

STATE OF NEW YORK
ONONDAGA COUNTY
TOWN OF CICERO

SS:

The Cicero Town Board held a **Regular Town Board Meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 2016** at 6:30 p.m. at the Cicero Town Hall, 8236 Brewerton Road, Cicero, NY 13039.

PRESENT:

Mark Venesky	Supervisor
Mike Becallo	Councilor
C. Vernon Conway	Councilor
Dick Cushman	Councilor
Jonathan Karp	Councilor

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joseph Snell	Police Chief
Chris Woznica	Highway Superintendent
Jody Rogers	Director of Youth Bureau Parks & Recreation
Robert Germain	Germain & Germain, Town Attorney
Stephen Snell	O'Brien & Gere, Town Engineer
Tracy M. Cosilmon	Town Clerk

Supervisor Venesky opened the 17th regular meeting of the Town Board at 6:30 p.m. by noting the locations of the three emergency exits, asked that all electronic devices be silenced and noted if anyone had difficulty hearing to bring it to the Board's attention.

Councilor Conway led the Pledge of Allegiance, and then requested a moment of silence for our troops in harm's way.

Town Board Meeting Minutes

Councilor Conway made a motion to approve the following minutes:

- Town Board minutes from the Regular Town Board Meeting held on September 28, 2016

Motion was seconded by Councilor Cushman.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

- Special Town Board Meeting held on October 3, 2016

Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 4, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 1. *Motion carried.* Councilor Becallo abstaining.

Approval of Abstract Numbers 40 & 41

Councilor Cushman made a motion to accept Abstract #40 (dated 10/5/2016) and Abstract #41 (dated 10/12/2016) as presented. Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

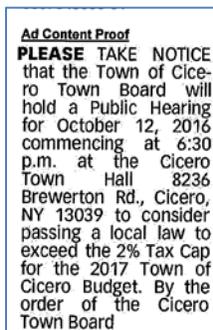
Budget Modifications/Amendments

Supervisor Venesky stated that there were no budget modifications/amendments.

Public Hearing to consider passing a local law to exceed the 2% Tax Cap for the 2017 Town of Cicero Budget

Supervisor Venesky: We will now have a public hearing to consider passing a local law to exceed the 2% Tax Cap for the 2017 Town of Cicero Budget. It by no way means that we are going to do that, but that gives us the flexibility to manage the budget as it needs to be done. The purpose of this public hearing is to consider passing a local law to exceed the 2% Tax Cap for the 2017 Town of Cicero Budget. The tax cap, which first applied to local governments beginning in 2012, limits tax levy increases to the lesser rate of inflation or 2 percent with some exceptions, including a provision that allows municipalities to override this tax cap. According to State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli property tax levy growth for local governments will be capped at 0.68 percent for 2017, decreasing slightly from 2016, when it was 0.73 percent.

Supervisor Venesky: I have proof of publication and posting.



Dated: October 2, 2016

TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CICERO
 COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, NEW YORK

Supervisor Venesky opened the public hearing at 6:38 p.m.

Supervisor Venesky asked if anyone would like to speak for or against.

Tom Beaulieu: I guess I would ask you Mr. Supervisor, and Town Board members, not having spent a great deal of time looking at the budget yet, but I figure when I am in the hospital next week for three or four days I can scrutinize it more thoroughly. If I am looking at potentially...I think it looks like a 12 percent increase this year, no?

Supervisor Venesky: No.

Tom Beaulieu: Between last year and the \$966,000 dollar increase, because you're putting the paving program back into the budget that wasn't in there before?

Supervisor Venesky: That is correct. Actually, right now I think we are at a 7.2 percent increase is what we are looking at. One thing to remember when anyone looks at percentages is its interesting and it sensationalizes articles when you say we are going to have this 11 percent or 17 percent, or whatever it is. The bottom line is what's the dollar? What's the land it costs? This town, about five years ago, began borrowing money. So when the County took the sales tax away from the towns what the town did is we brought in folks and we started borrowing money. Last year the town borrowed, I think it was \$1.35 million dollars and almost all of that was for paving for our Highway, our road program. One of the things that we committed to do, if you elected us, was to reduce that borrowing and eliminate it. This town needs to pay as we go. We cannot continue to borrow money. We are okay, right now, but we are looking down the road after we are gone because the rest of you, like us, I live here too, and we live here too, we will be here. We are trying to correct some financial decisions.

Tom Beaulieu: Discrepancies. So if I understand this, and to make it easier for the rest of us lay people to understand, if that rate is set at 0.68 percent for 2017, to exceed the tax cap of 2 percent even if you are above two percent...

Supervisor Venesky: It's 0.68.

Tom Beaulieu: 0.68 excuse me. Then if it's above 2 percent there is still no rebate back for the taxes for the people that pay the taxes in the town. We will not see any money back because...

Supervisor Venesky: Well that's not true, no. Because I think that's split three ways. There are three components to that. I wish Shirlie was still here, but she left. One is the school district. So if the school district stays within the tax cap...

Tom Beaulieu: They were.

Supervisor Venesky: And then, I think if the County stays within its tax cap and then if the Town stayed within its tax cap the average homeowner last year, I think, would have got \$48.00.

Tom Beaulieu: I thought it was a higher price than that. Some of us pay higher taxes, perhaps.

Supervisor Venesky: It wasn't an exorbitant amount. But let's say for example, if the Town exceeds its tax cap and the school district stays within the tax cap and the County stays within the tax cap then the homeowner will still receive two-thirds or whatever it would have been.

Tom Beaulieu: This side bar, seeing you brought the subject up, how are we going to go about paying back some of this loan money that we took out and carried the last five years for the Highway paving program that was borrowed? What are we going to do as the interest rates begin to pop up, which they expect to see a raise in the prime rate? How are we going to respond to paying that money back? With the current budget, where is that money going to come from?

Supervisor Venesky: Well, we do have actually in the current budget, and I took my paperwork in the other room, but we talked and we had a discussion about this today and then at the budget workshop earlier and you are starting to see that chickens come home to roost, if you will, because now we have a bond and debt payment that we are going to begin to pay. That's what happens when we borrow money. I don't mince a lot of words. I'm a pretty straight-shooter guy, but when you kick the can down the road (push costs down the road) that's what happens, so we are budgeting that expense. What our goal is is that we do not increase that expense and we get our arms around it, and that's what we are trying to do, so we are very close.

Tom Beaulieu: But we will be able to get some idea on that; not necessarily tonight. But, how are you going to go forward with paying down that debt?

Supervisor Venesky: We are going to budget it. It's going to be a budgeted item because the town has taken on a debt, and we together as neighbors, we owe that money. So together we are going to have to pay that money back. So for what happened years past, we are now going to pay for that. Our goal is to make sure that in years' future that we are not going to saddle each other as neighbors with a debt that was incurred for all the reasons we know in years past.

Judy Boyke: When we talk about the tax cap (that I took off line), it says the Tax Cap Reserve Offset is used to reduce the coming year levy. It says, this amount is the same amount as the Total Reserve noted above, which consists of the amount that the local government placed in reserve, including accrued interest for exceeding the tax cap in the prior year, which we did. Once the total level of property taxes needed to support the budget for the coming year is set the amount in reserve must be used to offset the property taxes that will be levied for the coming year. Can you explain that?

Supervisor Venesky: I'm not the comptroller, and I'm not an accountant, but Dick [Cushman] is. We had a good year. We managed the fund balance and we are going to use some money out of fund balance to balance this budget.

Judy Boyke: But how much did we put in reserve from the overrun that we did last year for the tax cap?

Supervisor Venesky: Well I can tell you that fund reserve grew. I think we increased our fund balance, and this was from the supervisor last year, but we've increased it. I can't give you an exact number, but it exceeds \$200,000 dollars.

Judy Boyke: When you talk about borrowing previous administrations, you did vote for all of these increases and borrowing for the Highway, as you said.

Supervisor Venesky: The last two years I did. As a Councilor I did do that because we didn't have a plan in place, that is correct.

Judy Boyke: You did have a plan in place, it was this. I call it a pyramid.

Supervisor Venesky: I agree with you. That's why we are stopping it. I am the Supervisor this year and we are stopping it. I was not the supervisor in previous years.

Judy Boyke: I understand that. But it doesn't matter, you voted on it.

Supervisor Venesky: So what's your point?

Supervisor solicited any further input from the audience. There was none.

Supervisor Venesky closed the public hearing at 6:47 p.m.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board comments. There were none.

Decision: Councilor Cushman moved for the adoption of a resolution to approve the following:

TOWN OF CICERO

LOCAL LAW NO.11 FOR THE YEAR 2016

A LOCAL LAW TO OVERRIDE THE TAX LEVY LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW §3-C

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of CICERO as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Intent: It is the intent of this local law to override the limit on the amount of real property taxes that may be levied by the Town of Cicero pursuant to General Municipal Law §3-c, and to allow the Town of Cicero to adopt a budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2017 and ending December 31, 2017 that requires a real property tax levy in excess of the "tax levy limit" as defined by General Municipal Law §3-c.

Section 2. Authority: This local law is adopted pursuant to subdivision 5 of General Municipal Law §3-c, which expressly authorizes the Town Board to override the tax levy limit by the adoption of a local law approved by a vote of at least sixty- percent (60%) of the town board.

Section 3. Tax Levy Limit Override: The Town Board of the Town of Cicero, located in the County of Onondaga is hereby authorized to adopt a budget for the fiscal year 2017 that requires a real property tax levy in excess of the amount otherwise prescribed in General Municipal Law §3-c.

Section 4. Severability: If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjusted by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgement shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or in its application to the person, individual, firm or corporation or circumstance, directly involved in the controversy in which such judgement or order shall be rendered.

Section 5. Effective date: This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Supervisor Venesky: Tracy, would you please take a roll call vote.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a roll call vote, which resulted as follows:

Councilor Karp:	Aye
Councilor Cushman:	Aye
Councilor Conway:	Aye
Councilor Becallo:	No
Supervisor Venesky :	Aye

Ayes – 4, Noes – 1, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried.* Councilor Becallo voting no.

Public Hearing to Consider a Speed Reduction of the speed limit from 35 mph to 30 mph for that section of Smith Road between Thompson Road and Totman Road

Supervisor Venesky: The purpose of this public hearing is to consider amendment of the Traffic and Vehicles Ordinance of the Code of the Town of Cicero to consider a speed reduction of the speed limit from 35 mph to 30 mph for that section of Smith Road between Thompson Road and Totman Road.

Supervisor Venesky: I have proof of publication and posting.



Dated: October 2, 2016
 TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CICERO
 COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, NEW YORK

Supervisor Venesky opened the public hearing at 6:49 p.m.

Supervisor Venesky: We had a family and we had residents who live in that area come to the last town board meeting with a petition and they asked for safety's sake, and for the safety of the children, that we consider lowering the speed limit.

Supervisor Venesky asked if anyone would like to speak either in favor or against lowering the speed limit.

Elizabeth Ostini: I'm the person that started the petition. I've also brought residents with me from Smith Road to have this speed reduction. I wasn't aware that I was going to come and speak.

Supervisor Venesky: That's okay. There's no one on this board that does not take public safety seriously. We heard you loud and clear on that and that's why we are having this public hearing. Would you like to speak again?

Elizabeth Ostini: No. Are you asking for other people that are here?

Supervisor Venesky: I am asking anyone who is here that would like to speak either in favor or against.

Councilor Karp: For the record, she brought with her last time a petition with I believe 55 signatures with 58 or 59 possible on that section of the road. I think that indicates overwhelming support for this among the residents of that section.

Tom Beaulieu: As you know, I brought this subject up recently regarding a couple of speed zone changes. I guess my question is, to piggy back on your statement, that you take the safety of the residents very seriously. If you would be whole-heartedly behind dropping the speed limit from 35 to 30 why wouldn't you be so whole-heartedly behind dropping a speed limit from 55 to 40 for the safety of people, because we didn't file a petition?

Supervisor Venesky: I understand what you're saying, and I am concerned about the speed limit. You and I have had talks about that. We have a wonderful community. We have a lot of runners. We have a lot of bikers. We have people that use the roads, and Mr. Beaulieu is one of those folks who does a lot of bicycling; there are some bicycling clubs. The issue that we had with that is we didn't want to be premature because there were so many folks that stood up. There was a handful of folks who were here, who were very vehement in not having us address that speed limit concern on that road or those stretches of roads there at that time and the Board made the decision that they would table it and that we would revisit it.

Tom Beaulieu: Well, I appreciate that. But again, we have tried to separate this out with all these speed zone changes that the Town Board over the last several years has made usually. It should come down to safety issues, not popularity and that's where I'll leave it.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any further input. There was none.

Supervisor Venesky closed the public hearing at 6:52 p.m.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any further Board comments.

Councilor Becallo: I would have liked to see more people that live on that street come up and talk. Just judging from this evening, it doesn't really seem like it's wanted or needed.

Don Snyder: But you had more than fifty of them sign a petition, so why do you need them to come up and speak?

Councilor Becallo: I would like to hear it.

Resolution:

Councilor Karp moved for the adoption of a resolution to reduce the speed limit from 35 mph to 30 mph for a section of Smith Road between Thompson Road and Totman Road and to install the necessary signage. To be known as Local Law 12 of 2016. Motion was seconded by Councilor Cushman.

Ayes – 4, Noes – 1, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried.* Councilor Becallo voting no.

Island Hollow Project

Supervisor Venesky: There is a project that was proposed, I think it was last year, by a developer who wants to put some senior housing and some housing on Island Road. There has been a lot of discussion about this and then there has also been some folks who have begun throwing around some accusations, and whatever, and there has been some subtle name calling, or whatever, about this project. I want to be very clear about Island Hollow, or any project in the Town of Cicero, that our major concern, our overwhelming concern, is for the safety of all of the residents in this town. I, as your Supervisor take that very seriously and also any potential residents and where they will live in this town. That is my only concern. I'm not interested in the size of people's pocketbooks. I'm not interested in all the other things that could go along with it. I am interested in the safety of the people in this town.

Supervisor Venesky moved for the adoption of a resolution requesting that the Town of Cicero Planning Board consider and address the following Safety concerns before granting site plan approval for the Island Hollow Project. Supervisor Venesky said, this board does not vote. We do not have a say in what happens in any development in the Town of Cicero unless there are infrastructure issues that we have to be responsible for. This is solely a decision that is made by Onondaga County Planning because everything goes in front of Onondaga County for approval or disapproval, or no comment, or no disapproval or no objection, and then it goes before the Planning Board. The Cicero Planning Board, by law, is an independent body. They have their own five member board. They have their own attorney. They have their own engineering and their job is to make sure that any lawful endeavor that wants to be constructed or built in the Town of Cicero meets all code and meets the zoning requirements of the town; that is their responsibility. I am going to move on to some of the issues that this board has had about this project. I want you to know that we are proposing a senior citizen's complex and a residential housing complex, all the way down out on Island Road, and I'm not going to say in the middle of nowhere, but it almost could be in the middle of nowhere. It is completed surrounded by Industrial and there are very heavy-duty, high power lines that go through that project. Just so you know, National Grid in 2017, to modernize the United States Power Grid is going to be replacing the poles that come through Cicero. They are going to get bigger, the lines are going to get bigger, and they are going to carry megawatts:

1) Pedestrian Safety:

There are no sidewalks or street lights on Island Road, and Island Road has narrow shoulders adjoining drainage ditches. Accordingly, we anticipate that residents will be forced to walk in the road. With the onset of winter and shorter days, we fear that a serious safety situation will exist with children and residents being forced to walk in traffic on unlit and snow covered roads. The nearest convenience store or shopping facility is 3 miles away with no sidewalks forcing pedestrians to walk long distances in unlit roadways to purchase even the most basic of necessities.

2) Fire Safety: The Fire Department has raised serious questions regarding adequate availability of water in the event of a fire.

OCWA has said that there, and I'm going off the top of my head here, 2153 gallons per minute available at that sight. The fire departments have recommended 3700 gallons per minute. A fire department pumper will drop over 2000 gallons a minute and we have sprinklers to think of, so let's make sure that we have the proper water flow to put out a fire in the unlikely event, and God forbid that there's ever a fire.

3) Lack of Public Transportation: Centro has stated that because the project is 3 miles from the nearest bus line, that bus service would not be available. Furthermore, Centro said that because the project is located more than 3 quarters of a mile from the major bus route, that Call a Bus service would not be available for disabled residents.

So we are going to put senior citizens, God bless them, out in the middle of nowhere, with no conveniences and no bus service available.

4) Proximity to High Tension Powerlines: National Grid will be installing newer and higher voltage lines that will be placed within 106 feet and 110 feet from residents' bedrooms. In addition to the potential health concerns from nearby electromagnetic energy, we are concerned that children will see the megawatt power poles as playground equipment radially available for climbing and an attractive nuisance.

Supervisor Venesky: That is my motion. I would ask, and we would ask, that the Cicero Planning Board consider and address those safety concerns before a vote is taken.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Cushman.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any further Board comments. There were none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Renewal of Trash Contract

Councilor Cushman moved for the adoption of a resolution to approve the renewal of the current agreement with Syracuse Haulers to provide municipal solid waste collection and disposal services for an additional year expiring December 31, 2017, and also to authorize the Supervisor and to exercise renewal provisions of the existing contract. Motion was seconded by Councilor Conway.

Supervisor Venesky read the following:

Whereas, the initial term of the agreement between the Town of Cicero and Syracuse Haulers to provide municipal solid waste collection and disposal services to the Town expires December 31st, 2016, and

Whereas, the approved terms and conditions of the agreement called for two (2) additional one (1) year renewals upon the written consent of both parties, now, it is hereby,

Resolved, that the contract and its current terms and conditions shall be extended pursuant to the language of the agreement for a period of one (1) additional year period until December 31st, 2017. This resolution also authorizes the Supervisor to execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the resolution.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Conway.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board comments. There were none.

Ayes – 4, Noes – 1, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried.* Councilor Becallo voting no.

Councilor Becallo: I am opposed. This was a very, very expensive trash contract. We had the opportunity to put it out to bid last year, but we failed to do it. I appreciate Supervisor Venesky's 'no' vote last year and we decided to continue it again this year.

Personnel Matters:

- **Assessor's Office**

Councilor Becallo moved for the adoption of a resolution to appoint Sarah Pinkasiewicz as a part time Assessment Clerk at an hourly rate of \$14.00, not to exceed 1040 hours per year, effective immediately. Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

- **Town Clerk's Office**

Councilor Becallo moved for the adoption of a resolution to appoint Gretchen Walter as a part-time Deputy Town Clerk at a starting rate of \$14.28 per hour, effective October 11, 2016. Motion was seconded by Supervisor Venesky.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Highway Department

Councilor Conway moved for the adoption of a resolution to approve the following for the Highway Department:

- \$7,000.00 to TH Kinsella for 900 yards of runner crush
- \$33,825.40 to Barrett Paving for paving per the Highway 284 Agreement

Motion was seconded by Councilor Becallo.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board comments. There were none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Parks & Recreation Department:

A. Bennett Street Installation of Streetscape Improvements

Councilor Karp moved for the adoption of a resolution to approve the authorization of the Supervisor to execute the Department of State contract, Project #C1000723 for the Bennett Street Installation of Streetscape Improvements in the amount of \$121,500.00. Motion was seconded by Councilor Becallo.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board comments. There were none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. Skyway Park Field Improvement Project (DASNY Grant)

Councilor Karp moved for the adoption of a resolution to approve the following:

- \$20,000.00 to Ricelli Enterprises for screened topsoil
- \$3,000.00 to Kinsella for stone for drainage

Motion was seconded by Councilor Becallo.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board comments. There were none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Discussion Item – Town of Cicero Highway Facility Site Clearing

Supervisor Venesky: Last year, the last board and Supervisor, purchased property for a new Highway facility. The highway facility we have, quite frankly, should have been replaced years ago; it has already exceeded its useful life. The engineering for that project, MRB Engineering, didn't send this to us until about 2 o'clock this afternoon, but it's important that we get it on. Basically, what we want to do is they want to send out bids to clear that property. Because of the Eastern Bat we have to. We can only clear property between October 1st and March 31st and they want to get bids out and back to the Town Board for approval so we can get some folks in there to begin clearing that property. So, with the Board's permission, I'd like to add an additional resolution. Again, because it came in late, so I beg your pardon on that, but with your permission I will ask you guys. This isn't a money thing. We have already approved the money. We just have to approve the resolution for MRB to get that [bid] out there.

Supervisor Venesky moved for the adoption of resolution to approve the following:

***TOWN OF CICERO
HIGHWAY FACILITY
SITE CLEARING***

BID AUTHORIZATION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Town of Cicero (hereinafter referred to as Town Board) is intending to construct a New Highway Facility at 6658 NYS Route 31, Cicero New York. The property has a total acreage of 48.88 acres. The parcel is wooded and also covered by vegetative brush.

WHEREAS, the northerly portion of the site needs to be cleared to accommodate the Highway Facility proposed infrastructure including buildings, appropriate hard surfaces for access and movement on site, site storage areas, public utilities and site amenities. Approximately 15 acres is to be cleared. Tree and brush removal will be limited along adjacent property lines to provide a buffer to neighbors as much as possible without limiting the proposed Highway Facility construction. The site clearing will be the first step in preparation for the new facility. The project will be released for public bid and be bid in accordance with Town Law.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board authorize MRB Group to prepare bid documents for the site clearing portion of the project. MRB Group is to prepare the advertisement for the project and provide to the Town Clerk for publication. The advertisement for bid will be published in the official paper of the Town.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Supervisor Venesky solicited any Board discussion. There was none.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions – 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Public Input

Les Matteson: The residents of where we live, off of Island Road, have put out a petition for the Stop the Island Hollow Housing Project. If you would like a copy, I can give it to you. Right here [referring to the petition] is about 130 signatures. There's about 30 more signatures that came in between about 4 and 5:30 tonight that is not on this and if you read the back of them as when we put out the petition and asked them to give their opinion. Ninety-five percent of it, exactly what you brought up Mr. Venesky, it was the same exact thing - the safety issues. It's just not the place for it. I would like each one of you to read this, if you would.

Supervisor Venesky: If you would give it to Tracy Cosilmon. Tracy, maybe we can get it over to the Planning Board. They are the ones, at this point, that are going to make the final decision on that.

Les Matteson: I also have a copy of exactly what the petition was and how it reads. If you'd all look at it we would all really appreciate it.

Petition (not including signatures):

Stop the Island Hollow Housing Project in Cicero, NY

We, the undersigned residents of the Town of Cicero and the North Syracuse School District strongly oppose all privately owned taxpayer-funded subsidized housing also referred to as "affordable", "workforce", "senior", "lead abatement", "flood housing", "transit" and/or "supported housing."

Whereas: Such projects cause additional costs for schools, police, fire, rescue, medical, water, sewage, traffic, safety, without adding a corresponding net gain to the already oppressively burdened taxpayers;

Whereas: Such projects could cause decreased property values, increases in traffic, increases in crime and impact the privacy of the homes in the area.

Whereas: Such projects are funded by the taxpayers for corporate profit or personal gain of a few developers;

Whereas: Such projects could disrupt community cohesiveness and its underpinnings, which are essential to its health, safety and stability;

Whereas: State tax laws including, but not limited to, 581A, issuing of tax credits to private developers, and PILOT programs are promoting these projects in Cicero and other areas.

Whereas: Section 8 housing works in the following manner; depending on the renter's income, the renter would pay a small portion of the rent and then the rest would be subsidized by the taxpayers. It stands to reason that if someone cannot afford to pay the rent, then they most likely cannot afford transportation, insurance and maintenance, etc. So, with no public transportation in this area, people would have to walk to the closest bus routes for transportation; which are approximately 3 miles away, and that could cause many problems. This area is not equipped for this; there are no sidewalks, and people would have to walk in the busy roads with little to no shoulder and very poor lighting, creating a very dangerous situation for them. It could also create a lot of traffic through the nearby neighborhoods, with people walking through at all hours of the day and night, as there are no sidewalks in this area. This project is a bad fit for this area. The only benefit to this project is for the personal gain of the developer.

The possible negatives far outweigh any positives for our community. Why take that chance? Ask the board to vote no on this Project, sign the petition and tell your neighbors. We have such a beautiful and peaceful community, let's keep it that way.

This petition will be delivered to:

- **Town of Cicero, Planning Board Chair**
Robert Smith
- **Town of Cicero, Supervisor**
Mark Venesky
- **Town of Cicero, Deputy Supervisor**
C. Vernon Conway
- **Town of Cicero, Councilor**
Mike Becallo
- **Town of Cicero, Councilor**
Richard Cushman
- **Town of Cicero, Councilor**
Jonathan Karp
- **Town of Cicero, Zoning & Planning**
Richard Hooper

This petition can be viewed and signed online at
<http://bit.ly/islandhollow>

Supervisor Venesky: Will do.

Les Matteson: There are three or four other things that I'd like to bring up. I know you talked about the safety, but I also, and everybody else on this thing I am sure is very interested in what it's cost the taxpayers of Cicero and the County. I'm going to give you a couple quick examples, and if I'm wrong you can tell me here:

1. Each student in our school system. It costs approximately \$15,000 dollars to teach that child, per year. There are 58 townhomes going into this project, all privately owned. If just ten students come into this project, there's going to be more, but we'll take ten from the privately owned development. So if you take \$15,000 dollars and multiply it by 10 that's \$150,000 dollars that's going to cost just for ten students, per year. They are going to be paying in this private

development approximately \$114,000 dollars total taxes (I'm not sure if its \$114,000 or \$118,000 dollars which he quoted us). So \$84,000 dollars was the people who were developing it exact quote. The Town gets \$30,000 dollars and the school gets \$84,000 dollars. That puts the district in the hole, per year, just for 10 kids it's \$66,000 dollars. Do the math. So, I just can't believe that they are even considering this on that Planning Board. I don't know if the Town Board can help us or not; I've got a whole list of things.

2. There has been absolutely nothing put in the paper, in any papers on this project; it's just like it's here somewhere. Then why that's not being done, I don't know. I feel that everybody in Cicero that is paying taxes should know what this whole thing is about. That's what we all feel on this petition.

Supervisor Venesky: We have a reporter here tonight, and I see her taking notes.

Les Matteson: It's what you said, and the Board said, and what you just voted on. I mean there are a million things; the bus costs, the police costs, and you add that in to the cost of just those ten kids coming in at \$66,000 dollars, is that going to cover it? Is that going to cover the cost of your police, your firemen, and everything else that's going to happen on this project? Nobody, not a one of us, are against a senior and we are really not against the project itself, except it is not the place to put it – out in a swamp, period. Now, let's talk about the other thirty acres that are coming in behind this, and it's going to happen, they discussed it on the Zoning Board. Mr. Bragman said, well we don't know. Common sense is going to tell anybody that's looking at this thing that there is going to be more; there's going to be more housing back there. They are going to put in a pump station. Cicero is going to own the line and the County is going to own the pump station, as I understand. But they are going to own the land that it is all on. The whole thing is just...it just doesn't make common sense to put it out there in that swamp. So, if we could get something and if you have any influence at all, if you could just put something in the paper to let the people know what's going on with this. Like I said, we have gone door to door. I've gone door to door and everybody I asked I said, did you vote on this? Did you get this? They said yes. Not one of them could find a single thing in the paper, in the minutes, of anything that has been going on in the Zoning Board about this project. So there are many people, and once you tell them a little bit about it they run in the house and go to their neighbors too to tell them, *We have got to vote this thing down. We've got to do it. It's just not the place for it.* I thank you for your time, and if you have any other questions, they are all on this paper.

Councilor Cushman: We don't want to stress you more, but the 58 units are two and three bedroom units. We estimated 50 students in the school system, so multiply your numbers by 5.

Les Matteson: Yes, by five. So do the math. It's still a big loss, and that's low. In here, one of the comments that they put on our post online is (one of them I thought was quite interesting) is they have openings for senior housings and other housings over in a project that is over here in Clay Court and Windsor for those who live in the area and need it, and they always have vacancies. Just to let you know, there are places for people to go. I thank you very much for your time.

Supervisor Venesky: Thank you, Mr. Matteson.

Debbie Joss: Onondaga County Department of Transportation did a traffic study. I don't have it with me. I don't know if you all have copies of that.

Supervisor Venesky: We do not.

Debbie Joss: I know the Zoning Board members do have copies.

Supervisor Venesky: That stuff, Mrs. Joss, does not come in front of this board. That's an independent board.

Debbie Joss: Okay. I don't know if you can obtain copies of that.

Supervisor Venesky: We could ask them.

Debbie Joss: But, they did a traffic study. They did it one day on July 14th during supposedly peak times, but you have to remember July 14th is in the middle of summer. There are a lot of people on vacation and

there's also no school buses running. So the traffic patterns, I would suggest that they do this study or would like to see them do this study over again and not for just one day but for maybe two or three days to get a better figure of how many cars are really going by here. Where they did this, they did this down where the entrance to Island Hollow is going to be, which is really past where Joss Farm crossing road comes in and I think that they should move up the street a little bit more to figure out where all this traffic is going to go once it gets there. They're in and out traffic, because of the location, is not going to be impeded by traffic going by because a lot of people that are coming down the road in front of my house and other people's houses on that end of the road will turn into Joss Farm Way. A lot of them go up the road if Rattlesnake Gulch is flooded. Our road is the best way to get to Bridgeport, so I would like to see them do this study over again in a little more detail.

Supervisor Venesky: I would just suggest that at the next Planning Board meeting you bring that up. The Planning Board meetings are held on Mondays.

Les Matteson: My understanding is you cannot speak.

Debbie Joss: He is not allowing public input?

Supervisor Venesky: I would write a letter with your concerns and address that to the Chairman.

Debbie Joss: Okay, I will do that. Thank you.

Tim Murphy: I heard what you said about *there is no one on this board that doesn't take safety seriously*. Maybe the side of Route 11 sidewalks needs to be put in. The Planning Board doesn't seem to care about it, but there are a lot of people that are going to be walking down there with that church and that new thrift store and I think it needs a sidewalk. I don't know how they let those businesses go in and not put it in when the Town requires that the businesses put the sidewalks in. I have asked before and nobody seems to do anything about it. Mud Creek Drainage from Walmart to the church is completely overgrown; it needs to be looked at. Final point, the Planning Board should be taped. With all these people here going over this with Island Hollow it just behooves me that you don't require that Planning Board to be taped. I know it's not your board...

Supervisor Venesky: We have no legal jurisdiction over that Planning Board.

Tim Murphy: But as people just said, *I can't speak at that board*, so I am speaking here. You are the Supervisor and that is an appointed position. Something needs to be done. That thing needs to be taped. Thank you.

Mrs. Boyke: Speaking in regards to the new Highway Department Building, you are talking about clearing the ground and all that. This building, doesn't this have to go to referendum?

Supervisor Venesky: It does.

Mrs. Boyke: So what happens if it doesn't get passed at referendum, the money that we are spending ahead of time?

Supervisor Venesky: We have a nice, big clear piece of property that we can sell.

Councilor Karp: Which makes it more saleable.

Judy Boyke: In regards to the Planning Board, again, I would like to reiterate that you cannot stand up and speak. I find that inconvenient. I feel that something should be done. That there is some sort of public input because people have many concerns and questions, yet they are not allowed to speak. As far as going in for the minutes, the minutes are never timely and it's hard to find them. With the new, well I guess she is a court clerk or something, that she does not, and that they don't tape them anymore. I don't believe that that is the correct way to do it. God forbid something should happen to her. I saw in the last minutes that she was absent, so I don't know how the minutes got taken, but it definitely... the Planning Board needs to have a little bit of observation and taking a look at it to make it more public friendly and taxpayer friendly. Thank you.

Debbie Joss: You spoke earlier about reducing the speed limit on Smith Road. I did bring this up at the Planning Board but they have no jurisdiction, so now I am going to bring it up here. On Island Road from Northern Boulevard to below the power lines is 35 mph. Why is this and what can we do about that? I think that's ridiculous to have two sides of the road at different speeds.

Supervisor Venesky: That was before we were born.

Councilor Becallo: That was for construction that they were doing to put the street lights up there. We voted on that, I believe two years ago. I'll be honest with you, I voted against it. I wanted to keep it the same. Uniformity, when it comes to traffic.

Debbie Joss: I'd like to see both sides because through there now with The Crossings there is quite a bit more traffic and I would like to see both sides at thirty-five. In my opinion, I think that would be much safer and nobody does the speed limit anyways.

Supervisor Venesky: Chief do you have any comments on that?

Chief Snell: I think Island Road in its entirety needs to be looked at. We have pieces of Island Road that are 55 mph. I have traveled that road and I would not go fifty-five. The whole road needs to be looked at.

Supervisor Venesky: Would you be able to do that, because I have no problem changing the speed limit and correcting it? To Councilor Becallo's point, he is absolutely right. That does jar my memory. When they put the lights in there they had asked for a speed reduction for safety issues, but that's done.

Councilor Becallo: It was supposed to be a temporary one.

Supervisor Venesky: It was supposed to be a temporary one, yes. But we have to vote to restore that.

Councilor Becallo: It was supposed to be a temporary one and then our previous supervisor just left it the way that it was.

Supervisor Venesky: We will entertain that, yes.

Tom Beaulieu: I will speak on that also. I guess a lot of people don't realize when that was done a couple of years ago that there's a section of Northern Boulevard that is also reversed; you go out, you can head south at fifty-five, but coming into the new traffic signal they have reduced it to forty-five. They are trying to do that to acclimate people to a signal, but it doesn't matter if you come in at 35 or 55. If you miss that traffic light you might survive the accident. The State doesn't do things like that, if we posted a road the speed limit would be 55 or 45 in both directions. I don't know how legal it is, but apparently you can do it. The County asked us to do it. Whether we were complicit with them in doing something that probably isn't what you would consider normal in those two situations. But her point is well made, if you have more additional traffic coming in between those two intersections and traffic pulling out and making turns into each other the reduced speed going out should be thirty-five also, as it is coming into the traffic signal; west bound is 35, east bound is 45 and then it goes to 55. They should both reflect the same speed limit at thirty-five.

Supervisor Venesky: At the next town board meeting, with the Board's permission, we will set a public hearing. We have to have a hearing for that. We need to take a look at that Joe [Snell].

Tom Beaulieu: I think you should ask the County engineers for some input as to why they wanted to do that in the first place.

Supervisor Venesky: And that was on Northern Boulevard? But we also have the Island Road issue.

Tom Beaulieu: Northern Boulevard and Island Road. They didn't touch Thompson Road south because it has been thirty-five approaching going back and forth. The other point that I would bring up too, as you know I had the opportunity over many years ago serving on the Planning Board and also as the Planning Board Chair, there were several instances, and I think The Pastures was one of them when I was Chair. Not all the time, but we would entertain discussion from the public. I know that you can't overstep your bounds and go to the Planning Board and tell them that you think that they should do this or that, but someone from the public can approach the Chairman. I certainly would do that myself and say, I think on something that is as important as this, whether you have already premeditated your mind or you could be swayed to change your vote that the public's input is very important in this situation and it would be better for the entire town to have people who are represented by our government, whether it's you, the Zoning Board, or the Planning Board, to have their voices heard.

Supervisor Venesky: Point well taken.

Les Matteson: I sat in on a Planning Board meeting, and just to let you know that County road, the engineers and I don't remember the gentleman's name, they said they absolutely, positively, will not do anything to that road. They won't widen it. They won't put sidewalks in it. They won't put up signs. They won't, will not, put up lighting just to add to the safety benefactor of this thing. I just want to bring that up. They were there when Centro Bus also said, we will not service this place. So that's what the County came up with. I also understand that the County went fifty/fifty on the vote and then turned it back over to the Zoning Board. At the last meeting that was open to the public, I asked Mr. Smith not to vote on this project. The reason was he is the one, and he told me this, and he told us at a meeting, that he is the one that come up with the senior housing project added onto the other housing. So I can't see how he can vote and not being prejudice of the whole deal because that was his baby; the senior. We need the senior housing, don't get me wrong; we know this. But that was something he stated in a meeting and he looked me straight in the eye and he said, there is absolutely no way that I will not not vote on this - just to let you know where he stands on it. Thank you.

Supervisor Venesky: That is true that the Onondaga County Planning...I attended that meeting and that public hearing, and I carried the safety concerns to them and the vote was a tie. They would not approve or disapprove it. They turned it back to the Planning Board.

Louis Pardee: I attend most of the Planning Board meetings and I agree that they should be taped. Some of things that I thought that they talked about I forget, so if it's taped it is there.

Supervisor Venesky: There have been some great ideas here tonight, but I would suggest that you put those concerns in writing. We do not have the legal authority to tell them or demand that they do anything, just as they cannot do it to us.

Tom Beaulieu: Who is their attorney now? They have a separate attorney, obviously.

Supervisor Venesky: Neil Germain is the attorney.

Tom Beaulieu: They have a different engineer too.

Supervisor Venesky: Yes, they do. It's O'Brien & Gere.

Adjournment

Supervisor Venesky made a motion to adjourn the Town Board meeting.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions- 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

There being no further business before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

