to implement them. This Comprehensive Plan oversight committee may be a more definitive way to look at this as opposed to an implementation committee.

The other thing, and this is going to make things more complicated but is crucial for the Comp Plan to be fully realized, is that we cannot look at the Comprehensive Plan just as a set of objectives and goals that need to be addressed and taken care of. There are so many issues that overlap various aspects of the Village that the Conservation Commission, the Safety Committee, a downtown committee, may all be involved in identifying and working on a certain issue. We have to make sure this committee is set up to look at a three-dimensional matrix of how all of these pieces work together so we are not solving one problem and neglecting other issues that tie into that: the whole genesis of why the Comp Plan came together to start with. This committee needs to understand it is not a chapter-by-chapter paragraph-by-paragraph situation; the entire document needs to be looked at, and various pieces need to be pulled together, as goals are identified.

**Ellen Hendrickx, 136 Circle Drive:** You will have to come up with some sort of implementation group as subgroups, maybe comprised of some of the people within the implementation or objective committee. But then in terms of farming out whatever work needs to be done. I guess that would also go through the Village Manager.

**David Skolnik, 47 Hillside Avenue:** Could you spell out what ongoing processes you referred to?

**Mayor Swiderski:** There are a bunch of projects, for example with the Conservation Committee, that are enacting components of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Trustee Armacost:** And there are sections in the parks part of the document that have recommendations that are already being acted on.

**Mr. Skolnik:** Specifically with regard to the Conservation Commission, at one of the last ones I attended there was discussion about whether Conservation was going to function to lead or have significant input into the transportation aspect of the plan.

**Mayor Swiderski:** We have not figured that out. That is part of the charge of the committee. In meeting with Conservation, Safety and others if it makes sense for a project to fall within its subgroup of conservation that would be the recommendation of the committee, I would imagine. And if it makes sense for that to be in Safety, that would be the recommendation to the Board and we consider it.

**Mr. Skolnik:** So that is a function of what this committee would be charged with.

**Trustee Walker:** The Conservation Commission has had a transportation subcommittee for several years. We haven't tackled the Comprehensive Plan, but they have been addressing issues.

**Mr. Skolnik:** The question is, in this time frame, where would you see the first public input begin to happen?

**Trustee Armacost:** I think it is too early so say.

**Trustee Apel:** Yes. I think what has to happen is I want the committee to see what is going on. Put this spread sheet out so we see what the different committees have been working on so we see what is happening.

**Mr. Skolnik:** That is what I mean. You say the different committees, and I am wondering what committees have been working on this.

**Trustee Armacost:** There are many committees doing things.

**Trustee Apel:** We had an Economic Development Committee. Are they doing anything that relates to this or not, or are they functioning? What is going on, what were their plans?

**Mayor Swiderski:** Existing commissions and boards. We should probably not say committees.

**Trustee Armacost:** But there is a Quarry Committee, for example. One of the elements of the plan relates to the quarry. So there are committees, boards, commissions. They all have different names. There are councils. They are all doing activities, and being able to gather the list of those activities that are relevant to the Comprehensive Plan that have been done so they are ticked off. Some of them are done by the Village, nothing to do with committees or commissions. But they are activities that were suggested that have been done already. And there are some that are pending and there are some no one has put his or her thoughts to. So being able to separate that out is very useful to us, and will be one of the functions of the committee but not the only function.

**Mr. Skolnik:** All right, that clarifies it.

**Trustee Armacost:** Documenting an action plan, basically.

**Trustee Apel:** Right. And coming up with a strategic plan as to where to go forward after that.

**Trustee Apel:** So as far as skill sets.

**Mayor Swiderski:** A couple of people from the Comprehensive Plan with institutional memory.

**Trustee Apel:** And then have people that are interested and organized.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Project management. A planner would be nice, architecture would be nice.

**Trustee Armacost:** Also someone in communications, maybe.

**Mayor Swiderski:** That would also be important.

**Trustee Armacost:** It is not necessarily a requirement.

**Trustee Apel:** No. And someone who is good with numbers might be helpful, or not.

**Trustee Armacost:** It would be useful to have someone who has a financial background, if somebody applied.

**Trustee Apel:** So I have project management, architects, finance. What else did we say?

**Trustee Armacost:** You said a planner, you said former members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee. People who have been involved in the past and some people who are new so there is a mixture.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Longitudinal above age, sex and geographic; wherever it can get diversity is a good thing.

**Trustee Armacost:** People who have particular knowledge in some of the areas that were focused on in the report are valuable to have. Former members of the Parks and Rec commission, perhaps, or people who are not overly strapped in other jobs.

**Trustee Apel:** Anybody that is interested should apply. If they are not accepted because of the sheer numbers at this time, we are going to put them on a list as people that would be called upon by this committee because the committee may need additional help. Do not feel that you are applying and we are not going to take advantage of you.

**Trustee Armacost:** I know the Chamber of Commerce was disbanded or is defunct, but somebody who represents the commercial sector might be interesting.

**Mayor Swiderski:** In terms of immediate next steps, it is easy enough to modify the infrastructure committee volunteer quest to incorporate these requirements. I do not necessarily want to wait three weeks until our next meeting. To set up the committee do we need a formal resolution?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** No, there does not need to be.

**Mayor Swiderski:** We are in accord here that the committee as constituted and described is what we want.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Then you can send out for the names, and when you have your committee you could do a resolution.

**Village Manager Frobel:** And appoint the members at the same time.

**Mayor Swiderski:** This is a big step in that a year ago we passed the Comprehensive Plan.

**Trustee Apel:** Those of you that are watching tonight feel free to send us your letter of inquiry, application and intent. The sooner that we get them in, then we can put this all together. Do we have a deadline?

**Mayor Swiderski:** We can probably get a request out in the next week. I do not remember what we did for the infrastructure committee. Three weeks?

**Trustee Apel:** Let us pick a date.

[ Discussion of timing ]

**Mayor Swiderski:** Applications have to be in by midnight on Friday, June 15. At our meeting on June 19 we can appoint and then formalize it in a resolution.

## **2. Buffer Zone - Next Steps**

**Trustee Walker:** This is one of several projects we have underway. I have some notes which I will distribute. This is not a formal strategy. Since the last time we talked about this, Marge and I met with Ellen Hendrickx, and we drove around and looked at all of the buffer zones recommended in our buffer zone report. We have done some prioritizing and we came up with questions which we spoke to Marianne about. Some of the thorny issues were ironed out. Additional issues popped up which we think we need to discuss.

Buffer zones are different from preservation of open space or preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. That is something that we will probably need to discuss. We are really talking about what you see not looking way into the properties, but what you see within a reasonable distance, which we will discuss, from the roadways. If we want to do more, there are other tools to do more. We thought we would like to look at Route 9-A and Broadway south of Washington Avenue, and then have some discussion about the gateway at the Saw Mill Parkway and Farragut Parkway. For Route 9-A, the initial proposal in our report proposes a 100-foot buffer all the way from the Dobbs Ferry border to the Yonkers border. We thought it does not need to go all the way down to the Yonkers border, because there is a residential community there, plus some commercial uses, which are close to the

roadway. You cannot imagine a buffer there. So we need to redraw the southern boundary north of the commercial properties a little south of where Farragut Avenue leads you to that parking lot for the South County Trailway. We would reduce it in size.

But we agreed that 100 feet was about right. The proposal was based on some of the existing industrial and office buildings on the north end, which are between 80 and 100 feet, the closest ones, from the roadway. So having a decent setback there we thought was important. We also noticed, especially at the north end, that there are some significant trees that would fall within this 100-foot buffer, which would be great to preserve. There is not a significant amount of vegetation.

The Ginsburg property on Route 9-A is mostly a paved parking lot. Any building there is going to have to have a parking lot in front. We agreed that in this particular buffer, and maybe not the other buffers, we would allow parking lots. But we might want to come up with design guidelines and setback requirements for the parking lots. There are several places where parking lots may need to go in. One would be on the Ginsburg property at the north end. If the buildings are set back, then parking is going to have to go in front because there is no other place to put it. The county has proposed an additional parking lot to provide access to the South County Trailway off Route 9-A just north of the Ravensdale bridge. Again, we think that is a good idea. We have not discussed it, but to have an additional parking lot is not a bad idea. But how it is designed and how it looks from the roadway we do care about. We may want to get some guidelines, and we may want to require pervious paving in a parking lot, or at least partially pervious, and maybe there is a vegetative buffer along the roadway. There is an additional parking lot that already exists at the Hastings Manor catering hall across the street. They have recently made some improvements to it and planted some trees. Planters and a little gazebo for wedding photos, and grass along the roadway. It is looking better. But if that were to be renovated, we may want to have some additional guidelines, again, for pervious paving and so on. So we need to address parking in that buffer, and we need to talk about what other features besides just no structures we want to preserve: trees, for example, and the vegetation. We think that was a high priority.

The more complicated area is along the two Broadways. Broadway from Warburton Avenue to the Yonkers border divides up into New Broadway and Old Broadway. We have various recommendations for setbacks on those two roadways. We looked at it as the large tracts and what we would like to see on those large tracts. The Graham School, the Burke Estate, the Andrus School and the Andrus retirement community were the significant large tracts. There is the church there, as well, which could be lumped with the Graham School.

One of the questions we had was, do we want to do a continuous buffer all the way along and include small private properties, or do we want to exclude small private properties? We



thought the 125-foot buffer on the west side of New Broadway that would encompass some of the large residential properties, as well the church and the Graham School, is appropriate. We do not have control over the Graham School because it is recognized by the state as a school district. We cannot prevent them from building within that setback. However, we want to communicate our intentions, even to a non-profit or a school. And they might want to subdivide or sell their property. It could be privately owned and then these requirements would apply. We do not think just because it is a school property we should not create a buffer zone. We did not see the Burke Estate as a high a priority, but because part of it is on Broadway we may want to include it in this buffer. The same thing applies to the Burke Estate. As a school district, they can do anything they want. But again, if they were to sell it we would have control over it.

The Andrus School and the Andrus retirement community, here Sanja looked at what was beautiful, scenic and exceptional about these properties, and recommended a 200-foot buffer, for example, along the west side of the Andrus retirement community because there is a steep hill there. I concurred when we looked at it: 200 feet along the Andrus Children's Home on Broadway and on Tompkins Avenue because that landscape is so exceptional, so pastoral. The meadows and the stone walls and the wetlands and the rock outcroppings along Tompkins for example, are exceptional.

But Marianne pointed out that we might be getting beyond the limit of what could be called a buffer and we may want to look at other ways to preserve that land, such as cluster zoning or an environmental overlay zone that would highlight the sensitive environmental areas. That is a question on the table. Otherwise, we agree with the recommendations for the distances along there.

A third one that we looked at we thought was important, but it is difficult to create a buffer: the gateway into Hastings at Farragut Parkway off the Saw Mill Parkway. It is all state property, except for a few small private properties that poke into it, with backyards and garden sheds. Maybe we should be talking to the state about how we can improve it as a gateway. We want it to be well-maintained, we want vines removed, we want the wetlands to be protected there. How do we work with the state to make that happen? If we want to plant flowers there, if we want to do other kinds of landscaping, what kinds of agreements do we have with the state? Fran, I meant to call you to ask you if we have an agreement.

**Village Manager Frobel:** I can answer all those questions, but perhaps at another opportunity. I did get involved in that about six years ago, and I can tell you state had a high level of interest in working with us to take that responsibility over at that time.

**Trustee Walker:** Then the question is, do we want that responsibility?

**Village Manager Frobel:** I agree, for the reasons you have outlined, we should. It is not well-maintained. It is mowed twice a year, and it was left could you at least call us a few hours before you mow so we could send someone to pick up the paper so you did not mow it and send it flying through the field. But they would be happy to. I always want to get involved in that turnaround that is all broken up and looks awful. But for another evening.

**Trustee Walker:** We agree that it is a priority because it is an important gateway and one of those things mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan as being significant. But we were not sure exactly how to tackle it. And buffers are not the way, so it is another discussion.

The questions I outlined here are do we want to reduce that 200-foot buffer to something else, and then talk about other ways of protecting the property? Do we want to include the parking lots on 9-A but not on Broadway in terms of when we write this up? What scenic resources do we want to protect in both of these areas? We talked about stone or brick walls, trees and vegetation, scenic views, and restricting new structures. Then what do we do with the small properties, the smaller houses on Broadway? We will not have that problem on 9-A because we will stop before we get to them. But on Broadway we have those questions.

**Trustee Armacost:** How many small properties are affected?

**Trustee Walker:** There are probably nine or 10 on Old Broadway, probably another seven or eight on New Broadway but smaller ones.

**Trustee Apel:** You are always concerned if there is any possibility that all of those houses are going to be ripped down, then you are going to have that land. Then if you do not have your zone... you could say we are going to have the zone if anybody rips them up, but to spend our time on it, the thought that all those houses are going to be ripped down does not seem plausible. But you never know. So if you have the plan in place, your intent is clear, this is how we want it to look.

**Trustee Armacost:** So the issue that was raised of how onerous or burdensome is it for those people to make small changes, how often would that come up even? How much of a concern is it that people would need to be asking permission?

**Trustee Walker:** The first question to me is, why would we want to restrict the small properties. There are a couple of good reasons. On New Broadway there are some important views of the Hudson River as you are driving along there where those small properties are. So that is one thing. But what difference would it make to us if they decided to plant a tree

in their front yard or put a breakfast wing on there. I do not know that it would affect what we think is important, which is the view. We do have the view preservation law, so that would come into effect. I do not feel strongly about these small properties. But at a certain point you get to larger properties on Broadway that are set back and have beautiful trees in front. Those, I think, are applicable. The buffer should apply to them. How you make that distinction is the question. It is easier just to say, why do we not run this buffer along the whole way rather than making this distinction. But then all these other little properties are sucked into it.

**Trustee Apel:** We could cut it down. Maybe the rest of the Board wants to take a tour of these particular small areas. You know the other ones. Maybe these are a little harder to envision. Then have a sense of what we are talking about.

**Trustee Armacost:** So the buffer goes a certain distance out from the road. It does not encompass the entire property. Or does it encompass the entire property?

**Trustee Walker:** We are proposing different distances.

**Trustee Armacost:** So why would it even affect a house which was built far back?

**Trustee Walker:** Many of these houses are within the buffer.

**Trustee Armacost:** How many does it affect?

**Mayor Swiderski:** The 100-foot line significantly affects a bunch of smaller ones on Old Broadway. It is a significant part of their property, if not most.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, and there are a lot of them. Then on New Broadway there is a number of them on the west side, too. So the same thing.

**Mayor Swiderski:** A quarter-acre lot is, what, 125 feet? So 100 feet in is most of the lot.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, it is most of the lot.

**Mayor Swiderski:** One-hundred by 100? So 100 feet in is a lot. It is taking their property rights.

**Trustee Walker:** That one that you are looking at, which is Old Broadway, what is significant to me is the Andrus Children's Home, the Andrus retirement community, which is on the west side, and the Burke Estate. All that stuff in between, to me, is just not that

significant. It is not stuff, it is people's houses. They are smaller properties, not large tracts. So does it make sense to just apply this to the large tracts and, in that case, is it a buffer? On the other hand, I think it works on the Andrus retirement home and on the Andrus Children's School property.

**Trustee Apel:** Then we have to understand which ones are schools. We can state them.

**Trustee Walker:** Ultimately, I do not think it matters. I think we apply it anyway.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** And they will say, we do not have to comply.

**Trustee Armacost:** I would like to understand exactly what is at stake for the people who are the small property owners, or the large property owners for that matter. The public land areas, where it is the Burke Estate or that kind of stuff that is abutting, I do not think that is so much of an issue.

**Trustee Walker:** Marianne can weigh in on this, but we could have a continuous buffer but say it does not apply to properties under a certain size. Could we do that?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Let me give you, by way of example, the way Irvington deals with the Broadway buffer. It says where there is nothing there now, the buffer is 125 feet on Broadway. But where there is something there it is 50 feet. It does not say you cannot build at all, but if you do you need a variance. You could make it not a variance, you can make it that any addition would require site plan approval or any structure would require site plan approval. So you could do it that way. They have two buffers: one on Cyrus Field Road, where there is nothing, so then that is just a continuous buffer, it is all the same for everything. But when the Broadway buffer was instituted there was stuff already there. It does run the length of Broadway, but it is treated differently if there is something already there and if it is blank.

**Trustee Armacost:** That seems like a sensible way to do it. I do not think you want it becoming overly restrictive for small changes that people want to make. But if the point is that you want to preempt something destructive happening in the future, it needs to be worded in a way where it does not, as a result of that goal, prevent things happening in the present.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** It would be more onerous to have to go before the Planning Board. But right now, if your property has a steep slope on it, it has to come before the Planning Board. So if you happen to be in that buffer area, if you want to do anything, it has to be approved.

**Trustee Walker:** Some of those properties on Old Broadway have some beautiful old stone walls. Even the little properties have some beautiful stone walls which are historic and part of the character that we would want to preserve. So if they came to the Planning Board and said they wanted to take it out because they wanted to put in a new driveway or widen their driveway that would be an example of where we would want site plan approval.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** You just have to be careful about how you define what you can do and not do within the buffer. So you are saying rather than just not build, you cannot take down any trees and you cannot allow paving on the one on 9-A if it is approved by the Planning Board. You are also suggesting additional things, like if you have a stone wall you cannot take it down.

**Trustee Walker:** Can we define what is important about these properties? I would like to do that in the ordinance, to say this buffer is significant because it has stone walls, because it has important vegetation.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, you could do that. But in addition to that, you have to define not only things you cannot build but things you cannot take down within the buffer, which is not unreasonable because you probably would have a provision that you cannot take down trees bigger than 8 inches in diameter at breast height or whatever. It cannot be unreasonable. You are going to have to be careful about defining what you can and cannot do within the buffer. So besides defining the buffer, think of what activities you want to allow and not allow in the buffer.

**Trustee Armacost:** So would the corollary be that you have to maintain it? I have got huge Village walls all the way around my property. And some people have those kinds of things that they are dealing with. In those areas, do they have to maintain it to a certain standard? Do they have to hire specific people so that it looks ancient, that they cannot use mud and cement?

**Trustee Walker:** There are some precedents for that. There are a lot of stone regulations.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** A stone wall could be dealt with separately. It seems to me it might be a better way to do it, because it is certainly relevant beyond the buffer.

**Trustee Apel:** I would like to treat the stone walls separately. The other half of that is once you have regulations you could be writing for grants. They probably define restoration grants and stuff like that.

**Trustee Armacost:** To maintain them, exactly.

**Trustee Apel:** And maybe encourage people to put up stone walls on property as it goes along Broadway or other ways to enhance the character of the Village. Once you have a law that shows you are serious and have intent, and this is what you want to preserve and this is what you like about your community, then you have a stronger leg in order to write for these grants.

**Trustee Armacost:** Yes. I think separating out the stone wall seems sensible.

**Trustee Apel:** So let us separate out stone walls.

**Trustee Walker:** Then it comes down to vegetation, trees of a certain height. Sometimes the vegetation, like on the Andrus Children's Home, it is not so much about trees. It is about a meadow. So we would like to have that preserved. There are wetlands pretty close to Broadway that we would want to have preserved. How detailed do we have to get?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** I think the wetlands should be dealt with separately. It is significant whether it is on Broadway or not, or whether it is on 9-A or not. You should just have a wetlands law. I am not saying it is easy, but it has come up before.

**Trustee Walker:** It has come up, and it is in the Comp Plan, too.

**Trustee Armacost:** And we have the wetlands near the entrance to the Saw Mill on Farragut. That needs to be taken care of, as well.

**Trustee Walker:** So separating out stone walls and wetlands.

**Trustee Armacost:** That leaves views and trees and vegetation.

**Trustee Walker:** In fine-tuning this we might want to look at these properties more carefully. We have been looking at it more globally. It would be useful if we all looked at them, particularly in light of this question about the smaller properties.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** It might be helpful to look at them also with an outline of the law you have in mind. What is this regulation going to mean to this property? Again, I did not write it, but the Irvington one is not bad.

**Trustee Walker:** You may not have written it, but you have to help enforce it.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** I have to say it never seems to have been an issue.

**Trustee Walker:** What are the next steps?

**Ms. Hendrickx:** I want to revisit 9-A and the parking. That is a narrow strip of land between the 100-year flood zone and the street. Ginsburg was planning the bulk of the parking underneath the structure. Maybe if you can limit the amount of parking, and if any structures are going to be built, parking be incorporated below to minimize as much parking along the street as possible.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, that is a good thought. There have been a lot of proposals for this parcel, and I cannot remember which is which. But it seemed to me the parking was underneath except for visitor parking, which was in front.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Most of it is above ground.

**Trustee Walker:** Most of it is above ground now? Because it is really expensive to put in underground parking. I do not know that you can require it.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I also get a little queasy at site-specific discussions about design details. I do not want to single him out.

**Trustee Apel:** But a long time ago there were a lot of buffered plants and vegetation.

**Mayor Swiderski:** His last proposal had a mound and trees on it buffering the property from the street, and would arguably do a better job than what we have there now, which is scrub land.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** But the concern here, just for the record, was not regulating that property in particular, but creating a buffer along 9-A, trying to seek an accommodation for that property that makes it still usable.

**Trustee Apel:** Because they were already interested. So what do you want to do?

**Mr. Skolnik:** I am urging that in your visualization of these buffers along these routes make it habit to visualize either the bike lanes or walking. I thought of it first when you were talking about 9-A because we did not get too far with dealing with those issues around the Ravensdale bridge this time around. But if, for example, they are talking about possible parking in that area they are not going to think about it. That is why we have to constantly keep that idea of that whole part of our movement in our vision.

**Mayor Swiderski:** My concern here is scope.

**Trustee Apel:** That is why we wanted to narrow it.

**Mayor Swiderski:** In terms of narrowing it, all I see narrowed is that we dropped Dobbs Ferry and, to some degree, Warburton.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, we dropped Warburton. We dropped an area along the Burke Estate along Farragut.

**Mayor Swiderski:** But there is still a fair amount here.

**Trustee Walker:** Because of the Broadway section.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Right. But all in all, dozens and dozens of properties are impacted. Is that your recommendation, to address all this in one fell swoop? And is that realistic? Can the law be written in that way, Marianne? Am I being unrealistic to worry that this is too much territory to cover, or can the law be written in a way that covers this?

**Trustee Armacost:** You can certainly make amendments. It is obviously much better to write a law with the things you want to have in it if you know what they are in advance. But we have amended laws and added other sections that apply. What are you worried about?

**Trustee Apel:** Why do you think it is too big? If we have identified that we are interested in the large tracts, and that is what we have had, 9-A and all the other properties.

**Mayor Swiderski:** The individual ones I was counting, potentially, on Broadway are certainly a dozen-plus, and with the large land tracts, private property and Andrus and schools, it is at least 40 or 50 in total. I am just throwing it out there. There is outreach to all those individuals and pulling them into the process because we are not going to do this without a notification to all those property holders. And in terms of scale, do we try to do this all at once, or we do one and then add others?

**Trustee Walker:** We could not do New Broadway on the west side, and just do Old Broadway on the east side.

**Trustee Armacost:** But we have dropped the stone walls, we have dropped the wetlands which are going to be treated separately. How would the small plots be affected or be controversial?



**Village Attorney Stecich:** That they would not be able to build further without getting permission from the Planning Board and the Zoning Board.

**Trustee Armacost:** But if they are making extensions to the houses they have to get permission anyway.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Not unless they are in view preservation. Are all these properties in the view preservation area? No, although they need to get a building permit. But site plan approval they don't need.

**Mayor Swiderski:** If they are within the zoning code they do not.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Right. If they do not need a variance. But this would mean that if the lots are that small, and you have got a good-sized buffer, virtually anything they do would require either a variance or site plan approval, however you structure it.

**Trustee Walker:** I have mixed feelings about this. I do not think that these properties, except for the stone walls and a few big trees, create the same kind of pastoral feeling that these large tracts do.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I agree. I am trying to understand the scope of what we were talking about.

**Trustee Walker:** And how could we limit it.

**Trustee Armacost:** Is there a way to just cut the properties out? Marge was talking about the concern if the buildings are destroyed and combined, and suddenly you have flats being built there or something, if that is the concern then we can certainly pass a law which covers the places which do not have residential properties right now.

**Trustee Walker:** It is all zoned single-family. That is not possible. They cannot build a multi-family.

**Trustee Armacost:** So then I am not clear on what the fear is.

**Trustee Walker:** We have kind of identified a couple of them. One was stone walls, which we can deal with separately, and large trees potentially. I have not looked at them piece by piece, with that in mind, like what is exceptional about these small properties. We have only looked at the large properties.

**Trustee Armacost:** Then why do we not look at them before we make a decision?

**Trustee Apel:** We would have to look to see where the large tracts are and where the small houses are. Do we want to do it in smaller pieces then?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** We need a blown-up map.

**Trustee Walker:** We can blow this up. But I do not know if you need the map to go out and look at the smaller properties. It is clear that there are not necessarily small single-family houses, but single-family houses on smaller lots. They are not large tracts. And the houses are close to Broadway. That is the other thing.

**Trustee Armacost:** Some of them are right up on Broadway. There is not even parking space.

**Mr. Metzger:** In New York, very often the way they would deal with something like this is you would look at, say, the setback depth as a percentage of the width of the property. You might say that if you have a small piece of property, say 100 feet wide, the buffer may only be, say, 20 percent of that for that property, assuming that the house is not currently sitting within that space. As the properties get wider, the buffer gets deeper, up to a maximum of 100 feet or 150 feet. So you set your buffer depth as a percentage of either the width of the property or as a percentage of the square footage of the property so that you can accommodate larger and smaller pieces of property with the same law.

**Trustee Walker:** But how do you enforce that?

**Mr. Metzger:** It gets written into the zoning code.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** How do they have that in New York? You mean for the big apartment buildings? Where is there a buffer in New York?

**Mr. Metzger:** No, I am talking when you do setbacks. Look at this as you are creating a front yard setback that runs along the street, because that is essentially what we are talking about. So you set that distance up as a percentage of the width of the property up to a maximum of whatever the buffer would be. Narrower properties would have a smaller setback requirement. So they all get covered, and you do not have to go on a house-by-house basis.

**Mayor Swiderski:** If it was by square feet I would understand that, but irregular size lots would lead to problems computing it.

**Mr. Metzger:** There are always going to be those issues, but that is a bigger way to look at it.

**Trustee Walker:** So it would be looked at when they come for a building permit, and the building inspector would know that they are within this district, and he would say you cannot build an addition because it projects into X.

**Mr. Metzger:** That is right. And then they have the opportunity to go for a variance.

**Trustee Walker:** It is not very transparent, though, from up front. They would not automatically know.

**Mr. Metzger:** Most people do not know what the zoning regulations are until they talk to one of the building officials or hire an architect.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Marianne, how does it work in Irvington in terms of smaller properties?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** First of all, it is a fixed number of feet, not a percentage. So for existing lots within 50 feet of the Broadway right of way "any additional structures or intrusions into the Broadway buffer shall be permitted only by variance obtained from the zoning board of appeals and conditioned upon the planting of evergreen and deciduous plantings." And "no variance shall be granted unless, as a condition, the applicant installs and maintains evergreen and deciduous plantings and landscaping as necessary to screen the building or structure within the buffer. For new lots or tear-downs, the Broadway buffer shall be 125 feet."

**Trustee Apel:** If the house got torn down on a very small lot, and then you say it is 100 feet and it takes up the whole lot, then you cannot let them build. That is the problem.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, that might not be as much of an issue for that because most of their properties line up along Broadway.

**Trustee Apel:** They are much bigger.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, they do not have tiny lots. There are a couple of smaller ones, but along Broadway they are pretty good sized lots.

**Trustee Apel:** I know you are concerned about some of these things. I do not know how fast we want to start moving this forward. It would seem to me that if we want to do the piece-by-piece thing, or just get started, let us just do 9-A and get that going. While we are getting that going we can start looking at these other areas and pick which ones we want to do next. Do them one at a time. I know people in the community might be concerned about large land, and I think we could take the next one. What is the one that the government is not involved in?

**Trustee Walker:** The Andrus School.

**Trustee Apel:** OK. So then the next one would be the Andrus School because that is one we can have an effect on and we do not have to start negotiating with the state.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** But then you run into a problem when you are just enacting a buffer for one piece of property.

**Trustee Apel:** For whatever that area is. I hear you.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** To minimize the chances of somebody challenging it, it has got to be part of a well thought out plan. A well thought plan is to protect Broadway from here to here. That is how it has got to be enacted.

**Trustee Walker:** But I think we could begin with 9-A and then spend a little more time looking at Broadway because there is some fine tuning that has to take place.

**Trustee Armacost:** Exactly. The stone walls law seems noncontroversial. It exists in other places so it would be relatively easy to copy. It could be a separate activity which preserves the look that we are interested in. A wetlands law also seems like it would be something that we can ask Marianne to look at.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** No, wetlands laws are more difficult. But I will give you some examples, and I will give you some examples of stone wall laws, which is not as easy as you would think.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I am not thinking it is easy at all.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** You know there is such a thing of a Bedford wall and a Greenwich wall. A Bedford wall is one that has mortar, and in Greenwich you are not allowed to have Bedford walls because a Greenwich wall has no mortar.

**Trustee Apel:** OK, so why do we not start with 9-A and those two others.

**Trustee Walker:** The wetlands are something the Conservation Commission is interested in looking at, too.

**Mr. Gonder:** If you only pick 9-A I would think you would have to have a hearing. And then you pick out Andrus and this and that, another hearing. You have to do in one step, get it over with. Everybody wants it. I am a resident, I want it. I am not sure the property owners want it. But let us do it all at once and it will be done within maybe six months or so, maybe within a year. Otherwise, it is going to take several years.

**Trustee Armacost:** I agree with him it should be done as one. It is worth looking at the small properties to see what the implications are, but then just bite the bullet.

**Trustee Apel:** OK.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Bite the bullet? Well, it is ripping the Band-Aid off, I guess.

**Trustee Armacost:** Some violent metaphor.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Well, these are property rights being affected, and people will react accordingly.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** The public hearings would be very helpful on this. It may well change your perspective.

**Mayor Swiderski:** We need specific proposals for the parcels. Then is this it, or do you want to fine tune it and come back with a specific set of proposals in terms of next steps?

**Trustee Walker:** These are just notes. This is not the proposal. Why do we not come back with more specifics. Marianne will help us, and we will also look at the smaller properties on Broadway. We will do counts, and we will need to get the names and addresses of people within these sections. Staff can help us with that. We will want to make sure that everybody is aware of what we are doing. We need to think about the appropriate distance on the Andrus Children's property, and then what other tools we want to use to preserve the significant open space in there. That brings us back to the clustering question and overlay zone question, which I am not going to launch tonight. I am just mentioning that we probably should revisit it to preserve what we really want to preserve.

### **3. Intermunicipal Agreement - River Towns Tourism Board**

**Mayor Swiderski:** Meg, is this something you are looking for approval tonight?

**Trustee Walker:** No. We have to put it on the agenda as a resolution, but maybe at our next meeting. I wanted to have a discussion where this is and why we are doing this, and also potentially a change or two.

This is from the River Towns Tourism Board. We started talking about a year ago about having an intermunicipal agreement among the three River Towns, Hastings, Dobbs Ferry and Irvington, leaving open the possibility that Tarrytown might join us or even Ardsley. But they have not yet. We can always add them in later as necessary. This would enable us to go after grants together, and perhaps would make it easier to make joint decisions. It is the formal structure under which River Towns Tourism Board would operate. It came up because we want to apply for grants to do information kiosks near the train station and near the Aqueduct or the South County Trailway to have maps and brochures and information available especially to visitors getting off the train.

I wrote it with Bruce Bolger's help, based on the Historic River Towns IMA. At our last meeting I presented it to the other members. Dobbs Ferry took it to their attorney who made a few tweaks to it, and then they immediately approved it before they told us what the changes were. I thought they were going to come back to us with some comments. They ran with it, which is great. Marianne had some comments. We do not define who the member is. We use different terminology in different places. Sometimes we say representative of a municipality, sometimes we say member. It is unclear as to who has the voting rights. The intention is that each town has one vote and one official representative who is a board member.

**Trustee Apel:** Is this the same person who has the vote and the representation?

**Trustee Walker:** Yes. But the voter is representing the will of the board.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** So it could be a different person, though. the important thing is that each village has one vote, which is not the way this is written.

**Trustee Walker:** Some of the villages have other members.

**Trustee Armacost:** C says with respect to any decision, each village shall have one vote.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, it does. But then someplace else it says a majority of the total number of representatives shall be required. And then another one, if you look at page one, representatives of each municipality shall constitute it. I think the intention of it was that each village have one vote. What you want to say is the majority of the total number of villages. That is the intention, but it just has to be cleaned up.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Where does that leave Dobbs Ferry, which rushed ahead of its skis?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** They could do an amended agreement.

**Trustee Walker:** Before we approve it, if we want to make a few changes I would let the others know that this is what we are comfortable approving with these minor changes. It does not change the substance, it is just refining it a little bit and making it clearer. If we want to go ahead and do that, I think we could.

**Mayor Swiderski:** But can you have IMAs that are assigned that are slightly different versions among municipalities? That does not sound right.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Dobbs Ferry would vote on amendments to it, and Irvington, I know, has not voted on it yet.

**Trustee Armacost:** Also, they use the term "municipality" and "village" interchangeably. It should probably be consistent all the way through.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** I will do the changes.

**Mayor Swiderski:** The advantage is that you have a relationship with Irvington as well. You can screen it with them so at least two of us are signing the same thing, then we can drag Dobbs along with us after the fact.

**Trustee Walker:** The next step is to just make those changes. Maybe we could put it on the agenda for the next meeting. Did anybody have any questions about the substance of it?

**Mayor Swiderski:** No.

**Trustee Apel:** It is fine.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** I had another question. Is it an issue, does Hastings care, that two other villages could outvote Hastings? I do not know if there should be some provision that within your own municipality you have to essentially agree with whatever they are

doing. Let us say they come up with a common sign they want, and the Hastings representative hates that sign, it does not go with the rest of the signs in the Village. Should you be able to say no?

**Trustee Walker:** How would you word that?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** I do not know, but I will figure out what to say if that is what you want to do.

**Mayor Swiderski:** How about unanimous consent?

**Trustee Walker:** Especially for going after grant money and we have to match it, it should probably be unanimous.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, that is another good point.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Yes, it should be unanimous. There are only three of us, and if we cannot agree on something.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, that all decisions have to be unanimous.

**Trustee Armacost:** There were not provisions if things went wrong. Normally, you should not be planning for it not to work well. But what recourse do you have?

**Village Attorney Stecich:** You have a provision: "Participation in this agreement shall be renewed each year unless a participant gives notice."

**Trustee Armacost:** To your point of the unanimous thing. If you have one village which stops everything that is also not helpful. There is no recourse here.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Well, the recourse is not voting. Make it unanimous.

**Trustee Walker:** And then nobody gets what they want.

**Mayor Swiderski:** That is the point.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, that is the point of an intermunicipal agreement.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** Yes, you should all agree.



**Mayor Swiderski:** Yes.

**Trustee Apel:** If you do not agree, you do not do it and that is the end of it.

**Village Attorney Stecich:** That is democracy.

**Trustee Walker:** So we will make the changes, and I will communicate to the other villages what the changes are.

#### **4. Downtown Strategies**

**Trustee Walker:** I was given the task of proposing the strategy for the downtown. I have almost more questions than strategy, but I have ideas to propose not necessarily completely worked out. We have a number of things going on with our downtown that we all cannot help but notice. Residents have been pointing it out, too. First of all, vacancy rates are up; there are more empty storefronts than there have been since I became a Trustee three years ago. We started to see improvement, and then now it is sliding downhill again. The Chamber of Commerce, if not defunct, is moribund. There is not a lot of interest in it. The leadership has been trying very hard. But local businesses are so concerned with just surviving they do not have time and energy to look at united efforts.

Definitely, local retailers are seeing the pressure and effects of competition. Ridge Hill is open now, pulling people away. The Internet is becoming even more of a major shopping venue for all of us. Foot traffic in the downtown has dropped off. So what is going on? Is it the economy finally catching up with us? Is it the fact that maybe there is not a critical mass of businesses to attract people? We do not know the answers. People have also been complaining about the cleanliness of the streets and sidewalks. We have been hearing about that for quite awhile. We have not come up with a solution.

Friday Night Live has become successful at bringing the community together. The restaurants do well on those Friday nights. But the restaurants do well on other Friday nights, as well. The retailers are not seeing a bump from Friday Night Live. Many of them are not staying open anymore because they were not getting shoppers, and they are not seeing people come back after a Friday Night Live just because they had some exposure to our shops and services. Friday Night Live, I think the community would like to see it continue. But it is not a solution for revitalizing the downtown.

I have looked at my own planning documents. I attended the National Trust's Main Street conference in Baltimore a month ago. The National Trust has a wonderful main street program that has been around for 30 years. It is very successful, and has almost 2,000

members around the country. Downtowns have turned themselves around from much worse situations than here. Through trial and error they have put together a program that they propose mostly to historic downtowns. But it applies. We are a historic downtown. It applies to all central business districts. I am using some of their ideas as a model. I also had a long conversation with Carl Carvalho, a recent president of the Chamber, and he had some thoughts. I did want to reach out to our Economic Development Committee members, but I have not had a chance to do that. I think that is a priority. We need to include them in some discussions.

Before we do anything, before we form a committee, launch any more activities, we should hold a public forum and make a point of inviting local businesses and property owners, particularly landlords; find them, reach out to them, invite them. And residents. And then also members of local organizations like the Arts Commission and 14 Miles North, seniors. Make people feel like the civic organizations are important to the life of our downtown. But ultimately, as Carl pointed out to me, it comes down to the residents. The residents complain about the downtown. They complain about the empty storefronts. But they are the ones who are not shopping in our downtown. We do not know, really, what it is they want. If they want a downtown that is going to caterer to their needs, then we need to find out what their needs are. If they are not going to be shopping in our downtown even if it were ideally suited to their needs, because it is either too expensive or they would rather go to Stew Leonard's or Costco or Central Avenue, we need to find that out, because then we should not be catering to their needs, and our downtown should be something else.

If you look at Cold Spring, for example, or Hudson, these towns have remade themselves around niche markets. They have given up providing local services and shopping for the residents; they have become regional destinations. There are antique stores and galleries and so on. The residents then complain that they have to go to a strip mall up the highway in order to do their local shopping. But that is the only way those downtowns could survive. Otherwise, they were not going to make it. So that is the big question in my mind. If we are going to caterer to our local residents and they really want this downtown, we have to figure out what they want. Residents need to participate in helping us turn it around. If it is not, then we need to think of something else. If it is not going to serve local needs, then we could be a tourism draw.

I think we have a public forum to talk about these big issues. Also to hear people. We just want to listen. We want to hear what the property owners have to say, we want to hear what the businesses have to say. I am sure there will be a long gripe session, but then we will ask for constructive ideas. We will propose that we want to form a committee, and this would be a good night to start getting some interest in this committee.

This would be more than an EDC. This would be a committee that would be focused on downtown revitalization, downtown as a place. Not just attracting commercial, increasing our commercial tax ratables, but transforming downtown as a place. It would eventually become something independent from the Village. It would not be a Village committee. It might start under our aegis, but then eventually become independent. Ideally it would become a non-profit and would be its own entity. This is what has worked in a lot of places. It would not be the Chamber of Commerce. It would be different. And it would not be a Village committee, it would be something different. In the main street program they become non-profit. Sometimes they are BIDs, sometimes they are not. Sometimes they are tax assessment districts, more often they are not. They often have staff, or part-time staff, even small towns. Like a 5,000 population, some of them have full-time downtown managers. It is amazing. But staff, after awhile, might become critical. Then that raises another question.

To start out, you form a core committee that would pursue four specific areas. They probably need more volunteers within each of these areas. I am not proposing this. I am just saying it works in a lot of towns. It might not work in Hastings, but this is the way it has worked well in a lot of towns. It would have four tasks, which could be four separate subcommittees. One is organizational, which is setting it up and managing it and recruiting volunteers, raising funds for its efforts, and engaging particularly business owners and landlords on an ongoing basis. There are other organizational tasks, but fund-raising is a biggie.

Then business development, which is what we sorely need. Carl pointed out to me that we could get a huge grant to make beautiful brick sidewalks, pristine, clean, everything. Put in beautiful benches, and make the VFW park a gorgeous destination. Put in a lovely gazebo. It still would not necessarily make a difference to the businesses. I hate to say this because I plan and design public spaces for a living, but I think it is true. We have to understand what is going on with our local businesses before we just start throwing money into physical improvements, or more activities for that matter. And promotion. What are we going to promote if we do not have businesses to promote? So business development. This usually consists of conducting market research, which this committee could do on its own. We do not necessarily need to hire an outside consultant. A lot of communities do it on their own through surveys and doing a supply and demand study. Help local businesses to become more entrepreneurial. Help retain the businesses we have. Do not lose them. Help them be stronger. And then seek the right kinds of businesses that are going to be entrepreneurial, and fill the needs that people identify with. So that is a task of a business development subcommittee.

Design. These are the things we love to talk about. Improving walkability, improving cleanliness, helping landlords with facades, storefronts, enhancing the environmental

sustainability, solving parking issues. So these things are all important, but unless we have viable businesses it is not going to make that much difference.

Finally, promotion, developing a marketing strategy, promoting our downtown as a whole, rather than each business. They are going to have to promote themselves, too, but this group would be looking to promote it as a whole. Develop an image, and this committee would also be producing the events like Friday Night Live and other things to attract people to the downtown. Successful downtowns have lots and lots of events. So it is not just one a month or three during the summer. They often have all kinds of different events.

This is what a lot of these successful downtowns do. Now, how do we do this? Some of the issues are would we have enough interest in forming a committee? Will we find people to do this? How are we going to raise funds? Right now we have so little traffic in the downtown. Residents are shopping elsewhere. What is our niche going to be? This committee could help figure that out. Should we be thinking about an assessment district in the future, or a part-time staff? That is down the road. The first thing is to do this forum. And talking to people on the Economic Development Committee, talking to folks who have a real interest in the downtown even before we have a forum is important so we can organize this forum. But that is where I think we should start. Then do the call for volunteers. We do not need to do a volunteer call in the next two weeks.

**Trustee Armacost:** I think it is a noble idea. I think the fact that we do not have somebody leading our Chamber of Commerce ...

**Trustee Walker:** No, we have somebody leading. There are no followers.

**Trustee Armacost:** I thought he resigned.

**Trustee Walker:** Essentially because there were no followers.

**Trustee Armacost:** So we do not have somebody leading, and we have not followers. It is useful to bring these groups together. I would throw in the Youth Council. The youth are probably the biggest users of the downtown of all the people in the Village. Having their perspective would be valuable; they are probably the ones who spend the most money in the downtown as well. At least my children. I am a little concerned that without having real interest, your business people have to be interested.

**Trustee Walker:** Niki, we have to start somewhere. And if the business people are not interested, there may be residents who are.

**Trustee Armacost:** You mean in starting business, you are talking about.

**Trustee Walker:** No. Residents who are going to do some of these things like a market study to figure out what kinds of businesses we can attract here. We have probably 13 or 14 empty storefronts.

**Trustee Armacost:** But we are having difficulty finding volunteers for Friday Night Live.

**Trustee Walker:** But we are not having difficulty finding volunteers for the waterfront, to do a tree inventory. I know what you are saying, but we will never know unless we try. And what are we going to do? Just let it go? What is the alternative? That is what I keep asking myself.

**Trustee Armacost:** Engaging the Economic Development Committee to see what activities they have done is also very important, because there needs to be some galvanization there, as well. I think that is important. Possibly holding a forum. I think there are people who will not come to a forum, but who may have ideas. So maybe there is a survey that needs to go out at the same time as the forum. If you cannot show up to the forum, these are the seven questions we would like you to answer. Maybe you will get some input there. And there will certainly be people who have specific things they are interested in. My youngest son is obsessed with having a movie theater. He thinks that is going to solve all the problems of Hastings. There may be other people who have similar kinds of interests, some of which may be viable.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, it worked for Pleasantville.

**Trustee Armacost:** Meg, you are a saint to take this on. This is not uplifting activity

**Trustee Walker:** Well, do I want to take it on?

**Mayor Swiderski:** No, you volunteered. I agree with the point that we cannot view this as a replacement for the Chamber of Commerce. And it is not. Our merchants are bedeviled with both commercial issues and economic issues. They are doing enough as it is just holding it together. Running a small business is time consuming. Sparing time for meetings is a real stretch for a lot of these people. Leadership has episodically come out of that group, but only episodically. Carl was as good as I have seen since I have been here. God knows he tried everything, and those meetings were simply not well attended. So the drivers here are not going to be the merchants or the landlords, who are MIA, period and at times even counter to the interests of the downtown. It has got to be a galvanizing external force. The problem is,

setting aside your sainthood, the sort of person who runs this is Pascale on steroids, but initially for free. That is a challenge, to find the right set of people.

I do not think this coexists with the EDC. The EDC had two charges when it was originally set up. They set two charges for themselves: the downtown, and a more amorphous economic vitality for the Village. It, not necessarily the people on it, goes away and is reborn as this or it is re-rolled into this capacity and restacked. But it does not exist side-by-side with this because there are only so many cooks who need to be working on this particular broth, and there are core people there who can be in that group. They will be further enhanced by volunteers coming out of any forum. Timing is important because there is a sense of urgency here. There are enough storefronts, and I do not know if it is 13 but enough of them, that I do not know if we can wait until after the summer for the forum. On the other hand, I think it can be too far into June before people disappear. And that does not give you a whole lot of time to pull in those conversations with other parties. If this is to happen it should probably happen within a month. Advertise it out, low expectations for attendance and high hopes, and see what happens. And low attendance is also its own indication.

**Trustee Walker:** It is true. We have to let the residents know that if they want a downtown we really need their help.

**Trustee Armacost:** We talked about wanting to preserve the character of our village. Maybe it is a question of asking what that means. Is the character of our village incompatible with a Starbucks, for example. Lots of people have said they do not want to have chain stores. Are there certain kinds of fair trade chain stores we are willing to accept and other ones we are not willing to accept? It may be time to think a little differently about some of those things.

**Mayor Swiderski:** But that is part of the market.

**Trustee Armacost:** I would not decide that there is going to be a committee. It may be the results are changing zoning laws; that that might shift things. Maybe the forum is the first place. I think the invitation should be to think out of the box; not to assume a set of rules. And there are perfectly good reasons not to have chain stores. Do not get me wrong.

**Mayor Swiderski:** There are no rules against it.

**Trustee Armacost:** But there may be reasons why we would want to think about attracting a set of national players that are within the character of our village, whatever we decide that is.

**Village Manager Frobel:** Meg, a wonderful job. It is a textbook outline on how to begin to revitalize the downtown. It is disappointing to me because the Mayor and Marge may recall that when I was interviewed seven years ago for this position I talked about how successful I had been in working with very active Chambers of Commerce in two other communities. I come to Hastings, and it quickly becomes apparent to me there was not the same level of enthusiasm. So it was frustrating. The only other element that I have drawn on in the past is the university. I have had some success with either marketing students or advertising students, and we were able to capitalize on that. We had a relationship with the local community college, and they brought some good ideas. But again, it really centered on the Chamber. I had the luxury of both communities having paid staff in the Chamber of Commerce, which made a world of difference. But terrific for starters, for certain.

**Trustee Apel:** This is great, moving ahead with bringing people together to discuss this as an issue. If I was a storeowner I would be exasperated by now and feel hopeless. So knowing that the Board is behind them and that we want to work with them, changing the image. Today, everything is about image. People hire corporations to do public relations.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Rebrand ourselves.

**Trustee Apel:** Right. We need to rebrand this downtown, and that is exactly the terminology. We have to look at it in terms of how people are communicating also. If it is going to be rebranded is it being rebranded online? What is going on here? That is how people are looking at things today. So we have to look at everything differently. We are going to find out all the list of things they would like, the wish list. But it is really the branding and the marketing, and the reaching out and getting people to come down there and use it. And getting the enthusiasm, and I think this will start a spark. This is what is important. So if you get something together sooner than later that would be great.

**Ms. Hendrickx:** When we started the Comprehensive Plan process, Richard Bass's Hunter class did a survey. They got a significant number of people who replied to the survey. One of the questions was a focus on downtown. You might start there because a lot of the residents did express what they would like to see in the downtown. I am having a bit of trouble believing that improving the aesthetic, then making the Village more walkable and attractive, would not give store owners more pride. And also, I have to wrap in the architecturally designed guidelines. I remember reading a few years ago, and I cannot remember what cosmopolitan area it was in South America, what country it was. There was a lot of crime. We are not talking about that problem, but part of it was the discovery that because everyone drove and no one walked it made it unsafe. I am not suggesting that. All I am saying is that the mayor of this city turned it around because he made it more of a

walkable community. Likewise, that could certainly help with people wanting to shop: improving the aesthetic, making it more walkable, and giving store owners pride. In the Comprehensive Plan, if I am not mistaken, we recommended this traffic calming. For instance, some bump-outs which would also be attractive. I think there were a couple of them in the downtown area, which would also enhance it. Enhancing the VFW, there was some talk of a gazebo. I do not know where that stands.

**Trustee Armacost:** That got blocked, the gazebo, because of the tree.

**Trustee Walker:** Well, only temporarily.

**Mayor Swiderski:** It was not blocked, but it was an issue.

**Trustee Armacost:** I think the gazebo promoters lost faith.

**Mayor Swiderski:** Lost heart too rapidly.

**Trustee Walker:** Yes, the problem was we needed to find another place for a Christmas tree and get it in place before we could take the old one down.

**Village Manager Frobel:** Precisely.

**Trustee Walker:** That is what it came down to. But, Ellen, in response I think you are right. I was in West Palm Beach at the Congress for the New Urbanism conference last week, and there is a perfect example of a place where they put walkability first. They did the bump-outs, they repaved, they put in great crosswalks, they narrowed their streets and it changed the whole character of the downtown. They did a lot of other things, too, but it really did help. One of the things I was thinking about is that it is hard for a municipality to get grants. Maybe there are some grants from the DOT for some of that. But for physical improvements, there is the Main Street Program under a state agency. Municipalities are eligible, but they have been giving money to non-profits for so long I am not sure how much they are giving to municipalities. But it is definitely something to look into. It is not to say that we should not be doing the physical stuff because I really believe in it.

**Ms. Hendrickx:** Absolutely. And you talked about Ridge Hill and Central Avenue. We have got another impending development that we need to focus on, too, even if it is not in our own municipality, the Riverton Square project. There are other aspects like flooding that can impact Hastings that we have to be concerned about, but also how it can help gut our downtown. We need to be more actively involved in finding out what is happening with that and representing ourselves.



**Mr. Metzger:** The perennial problem: downtown. It is why we all moved here. And as you said, not enough people are supporting it. I spoke to one of the realtors in town who moved from one location to another, set up a beautiful store. I asked him how's business? Business is great. You don't have a problem with parking? No, why? Who has a problem with parking? I said a lot of the shop owners are complaining if you cannot park outside their store they are not going in. He said I don't believe that. He said if you're selling a good product and you're promoting yourself, and people want what you're selling, they'll be willing to park a half a block or a block away and come over. That is the kind of store I want to run, and I'm doing just fine, thank you.

So part of this is how our retailers market themselves. That being said, when you are in the middle of a economic downturn, and you are asking someone to spend money, it is a tough sell. The idea of having the Village show some support for the retailers, and let them know we have their back, can go a long way towards motivating people. Talking about public art, one of the most exciting things that happened in the Village recently was the banner art project. I know there were a lot of issues around the project; it did not go well. But the project itself was wildly successful. People came in from neighboring communities to see the art banners that were hanging. They were in the Village, they were shopping here.

Cows in Chicago. We all know how successful that was. We should figure out some way to attract people in. I was in Beacon over the weekend. They have their Second Saturday, but they do not do it at night. They do it during a day, on a weekend. A friend of mine just opened an art gallery there, which is a dicey business in the best of times. I am talking to young people that were in there. Do you live in the area? No, I came up from Brooklyn. I came up from the Upper West Side of Manhattan. They traveled up to Beacon to walk the village and see art and use the restaurants. We are a whole lot closer than they are. We should be able to motivate people to come use our village. In terms of national chains, we do need to be careful. I know that Rye changed their zoning recently. They brought in a Gap, they may have brought in a Starbucks. They brought in three national chains to try and revitalize the downtown. I believe all of those stores closed within a year because they did not have the traffic to support what they thought was there. New York City is a different ball game, as we all know. We need to look beyond retail. We need to figure out how to bring business to Hastings so that Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 we have increased the population density of the Village. Those are the people that are going to be using the restaurants and dropping off their dry cleaning and picking up their drug prescriptions and buying a gift for their wife. If we can bring more people into the Village on the weekdays they will help to support the downtown more than just the residents do. Most of the residents go into the city during the week.

In terms of the kids using the Village, we did an interesting study as part of the Comp Plan. We went into the high school and we interviewed students. Universally, what they wanted to see was a place where they could go after school to hang out, like a coffee shop. We said, there are three coffee shops in Hastings already. Yeah, but it's too far to walk. So we said, what you really want is a coffee shop on the corner of the block where you live. Well, yeah, that would be good if we didn't have to walk to downtown. So it has to be more than just that. They said what can we get to eat there? The only thing that's affordable is pizza. What school kid is going to get a \$9 or \$10 lunch? It would be nice if there was a place where they could spend six bucks and get lunch, and then stop off and get some candy or pick up a magazine, do something to support the Village. It is a big picture we need to look at.

Obviously, landlords are suffering, as well. Everybody's income is suffering. So when we find stores whose leases are up you have a choice as a landlord. You either keep the rent the same and keep that client there, and say I am barely hanging on, and as my costs go up that rent is not going to cover me, or you tell that person I am raising your rent. Then the person says, I don't have the business to afford that so I'm leaving. I do not know how you can get a landlord to keep a reasonable rent, but it would be nice if we could figure out a way to do that. I do not know if there are incentives that the Village can provide. We need to figure out how to make it so small tenants can afford to stay in the Village.

The Economic Development Committee brought a woman in about five or six years ago who is in charge of development throughout lower New York State. She said one of the things we need to be cognizant of is when Hastings was developing 100 years ago everybody walked. People did not have cars. So you had your meat market, you had your clothing store, and that is what generated income. Now people get in a car on a weekend and they drive to a shopping center because it is easier to do that than to walk downtown. She said it may be that this village is not big enough to support the size of the downtown that we have. It is a reality we may have to face. It would break my heart as much as anybody's. We all moved here for the same reason, the character of Hastings. Hard to define what that character is. It is one of things you know it when you see it.

Five years ago, Dobbs Ferry was going great guns. Then all of a sudden Dobbs Ferry was losing businesses and we were filled to capacity. Now, all of a sudden we are on the downswing. We need a group, somebody who knows what they are doing, to study this and figure how to get on a more even keel and to start bringing the Village up. I believe it can be done, but it is going to take a concerted effort from everybody involved, including the residents.

**Mayor Swiderski:** So next step?

**Trustee Walker:** Next step is to pick a date for a forum. I like the idea of doing a survey. It is going to be more general. Eventually there will be more focused surveys. Looking at the work that Richard Bass's students did would be great. I looked at the Comprehensive Plan when I was fleshing this out, but I have not looked at the results of the surveys.

**Mayor Swiderski:** I would be happy to work with you on the survey, too.

**Trustee Walker:** OK. And I do think we also need to find out the names and addresses of all the landlords. If we cannot get it from the Village we can get it from the local realtors. That is important, so that is another step.

## **5. Update on the Waterfront**

**Mayor Swiderski:** I am going to pass on update on the waterfront. There is nothing significant, other than several thousand tons of rock dropping into the river on Saturday night. It is a dramatic change, certainly, when you come down Main Street and see that stripe now in the cliffs. It is quite dramatic. It is a good thing it happened at night, and not during the day when there are hikers down there. It would have been instant death.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Mayor Swiderski:** Sunday, May 27 we have the Memorial Day parade at 2 p.m. The fire department reached out to the Navy and extended an invitation. It looks like we have 61 sailors and the admiral in charge of the East Coast joining the parade. I will be working hard to flog the Village into showing up for that in some numbers. On Saturday, May 26 a sculpture in MacEachron Park is being dedicated. Everybody is invited. It is an unveiling of the sculpture that has been dedicated to the Hudson River school and efforts of people like Crosey, who memorialized the cliffs and the Hudson River valley working here in Hastings.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On MOTION of Trustee Armacost, SECONDED by Trustee Apel with a voice vote of all in favor, the Board scheduled an Executive Session immediately following the Regular Meeting to discuss personnel.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On MOTION of Trustee Apel, SECONDED by Trustee Armacost with a voice vote of all in favor, Mayor Swiderski adjourned the Regular Meeting [Public Hearing] at 10 p.m.