



The Village Green

Newsletter of the Village of Pomona

March 2003

Police Called to Village Board Meeting

For the first time in the Village's 35 year history, police had to be summoned to stop an individual bent on disrupting a village board meeting. At the February 24th regular board meeting, Mayor Marshall was forced to call for police help to stop a Mr. James Leman who persisted in interrupting the conduct of the meeting with a constant flow of flash photos, even after he was warned several times to stop. The meeting was attended by 17 members of the public, most of whom were there to ask questions on current election issues. During the early part of the open period, Mr. Leman, whose name appears on the masthead of the Rockland Reporter, a recent publication hand delivered to mailboxes throughout the village promoting the slate of Wendell Watford, Juanita Anger and Daniel Kolak, disrupted the meeting by aggressively approaching Mayor Marshall, Deputy Mayor Al Appel and Trustee Nick Sanderson and firing flashbulbs within six feet of them. Mr. Leman quietly left the meeting after the Ramapo police arrived.

The open period of the meeting was dominated by questions from the public mainly concerning the lawsuits that the village is defending (see accompanying article) and the continuing smell from the mulch plant located on Quaker Rd, just outside the village. Notably absent from their questions was any reference to the very important village issue of the Patrick Farm down-zoning.










Message from Mayor Herbert Marshall ...

In case you haven't already noticed, we live in particularly litigious times. In fact, expensive lawsuits have become such a part of local government that municipalities all around the country have looked to innovative insurance methods, mainly because the public sector wanted no part of government insurance. Today, Pomona, along with most of the other local government units in New York is insured with NYMIR, the New York Municipal Insurance Reciprocal.

Although at times it seems that new lawsuits are as plentiful as leaves on the trees, there are three contenders for Pomona litigant of the year. Sam Shechter and his Summit at Pomona, John Lynn's JWL Homes, and Juanita Anger and friends. Since irresponsible reporting and campaign rhetoric seems to have placed them on the front burner, I felt it important to let everyone know what the real story is, and reassure our village residents that NYMIR stands behind us in the defense of these suits.

Sam Shechter and his Summit at Pomona. For those who were not part of our community in the mid 1960's, Sam Shechter is the principal reason that there is a Pomona today. Back in the days of Lyndon Johnson and flower power, Sam tried to build a 3,500 unit town house development on Cheesecote Mountain. The idea was so popular that the Village of Pomona was incorporated to prevent this travesty from taking place! Not to be outmaneuvered, Mr. Shechter immediately ran to the Town of Haverstraw and rushed through a subdivision covering the entire top of the mountain which would thus not fall under the scrutiny of the newly formed village. The construction you see today on top of the mountain is a result of the original Shechter subdivision. Although we were unable to stop the undesirable high ridge development as we would have preferred, we were able to put a number of laws in place to regulate site filling and grading, protect our trees and steep slopes, and establish specific building controls for environmentally sensitive and potentially hazardous areas that are part of the Cheesecote development. About three years ago Mr. Shechter filed suit against the village claiming that he was being arbitrarily singled out and that the protective laws enacted by the village did not apply to him.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1>March 2003</h1>						
						1
2	3 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo	4 Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	5 Recycling - paper 	6 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo	7 9.30am Yoga class at the Cultural Center Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	8
9 2.00 pm Village Hall Clean-up Squad	10 7.30 Village Hall Village Board Workshop Meeting Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo 	11 Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	12 Recycling - commingled 	13 7.30 pm Village Hall Planning Board Regular Meeting Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo 	14 9.30am Yoga class at the Cultural Center Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	15
16 2.00 pm Village Hall Stream Team	17 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo	18 Village Election 12.00pm - 9.00pm Village Hall Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	19 Recycling - paper 	20 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo	21 9.30am Yoga class at the Cultural Center Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	22
23	24 7.30pm Village Hall Village Board Regular Meeting Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo 	25 Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	26 8.00 pm Village Hall ZBA meeting (scheduled) Recycling - commingled 	27 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo 	28 9.30am Yoga class at the Cultural Center Bulk Trash/Garbage Haverstraw	29 Grand Opening CULTURAL CENTER 6.00pm - 9.00 pm Spring Exhibition
30	31 Bulk Trash/Garbage Ramapo					

Have you been to the village website at www.pomonavillage.com ??

It contains lots of useful information, including meeting dates and agendas, minutes of Village Board meetings, the complete Village Code, goings on around the village, and even the local weather and

weather alerts. It is updated at least weekly, and the best part is that all of the time is volunteered, so it only costs the village the small hosting fee charged by our local ISP. Let us know if you have any ideas for it.

If you are interested in signing up for the free workshop **"Gardening with Deer"** to be held at the Cultural Center on Sunday, April 27th (date tentative), please call Leslie at Village Hall (354-0545)

VILLAGE OFFICIALS WORK TO KEEP VILLAGE PREPARED AND SAFE

Sometimes campaign rhetoric crosses the line especially when its source is out of touch with the real efforts of government. A recent published quote from one of the trustee candidates running against the administration in the upcoming election strongly implies a lack of responsibility by village officials regarding special preparations in the face of potential disaster. Such statements are untrue, inflammatory, and should not be part of the election process

without verification.

In fact our village is as prepared and safe as it can be in the face of our national uncertainty. We were one of the first villages in the county to adopt a formal Emergency Management Plan, and, for the past five years, under the direction of Mayor Marshall, has enjoyed the safety net provided by our own Crisis Management Committee which did its job during Hurricane Floyd, the Y2K threat, and in the dark days

following 9/11. Our village has taken a front line stand in fighting the Indian Point menace, and our elected officials are actively involved with the municipal and law enforcement network monitoring potential local problem areas.

Our village government is doing its job, but we must also remember that as a Neighborhood Watch Community each of us must also contribute.

Mayor from page 1

John Lynn's JWL Homes. Currently the principal developer/builder on the mountain, he also feels that he is being singled out by the village. Untrue! Unlike most builders on the mountain, he consistently refuses to follow village codes and regulations specifically established for protection of the sensitive areas in which he and others are working, and he continues to ignore the site plans approved by our Planning Board. This is not singling out Mr. Lynn or his customers as he claims, but instead is a clear example of our building department insisting that rules enacted for the protection of our village be followed. About a year and a half ago Mr. Lynn launched a campaign of harassment against myself, our Village Engineer, and our Building Inspector to get us to compromise our residents' safety in favor of his profits. We would not yield. As a result he is suing us claiming our laws are illegal, has filed a horribly distorted discrimination complaint with the Human Rights Commission, and unsuccessfully tried to involve the District Attorney and the Attorney General in his attacks. He has also heavily involved himself in our current election in order to effect changes more favorable to his operation.

Juanita Anger, et al. Ms. Anger has a problem. Her next door neighbors, rather than moving out of the area that they lovingly call home, but against the obvious wishes of Ms. Anger, decided to replace their existing single story ranch style home with a larger contemporary multi-level house. Although the design and construction of the new house carefully followed the established requirements spelled out in our village zoning code, it was different from other houses in the area, and since these were the same neighbors with whom Ms. Anger had been fighting for about a dozen years, she has filed suit against the village to force the village to make them tear it down. I know Ms. Anger feels that her rights have been violated, but what about the rights of her neighbors

And so it goes on. I suppose as long as we have lawyers, we'll also have law suits. Fortunately, like other villages covered by NYMIR, insurance covers most of the defense costs of these suits. But to me it seems that the term "by the people for the people" has gone a little off track. But hey, what do I know?

Patrick Farm property update ...

MAYOR MARSHALL ORGANIZES SUCCESSFUL SUMMIT MEETING

On January 29th in a summit meeting organized by Mayor Marshall, Ramapo Supervisor Christopher St. Lawrence met with a concerned group of local Mayors to discuss the Ramapo Draft Comprehensive Plan and the potential down zoning of the Patrick Farm property. After candid discussion on the many issues involved, commonsense and reason prevailed.

In a significant expression of honoring the wishes of the people, Supervisor St..Lawrence agreed to:

- Eliminate the Planned Residential Development designation which would have allowed multi unit housing.
- Establish R-40 Zoning requiring single-family homes on one-acre lots.
- Alter the town's gross acreage lot count to a village style net acreage lot count, which subtracts the non-buildable portions of the property from the total size, reducing the number of buildable lots on this property to a manageable 117 units.

Commenting on these new developments, Mayor Marshall expressed concern that "Although the Supervisor's compromise position is certainly laudable, we must all be aware that this is just the first step in our battle to further protect the rustic nature of community."

If you would like to get involved with the Preserve Ramapo Committee, please call our liaison Leslie Sanderson at Village Hall (354-0545) or by email to leslie@the-sandersons.com

www.pomonavillage.com

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MARCH NEWSLETTER

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