



Incorporated Village of Woodburgh Board of Trustees

Recently, the current owners of the Woodmere Club arranged a discussion with The 5 Towns Jewish Times (5TJT) regarding the development of the Woodmere Club.

Ostensibly to create a certain perception, the owners have attempted to plant seeds of confusion and misunderstanding. Make no mistake, these developers are not necessarily looking out for the best interests of the community.. They have denigrated politicians and others who seek to protect the quality of life for residents of the Village of Woodburgh and surrounding areas. As part of their strategy, they are seeking to prevent Woodburgh from joining together with the Village of Lawrence and Town of Hempstead to address sound planning initiatives that address ecological and environmental issues that cut across jurisdictional boundaries. They have chosen a heavy handed approach through *litigation and threats* and have sought to ignore the likely permanent detrimental community changes that would result from their current proposal.

The development plans that the owners have filed with Nassau County presently seek to develop the Woodmere Club property with 284 single family dwellings. Although they say they would consider an alternative that increases the total units to 285, of which 220 will be age-restricted units, no alternative has been included in any submission to any municipal entity, and thus is not being considered by the Nassau County Planning Commission. Based on the interview responses, this proposal does not appear to solve the serious “quality of life” issues that have been raised by residents.

The 5TJT interview contains numerous inaccuracies and rather than stay silent in the face of these misstatements, we would like to set the record straight.

The Proposed Development Does Not Comport with Woodburgh zoning and planning requirements.

The owners claim that the “current zoning” for the Club property allows for 284 homes. This is not accurate. Based on current zoning and planning regulations, this proposed yield exceeds the permitted lot yield on the property. At no time prior to the submission of the plan to the Nassau County Planning Commission, did the owners submit a copy of the proposed plan to the Village Building Department for review to confirm the assertion that the development addresses all zoning and planning regulations in Woodburgh. Instead, the owners decided to move forward directly to the Nassau County Planning Commission claiming, without any attempt to confirm with Woodburgh, that the current zoning and planning laws and regulations in the Village would permit the number of units proposed in Woodburgh.



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The Village Actions

The owners would like you to believe the Village of Woodsburgh acted improperly by adopting a moratorium to stop their development of the property and that they prevailed in litigation. This is not accurate. In October 2018, the Village lawfully adopted a 6 month moratorium prohibiting the processing of subdivision applications. Despite the clearly stated legal purpose, the lawful adoption of the law, and without ever seeking to fully understand the Village's intentions, the owners of the Woodmere Club property sued the Village challenging the adoption of the moratorium. The Village had taken significant steps in its planning review process and since it was intended for a short period, rather than pursue costly litigation, the Village agreed to allow the moratorium to expire at the end of its 6 month term without further extensions. The owners were in agreement with this resolution and their claim of victory is inaccurate.

The owners also contend that they will succeed in various lawsuits and the Village will be on the hook for millions in damages. Needless to say, we DISAGREE. As a Board, we have a continuing obligation to preserve the character of the Village and protect the safety, health and welfare of the Village and its residents and we will continue to do so despite their threats... The Woodmere Club, and the Rockaway Hunting Club, encompass 109 of the Village's 268 acres, a significant portion of which is, or abuts, coastal land. Decisions as to the future of the Village must assure that any development of these currently undeveloped parcels, and the potential development of other oversized parcels in the Village, are addressed through proper and thorough planning. Ignoring these realities would pose a significant threat to the Village's character and the safety, health and welfare of the Village and its residents.

The Woodsburgh Vision Plan

In December, the Village adopted a Vision Plan. The Vision Plan is a statement, prepared after thorough study and significant public input, of what Woodsburgh residents recognize as important, what we value and what we protect. The plan provides methods and a strategy for how we get there and will be used by the Village as a tool for future land use and planning decisions.

The formal visioning process began two years ago when the Village retained a municipal and environmental planning consultant to study potential impacts relating to a full buildout of the Village. The initial determination was that an additional 95 homes could be built in the Village (not including additional homes on properties on undeveloped golf course properties abutting the Village). Considering that the Village only has a bit more than 200 homes now, this potential in Woodsburgh is significant. The Village then took next steps and retained the same consultant to pursue a vision plan for Woodsburgh. As you all know, in support of this endeavor, the Village put forth a survey, which was available for 5 months and held a public visioning session this summer. In all, our consultant received comments and feedback from 160



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people. We thank our residents for the significant input, and submit that the result of this input – the Vision Plan - is document will serve as a foundation for our future.

The owners state that the Village has been pretending to create a master plan whose sole purpose is to target the Woodmere Club property and to move all development within the Village to Lawrence. This is nonsensical and obscures the facts...

Meetings

The owners have made no constructive effort to discuss the development with the Village, although they claim to do so. The Village was not provided with any version of the plan. Instead, the owners filed the development plan with the Nassau County Planning Commission, and the Commission provided the Village with a copy of the proposed development.

The owners unilaterally scheduled a meeting with representatives of Woodsburgh, Lawrence and Hempstead in December that we were unable to attend on that particular date due to conflicting schedules. We discussed proposed dates for a meeting, but before we could obtain a consensus, the owners again sued the Village, this time challenging the Village's Vision Plan. Given this changed circumstance, the Village determined that a meeting would not be productive. Despite claiming ignorance in the interview as to why the Village would not attend a meeting, the owners were made directly aware of why the Village could not meet on the unilaterally determined December date or subsequent to the commencement of the new litigation.

The Eruv

As you know, the Village has always cooperated fully with the Five Towns Eruv. The owners want you to believe otherwise. When the Five Towns Eruv sought to expand and modify the Eruv, the Village informed them on the steps and procedures that would be required to make it happen. The Village has always been supportive of the Eruv from inception and expansion, and this administration continues such support. The Village's comment to the Nassau County Planning Commission was consistent with this position. Again, despite the claims otherwise, there is nothing to see here but smoke and mirrors.

In summary, the Board and the Village have acted, and will continue to act in the best interests of the Village and its residents. Rest assured that your Board of Trustees is working diligently across municipal jurisdictions to defend our municipal authority to the fullest extent of law and will not be intimidated into taking actions that do not protect our Village and our way of life.

As always, if you have any concerns, or in an instance like this seek to understand the accuracy or inaccuracy of a public statement, please reach out to us or attend a meeting.

Respectfully Submitted 19 February 2020 - Board of Trustees, Inc. Village of Woodsburgh