

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gary Wall, Supervisor
Sue Camilleri, Clerk
Margaret Birch, Treasurer
Michael Healy, Trustee
Steven Thomas, Trustee

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Anthony Bartolotta, Trustee
Karen Joliat, Trustee

OTHERS PRESENT:

Rob Merinsky	Russ Williams	Hugo Cardenas
Lou Feurino	Derek Diederich	Mark Herne
Barb Miller	Dan Stencil	

PROPERTY OWNERS PRESENT:

Dave & Kimberly Hendrick, 4490-4494 Dixie Hwy.
Harold Hudson, 4500 Dixie Hwy.
Cheryl Macguire, 4508 Dixie Hwy.
Susan Anderson, 4532 Dixie Hwy.

Supervisor Gary Wall called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence for the brave men and women that defend our Country and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken and all Board Members were present except for Trustees Bartolotta and Joliat

The Supervisor stated that the Township owns and maintains the parking lot on Frembes behind the properties on Dixie. There is no funding to continue this benefit to a small number of tax payers and the Township hopes to come to an amicable agreement with the business owners regarding the maintenance and repair of the parking lot as we move forward. The Supervisor opened the floor to anyone who wanted to comment on the issue.

1. Susan Anderson has owned the property since 1970; it has been vacant for 15 years and is only used for storage. They pay over \$2000.00 in property taxes and over \$300.00 in water bills. The lot has been in bad shape for years and the Township only started mowing and plowing last year. They don't use the parking lot and don't want to purchase it
2. Supervisor Wall said the Township purchased the lots in early 1950's and it was intended to be a metered parking lot but that never happened.
3. Hendrick: they have paid to plow, salt, and cut the grass for years. He is interested in what the options are.
4. Hudson: the Lot is in bad shape, he already pays to plow, mow and salt. Doesn't want to purchase, might consider it if it was in better shape.
5. Trustee Healy wants to put the property on the market and let the market determine the value. There is approximately 36,000 sq. ft. of pavement on the lot
6. Trustee Thomas agreed putting it on the market was the right thing to do. He asked what would the store owners do if the lot sold.
7. Wall reminded all that the Façade Renovation program wasn't a success, owners weren't interested in upgrading their property and he wonders if they would want to own and maintain the parking lot. He questions whether the Township should cut their losses by selling the property.

8. Healy said it was a corner lot and repeated put it on the market and see what happens. Maybe the buyer would purchase the stores as well as the parking lot and create a new development on the corner. List it for a year and see what happens. Another year of maintenance couldn't cost that much.
9. Hendrick and Hudson do not want to sell. They chose to open their business in Waterford and want to stay here.
10. Macguire questions how much money was even spent on maintaining the lot. It is always in bad shape. There was an agreement years ago where each store was assessed a percentage based on the number of customers they had using the lot. She reminded everyone that the store owners are taxpayers as well. The businesses have not always been successful in that strip, many have come and gone.
11. Healy reiterated that you never know who might be interested in buying the property. It could be a big developer. He believes the property has value.
12. Wall recommended the owners organize themselves and purchase the lot. The Township doesn't want it. We are aware of the problems with the lot but we don't have the dollars to fix it.
13. Camilleri said the lot is in bad shape and offered an option to have the buyers create a legal entity and purchase the lot with that entity and all business owners would share in the cost in some proportion that they agree on. Or a Special Assessment District could be created and each business would be assessed for the cost of repair and maintenance. A third option was to create an easement. This option was not discussed.
14. Dovre said it was interesting the owners had a previous arrangement to maintain the lot. There is no current Business Association
15. Hendrick and Hudson have tried to contact other owners with no luck. Some previous leases for the store fronts included costs for plowing and mowing but the business owners didn't pay the fee.
16. Wall stated that the Township has to follow the rules. We don't want to create an opportunity for a lawsuit. The idea is to come to an amicable agreement.
17. Hendrick stated they contacted the DPW who agreed to plow because the other owners wouldn't pay to do so.
18. Hudson stated that neighbors use the lot when they have guests and kids play on the lot as well.
19. Wall pointed out it is a public lot and anyone can use it. Parking meters are not an option on this lot. The costs would be prohibitive and wouldn't generate enough money to maintain the lot properly.
20. Macguire stated that there are more empty storefronts than occupied storefronts in the strip. She took her business out of the storefront she owns because it was too expensive to maintain.
21. Healy repeated the property should be listed and we should sell it for fair market value.
22. Hudson questioned who would buy a lot that was in such bad shape
23. Healy said you never know, to give it a try.
24. Russ Williams said they got a call about the pot holes 2 years ago and they fixed it. The Township wasn't aware that they owned it but since that was found the lot is plowed and mowed, but other properties have higher priorities (Fire Stations, Sewer and Water stations, etc). It is a large expense to the township. He will get the costs together of what we have spent to date.
25. Dan Stencil said we plow many locations, some with higher proprieties than this lot.
26. Williams stated that we have limited resources and must prioritize. The Township fixed potholes in the County's right-of-way on the property as well as potholes in the parking lot.
27. Dovre pointed out that the agreement stated the Township was required to keep this as a parking lot for 15 year. That agreement expired in roughly 1968. He doesn't believe we have an obligation to provide a parking lot. The Township could contract with another business to do the mowing and plowing but the owners would have to pay. Three options are to sell on the market, to sell to the owners or to create a Special Assessment District. Selling to the owners sounds like "pie in the sky." The Township should be compensated for the costs, but that is not happening.

28. Dovre: The problem with a Special assessment district is the upfront costs would be large to repair the lot to the Townships standards. An estimate of \$250,000 to repair the pavement. The owners may have a lower standard and could repair it for less.
29. Dovre: Only 4 of the 10 property owners showed up, a disappointing turnout. It makes it difficult to come up with a plan when so many players are missing. The township was not enriched when they bought the parking lot, instead it is costing money. Each business requires parking Planning has a formula as to how many spots each store is required to have. The idea of this meeting was to get the owners to come to an agreement.
30. Wall suggests putting the lot on the market and offering the store owners first right of refusal. The Township will be included in any lawsuit due to injury if they are the owner, regardless of whether the businesses have liability insurance.
31. Hudson inquired if the property taxes he pays could be reallocated so the Township gets more to fix the lot. If a private individual buys the lot they could fence it off and his customers would have no parking. They might have to lease spots from the new owner.
32. Wall repeated listing it and offering first right of refusal to owners. Over 10 years we could spend well over \$100,000 in maintenance and it still would not be in good condition
33. Thomas asked the owners to consider what would happen if the lot is sold
34. Wall stated the Township will send another letter stressing the importance of all owners showing up to come to an agreement. We can't force people to attend.
35. Hendrick stated that a sensible business owner would realize that if you own a commercial building you should be responsible for the parking.
36. Wall realizes that this is a unique situation; he understands the problem the owner and the Township are facing. Another letter will be sent out
37. Wall asked that if the owners have contact information for any of the other owners to please share it.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Camilleri

Seconded by Healy, RESOLVED, to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Sue Camilleri, Clerk

Gary Wall, Supervisor