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TOWN OF NEWFANE

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TOWN OF NEWFANE

PUBLIC MEETING September 12, 2024

The Town of Newfane Town Board held a Public Meeting in the Town Hall, 2737 Main Street, Newfane, NY. The Public Meeting for the DRI / NY Forward Discussion was called to order by Supervisor John Syracuse at 5:30pm.

Town Board Members Present:

Supervisor John Syracuse, Councilman Pete Robinson, Councilwoman Sue Neidlinger, Councilman Rick Coleman

Others present: Town Attorney, Jim Sansone, from Wendel, Adam Tabelski -DRI /NY Forward Consultant; Olcott Yacht Club representatives Roy Knapp & Mike Layman, Jane Voepel, OBCA, Karen Young, Loren Bommer, David Schmidt, Larry Dormer and 8 others.

Supervisor Syracuse welcomed everyone for the DRI / NY Forward Discussion. Having this meeting is a requirement for Community participation and knowledge. He introduced Adam Tabelski, from Wendel Engineering, and turned the meeting over to Adam. Public Outreach is a necessity for the grant. Outside ideas are wonderful and encouraged. NY Forward is a smaller version of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). NY Forward is an offshoot of the larger 10-million-dollar DRI, but funding is not as high. Newfane has been enticed to keep trying for the grant and move forward with the plans that they have. The State has visited Olcott and had a tour on 7/29/24. The funding round opened in August with an "Intention to Apply" letter which allows us to get extra help. The State is looking for Renovations and upgrades, private and public sectors. Certain criteria for the "potential boundary" have been mentioned in the past focusing on the Hamlet of Olcott.

- Private Sector needs a 25% match from Owner.
- Applications will be submitted by October and winners announced by Winter 2024
- A SIP will be initialized for the winners with project ideas moving forward in early 2025.
- Funds will be seen probably early 2026. This all takes time.
- Public involvement is very important and a must. A page has been placed on Town Website for Public input.
 - Some ideas thus far are:

- Harbor Development
 - LVS Improvements
 - Olcott Gazebo
 - Beach Terraces, terraces near Shoppes and Lighthouse
 - “The Overlook” on East Marina side
 - Marina /Fish Cleaning Sation.
 - Green Energy projects: EV outlets
- Newcomers have joined in this as we progress through it each year. The Governor has changed how things are run. We just received verification that we are now a “Certified Pro-Housing" Town. Which is a requirement now to be considered on these grants.

Representatives from the Olcott Yacht Club spoke. They are hopeful to start a New Clubhouse from the ground up! The Club does a lot with youth boating lessons. They share Marina space, so they help in the education of boating and sailing, especially to the children/teens that sign up. The Yacht Club is a private entity, and they are a “not for profit" Social organization, helping the community, offering boating safety courses and Youth boating/sailing lessons. Many "winners” come out of Olcott in boating races.

The original 1920 Clubhouse was under water in 2017 and 2019 for a great length of time with internal flooding. They have already replaced flooring and underneath materials that are not visible. Even sidewalks and walls are at risk, currently, and need fixing.

Building a new Yacht Clubhouse would offer: 3000 sq feet building with Handicap accessible, a dining room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms, and an office. They are looking for assistance, as they have always handled finances in house. They handle things on their own and they do not make money on this. They do these things for the Community. Currently bids say the cost is \$750,000 for 3000 sq ft building and 50K alone for demolition. Overall, they are looking at \$800K for total cost.

Supervisor Syracuse mentioned that David Hedley and the Olcott Harbor Center has interest but was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Next Loren Bommer spoke with reference to “Route 18 at 18”. The Northern Pier Restaurant, located at the old Olcott Harbor Resort, currently has 6 existing businesses that are up and running. He bought the property in February of 2020, just 3 weeks prior to the Covid shutdown. There are 47 acres with 1985-1986 buildings on them. The Restaurant was closed in 2005. The buildings were empty almost 20 year. His side of 18 Mile Creek is thriving! Recently the “VP Fuel Racing" just took over the gas station and he has already seen an uptick there. They are also open 24 hours! Restaurant / lodging are open all year round.

His big snag is he needs to improve electricity supply to the grounds and has spoken with National Grid. He needs to invest \$495,000 to increase this infrastructure. He has 30 Campers that come every year. Good feedback from Tenants he sees year after year. He cannot grow the campsites without electricity. This is the closest RV Park to Olcott, and it’s busy. He needs infrastructure to help him increase his business. Inquiries suggest a Barber, Bakery, Bottle Return, and he needs power!! And he would also add Sewer and utilities for these campsites. This would bring in more tourism to make Olcott thrive. He has invested his own money to make this grow. He offers public facilities for the area and there are no others from Niagara Falls to Rochester to those traveling on Route 18. Loren passed pictures around of the upgrades being made. It's tough from Labor Day to April, but there is now a category of clients that continue to support the store constantly, and plan to year-round. There is more food now being provided.

The convenience store is filling the niche that was missing. He himself studied and planned a more open gas pump area for rigs and trailers. Bands are playing and they host patio gatherings, all happening at The Northern Pier.

There are 30 locals that now work there between all the businesses. Loren has 63 yearly leases, and he saves some spots for transients. The NYS River Authority is coming to meet Loren for his side of 18 Mile Creek, to talk about the possibilities with that property. There was public discussion on what may be messing.

The Supervisor filled the crowd in on the current owner's discussion of renovating the old Roller Rink. Another place is Time out 2 and he's in contact with that owner as well.

The Supervisor stated that the Empire State Group had one comment when they visited in July..."How clean it is here!!" Also, a local college architectural student did a thesis on connecting the two sides of the Harbor. He shared the student's thesis pictures of a hotel, museum, bridge idea.

"The Town is making progress on its own." The Town must show their interest and finding to prove we "can do it!" He feels we are a better fit for the 4.5 million of NY Forward than the 10 million DRI offers, due to "shovel ready" land projects. We as a Town can move forward on our own to succeed. This is all still OPEN! Check Website for the form to give more input to submit by the end of September.

The Public Meeting closed at 6:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary L Zeller
Confidential Secretary