

**PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING  
OF THE  
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
June 9, 2011 – 8:00 AM**

**Present**

**Mayor** Robert C. Corby  
**Trustees:** Paula Sherwood  
Tim Galli  
Trip Pierson  
Lorie Boehlert  
**Recording Secretary:** Anne Hartsig

Mayor Corby called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M.

Mayor Corby explained that the purpose of this meeting was to have a direct discussion with the applicant regarding the proposed project at 75 Monroe Avenue and about proposed changes to the Code for the R-5 District. Mayor Corby said the meeting was a workshop meeting and was not a forum for comments.

**Chris DiMarzo, Pittsford Properties LLC**

Mr. DiMarzo presented a written response to development proposal concerns to the Board of Trustees. This written submission contained the following:

- background context of the proposal,
- the history of the proposal design modifications,
- the site specific obstacles,
- environmental concerns,
- description of the unique site,
- benefits the development to the Pittsford Community.

Mr. DiMarzo discussed the intent of the R-5 District. He stated that this project meets the intent in the following ways:

- the project would be a development of a new pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhood,
- the project expands housing options,
- the project encourages utilization of vacant lands near the canal, railroad and Monroe Avenue,
- the project would have limited commercial development,
- the project ensures that the development is compatible with the character of the village,
- the project protects health, safety and welfare,
- the project will use quality materials for long term durability,
- the project implements the goals of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor,
- the project will minimize adverse effects on scenic views,
- the project enhances public access to the canal in conformance with the LWRP.

Mr. DiMarzo said that many design modifications have taken place. They have worked with APRB members and that Board is close to accepting the latest design. At the same time, they are addressing questions presented by the PZBA regarding health and welfare issues. Mr. DiMarzo then introduced Roger Brown, who was the Village's consultant for the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Brown also helped to develop the R-5 zoning district.

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**Roger Brown**

Mr. Brown gave a summary of his experience and his credentials.

Mr. Brown stated that there are three characteristics of Pittsford Village. He said they are the Main Street area, the single family residential area, and the canal edge/commercial area which has industrial warehouse characteristics. He said it is important to recognize the three areas. In his opinion, the canal type structures are what should be used in the R-5 district. This project presents an opportunity to build larger buildings that are compatible with the R-5 district and that have variety and interest and that use a variety of materials.

Mr. Brown explained the elements of the site plan. He said the main focus will be the look and feel of a village street along the canal with sidewalks, streetlights, parallel parking, trees etc. He said each building will be completely different but the details and the philosophy will tie them together. He stated that the highest building will be the last building and it will have a combination of 3 and 4 stories. He then discussed the sketches that have been designed and redesigned over that past several months.

Trustee Galli asked how Mr. Brown would define a story. Mr. Brown said a story is a living space, not a garage space.

Mayor Corby asked how the design will interface from Monroe Avenue. Mr. Brown replied that it will be a historic visual in keeping with the canal/commercial design. He said he has not drawn a view from Monroe Avenue yet but as one crosses the Monroe Avenue Bridge into the village, one passes through and into the three characteristics of Pittsford Village as stated earlier.

Trustee Sherwood asked what the range of height would be in feet rather than stories. Mr. Brown said it would be 10 feet story to story, 35 feet to the bottom of the roof line, and 12 feet more from the eave to the rooftop. He said the berm will be 4-5 feet high.

Trustee Galli asked what the maximum height of the Monroe Avenue Bridge is. Mr. Brown said that from the bridge, one would be looking into the windows of the second story.

Members asked about parking and the number of units. Mr. DiMarzo said he didn't have parking figures yet. He stated that the number of units will be less than 185 but he did not have the exact count. He said it would be between the 160 and 175 unit range.

Trustee Sherwood asked about the mechanics such as air conditioning and heating units. Mr. DiMarzo said they would be hidden as best as they can be. He plans to build a first class development. Trustee Sherwood asked if there are options to housing the mechanics on the roof top. Mr. DiMarzo stated that they are investigating placing that equipment along the railroad tracks. He also said river water is used for cooling at Corn Hill. They are investigating something similar for these units.

Trustee Pierson asked if the developer would be adverse to less site coverage than what is listed in the current R-5 Code to continue to move forward while modifications are considered for the R-5 Code. Mr. DiMarzo said that site coverage in the R1 is 25%, R2 is 25%, R3 is 30%, and R4 is 30%. The current plan for this project is 22% which is below even the R1 specifications. Trustee Pierson asked if the developer would be flexible about changing the lot coverage. Mr. Brown responded that the key is about how the public realm is designed, not the lot coverage.

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Mayor Corby said what is most important is the space and how it functions. He said the design has come along way but the back “B” streets need more work to look like a village street.

Trustee Pierson asked if a restriction in height is imposed, would the developer accommodate the restriction in order to keep the project moving. Mr. DiMarzo said he would follow whatever criteria the Board comes up with but he asked that the Board allow Mr. Brown to do his magic. He asked them not to put a number in to lock them in. He said the Code allows for 4.5 stories and they have not gone above that.

Trustee Boehlert asked what the percentage of 4.5 story units is compared to the number of 3.5 story units. Mr. Brown replied that it is about 15-20%. He said the project is beneath the criteria listed in the R5 Code.

Mr. DiMarzo said the Board of Trustees has full reign to decide what they want.

Trustee Boehlert stated that the Board doesn’t want Mark IV to spend any more money on something that won’t fit with Pittsford Village. She said the number of units and the size of the project is too big. She asked what Mr. DiMarzo would say if the project was cut in half. He replied that he would have to walk away because it would not work financially. He said it would not work as half a project.

Trustee Galli asked Mr. DiMarzo what his bottom line is. He replied that he doesn’t have a number. He said it is a tough site to develop and he wants it to be a high class project, therefore, it will be an expensive project.

Mr. Brown said if the Village wants a high class project, it requires a size and design that will work financially.

Mayor Corby asked if there are examples of a development of public realm similar to this in the northeast. Mr. Brown mentioned Middleton Hills in Madison, Wisconsin. He said there are many around the country but that they rely on density to be financially successful.

Trustee Pierson said he doesn’t want this project to feel non-compatible and that he worries about the very tall line it will visually create in a village that is very small. He said the project may appear as if you cross a moat to the castle to get into the village. He said that on Schoen Place the tall buildings are broken up with gaps and it works.

Trustee Galli said he shares that concern because the area is a gateway into the village. It will be a huge structure that will be too big.

It was noted that the length of the project along the canal will be about a half mile, similar to the length of Schoen Place.

Mr. Brown said the project will not be another Schoen Place. It is meant to be a high quality space for the village, a reflection on “canal commercial”. He said it could be a beautiful gateway into the village, although different from Schoen Place.

Mayor Corby said he is getting the sense from the Board that their thoughts are that as you come over the Monroe Avenue Bridge, it may be visually overwhelming to see such a large structure and that there is concern that the project won’t look compatible with the village.

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Trustee Boehlert said it seems to be a long, drawn out wall along the street. She said that at the tennis courts on Sutherland Street, you will no longer be able to see the cityscape.

Mr. DiMarzo said the whole project would not be visible at once. He said the first building will be what is seen. He said Sutherland High School will tower over the new buildings.

Trustee Sherwood said she is concerned about the lighting impact that will go along with that kind of density. Mr. DiMarzo said the project will have to meet the lighting code.

Trustee Sherwood asked if the developer would consider a mixed neighborhood with condos, property owners and rentals, retail, and a mixed age group. She said Warwick, NY has a development with this kind of mix and it seems to work. Mr. DiMarzo said he could look at this kind of development but it is very different when there is a mixture of for sales and rentals. He said in terms of business, rentals are easier. He emphasized that this development would be renters by choice. The proposal is now a high end rental basis proposal. He anticipates that it would bring buyers to the village. People would rent for awhile, and decide that they want to become a property owner in the village.

Mayor Corby asked what the ideas are for how the project will look as one comes over the bridge. Mr. Brown said that the landscape treatment that leads into the first structure will be very important. He has not thought about specifics yet but he wants it to say "Village Street". He said the green space will dramatically shield the buildings from the street when the trees grow and the landscape develops.

Questions were asked about the maintenance of the landscaping and the street. There will be no impact on the village services. The street will be built to village standards but Mark IV will maintain it. Trustee Boehlert expressed concerns about traffic. Mr. DiMarzo said the impact would not be significant and he would like to talk with her "off line" about the traffic issue.

**Anthony DiMarzo**

Mr. DiMarzo said he is very concerned. He explained that the project will be an asset to the village and will create benefits for the village. He said the R5 district was enacted and the developer relied on that code to design the project. He said they met village requirements and are trying to do a good job. He said the Planning Board has given them eight pages of questions which will be answered. He said they are not going to walk away and that it can be a win/win for all. He said without the density, they will not be able to meet the criteria of the APRB. He said they are glad to take recommendations but the project needs to balance and work for everyone.

Trustee Sherwood said the Board is willing to discuss all of the ideas presented. She said they are not against development within the R5 district. However, as elected officials, they have a duty to protect the public trust. She said the Board will consider all factors and make the decisions that will be in the best interest of the present and future Pittsford Village. She said the Board would like to adjust the R5 code so that it is in accordance with the Village's Comprehensive Plan. The R5 district is the western gateway to the village on both sides of Monroe Avenue and is a great area for potential development. The proposed moratorium would give the Board the time to address gaps in the current R5 Code to ensure it is compatible with the Comprehensive Plan, which was developed and adopted to use as a guide to retain and enhance the distinctive historic identity and character of the village. Trustee Sherwood said the village did not become as special as it is by accident.

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Trustee Galli asked about payment of bills to the consultants. Mr. DiMarzo said he is communicating with the Treasurer. Once the bills are clarified, they will be paid.

Mayor Corby summarized the concerns of the Board. The concerns are the number of units, the density, mass, and site coverage. He said the Board understood when this property was annexed that it would have significant impact, good or bad. It is their charge to make sure any development that takes place is right.

Anthony DiMarzo said the Board developed the R5 district which has been used as a guideline for this development. Now the Board wants to change the Code. Chris DiMarzo asked why the Board didn't change it two years ago. Anthony DiMarzo said to change the Code now would be a disgrace to the village. He said he is trying to figure out where the project is going and how to please all three Boards. He said he has never built a development by committee. He asked what the Board wants.

Trustee Boehlert asked what would work for the developer. She said 2 ½ stories would take the wall feeling away.

Roger Brown asked if there were more 2 ½ story elements that were visibly discernable, and if the developer could accomplish this, would they be on the right road.

Trustee Pierson said 175 units is too many units and puts a strain on the village. He said that even if the architecture is okay, it doesn't mean that 175 units will work.

Mayor Corby temporarily adjourned the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 10:55 AM.

Trustee Pierson said that the Board of Trustees needs to answer questions for the developer in a timely fashion so that they can proceed. Anthony DiMarzo said they will meet to come up with what they can live with. However, he said he is concerned about the "moving goals". He said they need to have input and guidance. If things match up, he said it would be a win/win situation.

Trustee Galli asked if APRB and PZBA meetings on this project should be postponed until the issues are worked out so that the developer doesn't have to do extra work to no avail. Chris DiMarzo said that within two weeks they could present new drawings and hard line numbers regarding the number of units and the parking issues but he asked the Board to keep the moratorium on hold.

The Board discussed finding a planner to assist in determining what the numbers should be. Mayor Corby and Trustee Pierson will interview potential planners. Trustee Pierson said he would want Mr. Essler's input. He will arrange a meeting.

It was decided that another workshop meeting will take place. The tentative date will be June 14<sup>th</sup> to meet with a planner.

There being no further business, a **motion** was made by **Trustee Boehlert, seconded by Trustee Sherwood** to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 AM.

**Vote:** Corby – yes, Galli – yes, Sherwood – yes, Pierson – yes, Boehlert – yes. **Motion carried.**

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Anne Z. Hartsig, Recording Secretary

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