

A Joint Meeting between the Town Board of the Town of Goshen and the Village Board of the Village of Goshen was held on October 20, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., in the Town Hall located at 41 Webster Avenue, Goshen, New York.

PRESENT:

Douglas Bloomfield	Supervisor	George Lyons	Councilman
Louis Cappella	Councilman	Kenneth Newbold	Councilman
Philip Canterino	Councilman		
Robert Weinberger	Mayor	Susan Bloom	Trustee
John Higgins	Trustee	Marcia B. Mattheus	Trustee
Susan Fast	Trustee		

ALSO PRESENT:

Dennis Capplicki	Town Attorney
Priscilla Gersbeck	Deputy Town Clerk
Valma Eisma	Town clerk

Supervisor Bloomfield opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and thanked everyone for coming. He then gave a brief summary of the three things the Boards will be discussing. Councilman Lyons stated he had sent an email over, suggesting two other items be added to the agenda. He said one of them was the Salesian Park, being a passive use versus the use for sports activities, and also the advertising.

Supervisor Bloomfield stated the three items were advertised in the paper and he did not feel it would be fair to the public to add other items. He suggested the Board address it at a later date. Councilman Lyons stated the agenda is amended quite often and he felt these items were of great importance to a lot of people. Supervisor Bloomfield asked the members of both Boards their feelings on adding the two items? The majority of the Boards felt they should stick to the planned agenda, as it would take a good deal of time to cover and both Boards had another meeting to follow this one. One or two members felt they could talk about it if there was time.

**1. SALESIAN SCHOOL BUILDING (LIABILITY):** Supervisor Bloomfield asked Trustee Higgins, Police Commissioner for the Village, what the history is with the Police Department, if they are getting many calls, etc. in relation to the park? Mr. Higgins replied yes, that the police patrol the property all the time and there have been incidents and arrests made. He felt with Halloween coming and the old school, supposedly haunted, there will probably be a problem. Supervisor Bloomfield said he has observed the chain that holds the gate has been tampered with and gate slightly opened. He said this has been repaired, but the board over the door has been removed enabling a person to get inside the school building.

Mayor Weinberger said some parameters should be set for the large number of people in the audience. (a large contingency of people from the Recreation Commission, Little League and Goshen Soccer unexpectedly gathered). Supervisor Bloomfield said this meeting was called and advertised for the Village officials and the Town's to discuss the three subjects that are on the agenda. He stated this is the first time the Board has met to discuss the Salesian property since it was opened to the Public. He said if there is time perhaps he will allow some discussion.

Supervisor Bloomfield stated that in 2005 Silman Associates, a structural engineering company, did a study of the school building to see if it was salvageable. Silman looked at the building to see if it could be used as a library, able to handle the weight of the books or be used for another

purpose. He said they submitted their report in 2006 and he talked to the engineer and was told it could be used for a library or an administration building, on the first floor only. The Board was told they would have to go into the basement and shore the building up to be sure the building could carry the load of what ever was proposed for it's use. The engineer said it would at that time cost approximately eight million dollars to refurbish the building and it would have to be done soon. They said this amount would not include the electric and the heating and air conditioning. At that time the roof was leaking and was continuing to weaken the building. He said at that time the fence was put up around the building. Supervisor Bloomfield said he would like to hear what the two Boards thoughts are to deal with the building. He called upon Councilman Cappella.

Councilman Cappella said a couple of months ago a grant for Salesian Park was discussed and the Board was discussing the use of the Park and it's problems. He said he became upset because this property was bought back in the end of 2003, and here we are now five years later and this building has never been addressed. He stated we need to address this building asking ourselves is it an asset or a liability? He said we know it is a liability if there are young kids going in and out of it. Councilman Cappella stated he was afraid something would happen in reference to the building and a law suit would follow, and then everyone will be rushing to do something. He said we need to be proactive on this. He suggested the Board's should find out if there is someone out there who would be willing to do something with the building, before we declare the building a complete liability.

Councilman Cappella stated if it comes to a point that the building must come down, then he said he has talked to some contractors and perhaps a contractor could tear it down, not costing the Town anything, and the contractor could take the salvage for payment. He stated he did not want to sit idle on this building any longer, as it is definitely a safety issue.

Susan Bloom stated Councilman Cappella's idea of the salvage was good, and she would like to go a step forward. She would like to see the consolidation of some services with the economy as it is today. She suggested putting the Town and Village offices there and leasing out the rest of the building. Trustee Bloom said also if the Town and Village did not use it, perhaps it could become a civic center or arts center, music, something to go along with the park.

Trustee Marcia Mattheus said a conversation has been started about something that needs to be addressed, however, she said we need to take a few steps back. She said the combined, joint ownership of the park does not preclude Village zoning. She said if there is to be development other than all parkland, which was a critical consideration when it was purchased. at this time if anyone came forward with plans to do something with the building, it would not be allowed by either Planning Board. It could not be developed piecemeal, you would have to look at the entire picture. She said if you are going to start to change the concept of the park it will require an entire review and a public hearing. She felt it narrows down to what we can afford and what the community wants to see. Councilman Cappella asked for clarification of what Trustee Mattheus felt was needed. She replied that when the Town and Village purchased the property, the concept was that it should stay forever green. She said it makes no difference that she or Councilman Cappella agrees with this concept, this is how it was purchased.

Councilman Canterino said what his thoughts are is that we have a building that is a tremendous liability. He said it has no historic value, and he was not sure it has any material value, but we are on notice it is not safe. He said he did feel that the least we could do is to open it up to see if there is any interest from contractors to take it down. Councilman Canterino stated the building is obsolete and dangerous, and I think it is beyond the point of rehabilitation. "Our concerns are safety and liability."

Trustee Susan Fast stated "I am sorry, it is a park." She quoted the Wall Street Journal saying "you don't strip assets to pay bills."

The Town Board assured Trustee Fast this was not what the Board had in mind. Councilman Lyons said it was heartbreaking to think it has to come down, but it is a liability. He said he thought there might be people out there that most certainly have more expertise than he or the Board. Therefore he felt the Board should get some people in the building to see what if anything could be salvaged, so that the contractors could take it down, without a cost to the Town or the taxpayers.

Councilman Newbold said he was one of the few Councilmen that was around when the property was purchased and it was always looked upon as a liability, the school and the mansion. He said the steel within the building is rotting, it cannot be salvaged. Everyone agreed there is no money on the part of the Town and the Village to spend to take the building down.

It was decided that Supervisor and the Mayor would put together a team, including members of the public, to look into taking the building down and report back to the Board at a later date.

Mayor Weinberger said to sum up what has been said tonight, is to try to define whether or not the building is a physical liability and an economic liability. So now we are trying to decide by getting some legislative input, some professional input and some community input. He said also the Boards have to look to the future and where the Village and Town are going, and what their needs will be. He said he came to the Town Hall when Court was in session and could not find a place to park. He said when court is in session at Village Hall you cannot find a place to park. Mayor Weinberger also said when he has more than thirty five people for a public hearing it cannot be held in Village Hall, it must be held at the Senior Center.

**2. SHARING CAPITAL EXPENSES JOINT RECREATION:** Supervisor Bloomfield said ever since he has been in Town government, he has always heard that Criagville Park belongs to the Town, and the small pocket parks within the Village belong to the Village. He said the conclusion was that the Village should take care of the Capital Improvements in the Village and the Town should take care of the Capital Improvements in the Town. He said this is not true, as the Village is part owner of Craigville and the deed stated this is so. He reported the Village and the Town both give 135,000 to the Joint Recreation Commission to manage the Joint Recreation business for us. This money is supposed to take care of funding programs, maintenance of the fields and other minor repairs that need to be done for maintenance.

The Supervisor explained that now the Craigville park is in need of extensive repair to the second entrance. He said every year there have been complaints and the Town DPW has gone out to patch it here and there. An engineer was called in to estimate the cost of repairing it properly. The Supervisor reported there is another item Joint Recreation is asking for, they would like to expand the kitchen and extend the pavilion area. Each of these will cost money, not budget money, but Capital Expenses, Parkland fees, and Supervisor Bloomfield said going forward he would like the Town and the Village Boards to both officiate these Capital Expenses. He said with both Boards examining the expenditures and approving them or disapproving them, and funding them evenly.

Trustee Bloom stated the Village DPW has helped in repairing the road at Craigville Park. Supervisor Bloomfield replied saying this is not just patching it, it would mean digging down, laying a foundation and building a proper road. Trustee Bloom said she was sure the two DPWs could do this. She asked if the Town was asking for more money than is in the budget. Councilman Canterino explained the Town and the Village have Parkland Fees and if a Capital

Improvement is needed the Town and Village could go 50 -50 on the project. Trustee Higgins stated he had no problem sharing expenses as long as there is input from both Boards prior to any expenditures, which he felt has not been done in the past. Councilman Cappella stated that both the Village and the Town have liaisons to the Joint Recreation and ours, currently Councilman Lyons always reports back to us the information needed for our Board to make a decision and the Board always asks if the Village knows about whatever the project is. There was a discussion about projects done by both the Village and Town that were done independently, sometimes without the other municipality knowing it was done.

Supervisor Bloomfield stated that Village and the Town own all of these parks together. He said it is time to do things in a more professional way and do the projects together.

Councilman Lyons reviewed the current projects before the Joint Recreation Commission and the costs involved. He listed the entrance road on Craigville Park, the expansion of the kitchen and pavilion, and most important at this time are the fields, one in particular which has a drainage problem. He stated the Town Board took the lead and authorized the hiring of an architect to help with the design of the expansion of the kitchen and the pavilion area. He stated the cost of the expansion of the kitchen has been quoted as approximately \$20,000.

Supervisor Bloomfield asked if all were in agreement on sharing the expenses equally? Trustee Mattheus said this seems systematic of the problem here, as the Town has already moved to hire an architect without the Village's knowledge, and is now coming to the Village to help pay for it. Supervisor Bloomfield replied that this is what brought this issue to the Board's attention. However, he said the Town Board would cover this cost, as they did authorize the expenditure. Trustee Mattheus said if the Town is looking to the Village to make this commitment, things need to be defined and the process formalized.

Both Boards agreed that Supervisor Bloomfield and the Mayor would work, along with the Town's Commissioner of Finance, Councilman Canterino, to draw up a formal agreement to present to the Boards at the next joint meeting.

**3. ARCHITECTURAL ARTIFACTS FROM SALESIAN PARK:** Supervisor Bloomfield explained that when the mansion at Salesian was taken down, the Town had the contractor who took down the building to pull certain items or artifacts out of the building. The Town then purchased some trailers to put them in. The artifacts were put in the trailers by the contractor and have been stored there for several years. He reported Trustee Bloom and Councilman Cappella went out to open the trailers and examine the artifacts. He said they found everything covered with mold and mildew. Supervisor Bloomfield said he felt that in the spring the trailers should be emptied and have a qualified person inspect them and see if they have any value left in them. Trustee Bloom said she knows a person who is qualified to come and evaluate the situation. She said his name is Mark Vale, and the other Board members seemed to be familiar with him. She will make arrangements for him to come and will report back to the Boards.

Supervisor Bloomfield said he would like to go over the items both Boards would like to have on the agenda next time they meet. The list is as follows:

1. R F Ps and a group of people who will discuss the Salesian School Building
2. A written Municipal Agreement pertaining to sharing Capital Expenses
3. Trustee Bloom will report on her meeting with Mark Vale about the architectural artifacts from Salesian Park Mansion
4. Is Salesian a passive park or is it an active park?

There was a lengthy discussion between the Board and the public about the need for additional playing fields and the possibility of using the back portion of Salesian Park for practice fields. Supervisor Bloomfield said there are projects before the Planning Board that are promising land parcels that will make beautiful fields. Trustee Higgins said these are fields of the future, but Salesian is right there and could be used now. He said the fields are in very bad shape, as they have no time to rest, they are being used so constantly.

Councilman Lyons said that another time there was a request from Joint Recreation to use the fields of Salesian for football practice, and it was refused. He said just to use it for a practice field would help. Supervisor Bloomfield said it would be put on the next agenda so it could be looked at from a legal standpoint. He said he would talk to the Town and Village attorneys to give the Board some legal input as to what can and cannot be done.

Councilman Lyons said another thing he would like to discuss, on behalf of Joint Recreation, is the sale of advertising plaques to be hung on the playing fields. He said this could be a source of income for Joint Recreation. Supervisor Bloomfield said he would add it to the next meeting agenda. He asked when the Boards would like to meet again? It was decided the Supervisor and Mayor would choose a date. Councilman Cappella asked that the meeting be set for a night other than Monday night or a meeting night, so the Boards would not be under a time restraint, such as tonight.

Supervisor Bloomfield said he would allow the public a short time to speak, as the Board had to open it's own work session. A number of people spoke about the pros and cons of refurbishing or tearing down the Salesian School building. Also several speakers spoke on behalf of Joint Recreation in reference to using other areas for fields, such as Knoll Road and Salesian.

Councilman Lyons made a Motion to closed the joint meeting at 8:50 p.m. The Motion was seconded by Councilman Canterino. Motion carried unanimously.

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Valma Eisma, Town Clerk