

April 5, 2022 – Workshop Meeting

The workshop meeting of the Gardiner Town Board was held this evening at 7 PM. This meeting was conducted as a hybrid - in person and on Zoom. Present were Supervisor Majestic, Councilmembers Carucci, Richman, Walls & Wiegand. There were approximately 80± audience members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 6 – ECC zoom meeting on Indigenous Land & Water Protection. 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

April 22 – Earth Day. Orange bags will once again be available for trash pick up along the town roads.

April 30 & May 1 – Gardiner Open Studio Tour

May 7 – Riverkeeper Clean Sweep of the Wallkill River

BURN BAN

The State of NY is currently in the midst of a statewide burn ban. This ban is in effect through May 14.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN SURVEY

The Town of Gardiner is conducting a survey for feedback regarding community preservation of lands in the Town. The survey is available on the Town's website or can be pick up at the Town Hall or Library. Responses should be completed by April 24.

COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION PROGRAM

There will be three (3) information sessions about the Community Choice Aggregate Program that will be available to residents of Gardiner. This program is regarding the renewable electricity rate negotiated for the Town and the options available to residents. The first session is April 9 at 1 pm at the Town Hall & Zoom, the second is April 25 at 7 pm at the Town Hall & Zoom and the third session will be held April 28 at 7 pm strictly on Zoom.

INTERSECTION ROUTE 44/55 AND BRUYN SWICK RD (COUNTY ROUTE 7)

A blinking warning light has been installed just ahead of the intersection of Route 44/55 and Bruynswick Road to alert motorists of the dangerous intersection.

SUMMER RECREATION 2022

Materials to enroll in Summer Recreation for 2022 has been post on the Town's website. Registration is limited to Gardiner residents only costing \$500 for the first child and \$475 for each additional child in a family. Registration is to be completed by April 30.

PUBLIC HEARING – WIRELESS EDGE TOWERS II

The Town Clerk read the public notice at 7:15 PM beginning the public hearing for Wireless Edge Towers II for the construction of a 110' monopole cell tower to be located at the Highway garage at 630 South Mountain Road. Supervisor Majestic will keep the public hearing open for 1 hour and has asked comments to be limited to 3 minutes.

Wireless Edge attorney Robert Gaudio spoke about the project. The public hearing was then opened to the audience for questions and or comments.

Councilmember Richman – asked how the elevation was determined.

Tim Hunter – cited Town laws that he feels prohibits the project from moving forward.

Andrew Campanelli – represents 48 community members opposed to the cell tower. Pointed out several reasons not to approve the cell tower. Does it actually expand coverage, has a drive test been conducted, filed maps are not accurate? Stated that the Town is not applying the code/laws of the Town. Indicated that the lease agreement will allow an increase in height without Town Board approval.

Sally Hansell – remarked how the photos do not do justice to how the cell tower will disfigure the Shawangunk Mountains.

Eric Hildebrand – Has a definite impact on the Ridge. This is the greatest asset in our Town. If constructed it will forever be a part of the Ridge. Find a new location.

Jean Gautier – stated the tower is very visible from his home and property. Wireless Edge documents do not represent the actual impact on the view.

Cheryl Kiviat – can also view the tower from her home and it is very visible on Shaft Rd. It is out of place. Many roads surrounding the site are designated as Shawangunk Scenic Byway and Shawangunk Wine Trail roads. This is just not the right location.

Manuela Holterhoff – spoke about the sound that will be emitted from the site, such as whining, generator noise etc.

John Sorenson – The Shawangunk Mountains are a stunning view as you drive along Bruynswick Road that many come to our area to see. Why put such a structure right where it will ruin the view? He has traveled all over the country and has never seen such a structure in any viewshed of a mountain. It will be a scar on the community.

Jonathan Byrne – this will be an adverse visual impact on the Shawangunk Mountains and the Town. The balloon test is not an accurate depiction of the impact. It will forever spoil the mountains. The Town should be protecting the neighborhood.

Ryan Kiernan – born and raised at the base of the Ridge. The Ridge has always drawn him back to the area where he now lives at Kiernan Farm. The cell tower does harm to our community.

Kiernan Farm is protected by the Open Space Plan. Spoke about new technology – Starlink Satellite – that will allow for cell phones to work through satellite rather than a tower.

Gabrielle Cody – spoke about the sound impact which will be quite significant.

Justin Riccobono – has a bed and breakfast on Bruynswick Rd. He is against the project. He read the vision statement that was in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. He stated he hiked from the Trapps to Gertie’s Nose during the balloon test. He has photos available. He has not heard anyone speak in favor of this tower. He too spoke about the Starlink Satellite.

Justin Bridges – From tonight’s meeting he has gathered that the tower is not needed. It will affect property values and is not necessary.

Marilyn Perry – asking to hold the line on this project. Find another location so as not to impose on the views of the mountains. Suggested Board members talk to local towns who have suffered from the imposition of a tower. We have a beautiful visual world here.

Marty Kiernan – Owner of Kiernan Farm. Has anyone asked what Open Space Institute and Wallkill Valley Land Trust think about this? His farm is preserved by Open Space. Take what God gave us and preserve it.

Debbie Brooks – commented that she could see the balloons from her home. Urged the Board to look into another location.

Donna Petereit – has lousy service but does not want to see a tower at this location.

Linda Sisto – spoke on how the Ridge was created out of the glaciers. What a shame to ruin the cliffs by putting in a cell tower right below it.

Sal Schisano – lives on Shaft Road and stated that the tower will be visible from every aspect of the house.

Lillian McMahon – has bad service and doesn't care. We need to maintain the integrity of this Town and not put a cell tower at this location.

David Kiviat – both balloon tests revealed significant impact. The applicant does not have the right to construct this tower without the OK of the Town Board. This is clearly laid out in Town law.

Linda Goldsmith – moved here 4 months ago on Black Hawk Trail. Came here for the views and nature. If she had known a cell tower was going to be constructed, she would have never moved into this home. Driving by it will remind her that the areas beauty is not valued. Asked the Board to deny this application and find a better location.

At this point the Supervisor stopped any further questions or comments. Town attorney Victoria Polidoro addressed the options for the Town Board. They can close the public hearing, continue it to another date or close in-person comments but allow written comments. Councilmember Walls asked about drive test data and research on accuracy of the balloon tests. She commented that she never thought about the noise aspect. Councilmember Wiegand suggested continuing the public hearing to next week's meeting. Councilmember Richman asked attorney Polidoro to review the provisions of the lease.

A motion was made by Supervisor Majestic, seconded by Councilmember Richman and carried to continue the public hearing to April 12, 2022 at 7:30 PM. Councilmember Walls voted nay.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

Attorney Christine Chale, representing the Town of Gardiner, reviewed her memo sent to the Town Board on March 25 summarizing the steps to be completed by the Town ahead of a mandatory referendum for the November ballot allowing for the Community Preservation Fund. An advisory board will need to be established to create the plan. Three (3) local laws will need to be adopted, SEQR review and a public hearing is required. A transfer tax rate must be established not to exceed 2% which will be paid directly to the County Treasurer. A very strict timeline must be adhered to in order to meet deadlines.

PARKS & RECREATION

Ilka Casey was present to discuss with the Town Board several necessities for the Park such as completion of the kitchen at the pole barn, basketball court painting, a water bottle filler station, fencing, drainage for the ballfields and various park repairs and maintenance. With so much discussion needed it was recommended to have a dedicated meeting just for the Parks & Recreation Committee. No date was set.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Suzanne Levirne – asked the status of the short-term rental law and the status of the Lazy River applications.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Supervisor Majestic, seconded by Councilmember Walls and carried, the Town Board entered into executive session at 10:15 PM for the purposes of discussing potential litigation. The Board will return to regular session only to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle L. Mosher
Town Clerk