**Village of Coxsackie**

**Public Hearing Minutes**

**Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Joint Public Hearing-Empire Riverfront Ventures, LLC**

**August 29, 2022**

The Public Hearing was called to order by Planning Board Chairman, Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr. at 6:10 p.m. Present were Planning Board Member-Jarrett Lane, Planning Board Member-Rodney Levine, Planning Board Member-Patricia Maxwell, Planning Board Member-Deidre Meier, Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman-Sal Bevilacqua, Zoning Board of Appeals Member-Christopher Chimento, Zoning Board of Appeals Member-Brian Goble, Zoning Board of Appeals Member-Debra Jung, Zoning Board of Appeals Member-Brian Tighe, Village Attorney-Robert Stout, and Village Engineer-Mary Beth Bianconi.

Village Attorney, Robert Stout, stated that the purpose of tonight’s meeting is to allow for public comment on the various applications filed by Empire Riverfront Ventures, LLC before both the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. All the public comments received will be part of the record and will be responded to by the applicant as part of this process. This is not an opportunity for a question-and-answer session this evening. With respect to process in terms of what is next, it was important for both the Boards to hold the Public Hearing before the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process is completed, so that they can take all public comments into consideration before they issue any SEQR determination. So, before either the Planning Board or Zoning Board can rule on the substance of the underlying application, they need to complete SEQR, which is the environmental review process. The Planning Board will next engage in a conversation about SEQR at it’s September 15th meeting. For those of you who were at the Planning Board’s last meeting, there was an extensive conversation about Part 1 of the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF), which is a thorough review of the facts of the applications. At its next meeting, the Board intends to review Part 2 of the EAF, as well as the comments received at the Public Hearing tonight. As they move through the process, they will eventually make a determination of significance based on both parts of the EAF and the public comment. The next Zoning Board meeting will be next Tuesday, September 6th. The Zoning Board will not be able to make any determination at that meeting, since the SEQR process will not have been concluded by then.

Mary Beth Bianconi, of Delaware Engineering, stated that there was an original Site Plan application in 2019. The date of the original approval of that application was March 21, 2019. That was based on the SEQR Negative Declaration that was adopted by the Planning Board on February 21, 2019. Subsequently, the Planning Board has received two applications, and the Zoning Board of Appeals has received a single application. A Special Use Permit is needed for construction within 50 feet of the high-water mark of the Hudson River, as is specified within the Village’s Waterfront Development zoning district. That is for construction of a deck at the Wire Event Center. An Area Variance is needed to authorize a total building height of 65.23 feet. The current regulation allowed in the zoning is a maximum of 50 feet in height. Using measurements required in the Village’s zoning code, the Area Variance requested is for the additional 15.23 feet. A Site Plan Amendment has also been applied for for the addition of a 2,000 square foot kitchen for the Wire Event Center, an addition of a 1,200 square foot exterior deck on the Wire Event Center, an increase of the footprint of the Newbury Hotel from 6,280 square feet to 8,460 square feet, an increase in height of the Newbury Hotel to a total height of 65.23 feet, enlargement of the parking area on parcel 56.20-1-26, a leased area for parking on parcel 56.20-2-13.2, allowance for vehicle charging stations, 250 square foot second story walkway between the spa and the Newbury Hotel, and a 500 square foot overhang roof between the Newbury Hotel and the Wire Event Center. These applications were submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals on April 11, 2022.

Planning Board Chairman, Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr., stated that this is a Public Hearing to allow the public to provide comment to both the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals on the applications received from Empire Riverfront Ventures, LLC. In addition to receiving oral comments this evening, the Boards will be accepting written comments through the close of business on Tuesday, September 6th. They can be mailed, emailed, or dropped off to the Village Clerk. The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to voice their comments and questions on the record. The applicant will be required to respond to all questions in a separate submittal. The purpose for tonight is not to engage in a back and forth, question and answer style format. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes. Everyone who wishes to speak will be given an opportunity to speak, before letting people speak for a second time. For those who do not wish to speak, please remember that you can always submit written comments. We ask each speaker to stand up, state your name and address for the record, and speak loudly and clearly into the microphone. All the rules of common courtesy apply, such as only one speaker at a time, and no talking over each other etc. All comments and questions submitted will be captured in the meeting minutes of the formal meetings of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Comments received from April 11, 2022, to the present will also be part of the record of the Area Variance, Special Use Permit, and Site Plan Amendment.

Andrew Millspaugh, of Sterling Environmental Engineering, stated that his company is the consultant for the applicant. He would like to address three areas of concern that have been raised multiple times by residents. Firstly, there has been a lot of discussion about the demolition of the structure of historic value. For the record, the NYS Historic Preservation Office (NYSHPO) has been involved in that process throughout. There is a letter of resolution that is on file that is signed by the applicant, NYSHPO, and Empire State Development, for the demolition of that building. Secondly, the parking area has been increased on the parcel to the south. The original Site Plan did not have a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. A plan has been submitted to the NYS DEC with a Notice of Intent to address this. Lastly, there has been a lot of focus on the height of the hotel. The business model of the fifth floor includes an interior eating space and kitchen on the west side of the building. On the east side, it will include an outdoor deck area for eating and congregating. The business model discussed with the Zoning Board states that that outdoor space will be seasonal and operate Monday-Saturday from 4-9 p.m. There will be brunch hours on the weekend. There will be lighting that is typical of a restaurant, that is just bright enough to read a menu. Nothing overly bright. Music will not be anything loud. Any live acts or music will typically be acoustic in nature. The visual assessments and business model are available by visiting the Google Drive link on the Village’s website.

Justin Smith, President of Prestige Hospitality Group, stated that his company is based out of Albany, NY, and that they are a third-party hotel management company and consultant to the buyers. They currently have 33 hotels with their group, with an additional 6 properties under construction. Prestige has been engaged to work with the James Newbury Hotel project since prior to the Covid pandemic. They provide feasibility and market information, assist in creating a business model, provide design and construction networks, assist in programming the hotels guest rooms, guest amenities, and other public spaces, and assist in coordination and execution throughout the development of the project. The pandemic initially impacted the project in a number of ways. Financing of hotels became very challenging. Construction costs increased by almost 30% for all materials and labor. Supply chain availability became an issue as well. The hospitality and tourism business came to a screeching halt. Because of the pandemic, guests changed the way they traveled and the amenities they sought. Travelers were looking for experiences with longer lengths of stays, especially in the Hudson Valley, and similar destinations. What became very clear once the pandemic hit, was that we needed to change certain aspects of the experience for guests at the James Newbury Hotel. We also needed to change our business plan, to expand revenue generation, and profit centers of the hotel. This was imperative to make the business work, and for bank underwriting to finance the deal. Also, we know from operating other hotels in destination type markets, that guests who travel to a destination are looking to make the most of their experience and maximize their long stay options. This may mean that we need to provide guests with as many amenities as possible and entice them to stay longer. Another point of feedback that came about during the peak of the pandemic is how to provide food and beverage solutions to guests that are outdoors and in a fresh air environment. All of the points just described forced us to re-look at the product offering as a whole. It became clear that through the change in expectations, that in order to make the project feasible through rising costs, and a shift in market profile during the pandemic, it was for this reason that the development team added a rooftop restaurant. The design process has been thoughtful, with the goal of having to be open to the James Newbury Hotel guests, but also having it be a destination for residents of the area as well. He stated that he knows that this process has been extremely difficult for all involved, but he would like to express his deepest gratitude to the Village Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and other members of the community who have provided feedback in the hopes to make this project the absolute best it can be. He looks forward to welcoming all to the James Newbury Hotel.

Bob Phibbs, of 38 Riverside Avenue, said that he owns a historic home about 4 blocks away. His background includes operating his business, the Retail Doctor, which helps retailers around the world discover how to obtain more business and run their businesses more effectively. He stated that when he was on one city’s strategic committee and planning commission, they would have loved a project like this. It involves crafting a vision, going out and finding partners who can then see the vision, and then try to find the money to accomplish this. This is not Athens or Catskill, dealing with chemicals in the air or on the waterfront. Here, you have someone who has the vision and proven track record, with renovations to the Eagle Hotel, old high school, the shopping plaza, and more. For the sake of the future of the children and jobs in this area, he hopes a permit will be issued, and this project will be finished.

Bill Pratt stated that he would like to reiterate on Bob Phibbs’ statement. Both himself and Mr. Phibbs moved here several years ago. They renovated a historic property known by the locals as “The Homestead”. Their property overlooks the Hudson River just a few blocks from Mr. Flach’s hotel project. They share the same views of the Hudson River that a guest of this new hotel would also look at and enjoy. He and Mr. Phibbs moved here from California and operated a hotel in Newport Beach for 22 years. They have experienced firsthand the many rewards of operating a hotel in that beach neighborhood. Out of all hotels in Orange County, they received a number one ranking through Trip Advisor and kept it for all of those years. The big-name brands were not as well ranked compared to their little inn that started to excel. He believes that Aaron Flach is on the verge of creating something extraordinary here as well. He stated that when he found out around a few years ago when a young man from Coxsackie was planning to build a hotel here, he was thrilled. He was beginning to feel his hopes for this community have been misplaced. A lot of Coxsackie’s storefronts remained empty for all of those years. One entrepreneur has stepped up to the plate. He can see the vision of having interesting visitors from around the world visiting this hotel, shopping at new stores created by other Coxsackie entrepreneurs, visiting our restaurants, and watching the bald eagles from our beautiful new park, the gateway to the Hudson Eagle Recreation area. He looks forward to next year when family and friends gather on the roof of the Newbury Hotel, just like he used to do in California.

Rene VanSchaack stated that he doesn’t envy any of the Board members sitting here tonight. For 36 years he has worked for public service, but he would like to note for the record that the following comments are presented in his role as a citizen and landowner of the Village of Coxsackie and in no way reflect the position of any of his past titles or employers. However, he has sat in a similar position that the Board members are in, and it is a very uncomfortable place to be. He has submitted some extensive written comments, that are a result of 36 years of his professional experience. He thinks that the comments received speak for themselves, but the Board members need to pay attention and listen to what is true. He has experienced firsthand how opponents of a project marshal their friends from outside the community to add to their own voices opposing a project. The Board needs to focus on the positive and negative impacts on the community. As for his personal standing, his family has been on South River Street for 125 years. He came home 64 years ago as a child to 81 South River Street. During his life downtown, he has personally seen the sad deterioration and vacancies on the parcels that are now part of the Empire Riverfront Ventures project. He left this community for a long time as an adult, but he chose to come back, and is blessed to have his children, grandchildren, and now great grandchildren here. So, when we start thinking about community character, he can tell you that he sat in the same audience in the early to mid-90’s when there was a conversation about the struggle with the Dolan Block, with the absentee landlords and crumbling buildings. It looked horrible. Fast forward 10-15 years, it still looked like junk. He was on the Comprehensive Planning Committee where he spent a lot of personal time trying to make some improvements to that stretch of South River Street. They again dealt with the same struggle of what to do with the downtown area. There were absentee owners and buildings falling down. That is until Mr. Flach came along and had not only the vision, but the guts to develop that area. The people in this community should not be focused on getting their pound of flesh and taking down this man. He has been disgusted from what he has heard from some in this community. The last thing he will say in closing is the Board needs to listen to us, meaning Village of Coxsackie residents. This is our community, not people from outside of the community.

Hugh Quigley, of Beechwood Drive, stated that he is speaking tonight as a neighbor of this project. He and his wife own the old firehouse across the street on South River Street. He believes context is very important and would like to share a little bit about himself. In the late 60’s Peggy and he met as students in New York City. In the 70’s they moved to Coxsackie. They fell in love with this community. For many of those 50+ years they did not see much positive progress. There was a lot of talk about progress, but not much materialized. Those downtown buildings were slowly deteriorating. In recent years, Aaron Flach has completed quite a few of rehabilitation projects. In his opinion, in the platform of context, these should be mentioned. There were five projects on Ely Street alone that were completed. 9 Ely Street, 27-29 Ely Street, 45-47 Ely Street, and 50 Ely Street have all been rehabbed by Aaron Flach. At the building at the base of Ely Street he has put on a new roof and exterior. 160 Mansion Street was a total renovation and is now beautiful tenant houses. Vermilyea Apartments was created, beautifully repurposing the site across from the Town of Coxsackie Senior Center. Donovan Apartments at Bethany Village was created. Once the video store at Tops Plaza is now home to the YMCA. What was once a fabric store, is now home to healthcare facilities. What was once a dress factory, is now home to the Eagle Hotel Apartments. What was once a school, is now home to beautiful Elm Street Apartments. Finally, the area in question, the Dolan Block, which he plans to develop with a hotel, event center, restaurants, and shops. He would like to revisit the Eagle Hotel Apartments. Mr. Quigley state that before Aaron Flach bought that building, he wanted to purchase it. It needed too much extensive work, and he decided that it would be too overwhelming. Aaron Flach ended up purchasing and did a beautiful job with it. It was at that moment that he realized that this guy was serious about what he was doing. Mr. Flach’s body of work is extensive and worthy of consideration going forward. He stated that he can’t speak as to the procedural issues that both Boards are dealing with, but he can tell you that Aaron has a deep appreciation for this community. Aaron’s track record has clearly benefitted this community, and he asks that the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and elected officials stay focused on what is truly best for downtown Coxsackie. He thanked the Board for allowing him to speak, and thanked them for their service to the community.

Carol Ann Lucio, of 48 Mansion Street, stated that her family has lived in Coxsackie for generations. She is always thrilled to hear about any renovations or improvements that would make this community better. In support of the project, the foundry that was there was really an eyesore, especially next to the beautiful park that is there. Getting rid of that eyesore, and having Aaron’s project be built, can only be better. People who are coming to this town will benefit our community. They will shop in our stores, get gas at our local gas stations, and eat at our restaurants. In support of Aaron, she has known the Flach family for years. She has known Aaron personally since high school. One thing people know about Aaron is that he is generous and gives back to the community. One thing people may not know is that Aaron paid for the fireworks that the Farmers’ Market had for the fourth of July one year. With all of the other properties that Aaron has worked on, this in only going to be another positive addition. She hopes that the Boards vote in favor of this project and take a strong consideration in allowing him to keep moving forward.

Kim McClean, of 47 Mansion Street, stated that he has lived in Coxsackie for a year and a half. He used to own the Stewart House in Athens for many years. He is happy to be living in the community of Coxsackie. He appreciates the vision that Aaron Flach has for Coxsackie. He would like to address Rene VanSchaack’s letter that was submitted about the project since it outlined crucial points about self-created hardship, whether or not it is a desirable change to the community, if there is some other method that can be used, and if it is substantial. He said that as someone who served on the Zoning Board of Appeals in Athens, he can totally sympathize with the ZBA. It is not the easiest of considerations.

Veronica Foley stated that the only comment she would like to make is that through her many conversations and connections that she has made since beginning to attend Village Board meetings, Planning Board meetings, and Zoning Board meetings, is that the community is in support of development here in Coxsackie. She grew up in New Baltimore, so she has seen what the waterfront has looked like over the years. She thinks that it is very exciting where Coxsackie is headed as a community, and she is happy to see that the structures and procedures that the Village of Coxsackie has in place to ensure that the community is protected is now fully in action, and the Village is doing their due diligence.

Charles Hailer stated that he would like to echo what Ms. Foley was saying in the sense that a lot of people have spoken tonight saying that they are for this project. He knows, speaking for himself, that as a Coxsackie resident, he’s not against the project, but he thinks a lot of complaints that have come up are really about accountability, fairness, and following the rules. Ideally, if the rules had been followed, then we wouldn’t be in this situation right now. We would have had these conversations before the building had gone up and had that extra floor that was built. He thinks that people need to keep in mind that there is going to be a bar and a restaurant outside of people’s bedroom windows now. That is going to be damaging to people’s quality of life. He just would like to see the Boards consider that as they move through this process.

Katie Higgins stated that she has a background in economic development. Funny enough, Rene VanSchaack helped put her on her path to economic development a few years ago. One of the things that has emerged over the past couple of months is a tone of “us” vs. “them”, or “development” vs. “anti-development”. She thinks this is leading people to miss the point, and there is kind of a tone here that is taking away from the actual purpose of this Public Hearing. She thinks that you would be hard pressed to find anyone here that is against development, or who wasn’t excited about the originally proposed redevelopment of that area downtown. Looking back at the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) paperwork from a couple of years ago, everybody seems to want more bars, restaurants, and a little bit of variety. She thinks that Aaron Flach has done many good things for the community, but what we are talking about here is following proper process for building in town. Everybody else needs to follow these rules, and the public is entitled to a transparent process. That process is an opportunity to give comment, during public conversation, before a project is approved. Nobody wants things to stop or have half-finished projects. What we really want is to think about how we move forward. This whole conversation actually started back in March when it was discovered that there was going to be a 5,000-person event in the Village, with a 3,000-person event a few months later. This seemed pretty shocking to all of us, and it kind of showed that we didn’t really have a conversation about how sustainable this is going to be. It is incumbent on the Boards here to ensure that this project develops a functional traffic pattern and follows all processes for all future projects. If the Village moves to grant these variances, they need to ensure that something like this doesn’t happen again in the future. She said that she really does feel that it is about time that the Village looks at their Comprehensive Plan. With all of the development happening, the plan needs to be re-done sooner rather than later. We need to make sure that we are balancing quality of life with sustainable development.

Gail Marowitz, of 16 Ely Street, stated that she has painstakingly renovated her Ely Street house. She said that she loves the look of the Wire Event Center, and other buildings that Aaron Flach has renovated over time. However, she would like to express concern with traffic in the downtown area. She has seen too many cars come up the street the wrong way. She said that her biggest concern is traffic. Traffic, to her, has been a problem, with people clearly exceeding the speed limit, and noise has been an issue as well. She thinks that the Village needs to make a stronger effort in addressing traffic and noise. She thanked the Boards for having this meeting and allowing her to express her concern.

Mark Maraglio stated that he has lived in Coxsackie for 45 years. He stated that he represents the National Bank of Coxsackie and has been with them for 26 years. The bank owns 3-7 Reed Street, 16 Reed Street, and 19 Reed Street. He just wanted to let everyone know that the National Bank of Coxsackie is in full support of Aaron Flach’s project. He has done so much for this town.

Fred Hinrichsen stated that first of all he would like to acknowledge the Board’s efforts and diligence in this process. He is sympathetic with the Boards having to make their decisions. He has seen plans of revitalization attempts for the downtown area fall through for years. He understands about the oversights and missteps along the way, but with the track record that Mr. Flach has he feels that that warrants some consideration. Although he is not deeply familiar with this project, the construction projects he has been a part of are not without those types of stops, starts, and pivots along the way. In terms of accountability, Mr. Flach shows that he is willing to cooperate by filing for the variances and amendments. He does ask that the Boards do weigh the impact of the development on the community.

Rebecca Vermilyea stated that she is a lifelong resident of Coxsackie. She lives on Riverside Avenue and has known the Flach family for a long time. He feels that Mr. Flach has done a lot for this community and this town. She thinks that we need to move forward and allow Mr. Flach to continue with his project.

Carol Metz stated that she totally approves of Aaron Flach’s hotel, and she is hoping that it will be finished very soon. She thanked him for adding to the community, and she is hoping that the Boards will continue to support him in moving forward.

Richard Guthrie stated that he lives just up the river in New Baltimore. He is thrilled with the idea of the improvements that are taking place here in Coxsackie, his neighboring town. He’s not here to offer his opinion on the design, or location of the project. He is here because of the process. He is concerned about the process. His concern is that there was blatant disregard for the law. The professionals involved had to have known about the process, the applications that were approved, and knowledge of the limitations and conditions of the permits that were granted. The plans and specifications had to have been prepared, reviewed, signed, and stamped with the signatures of licensed professionals, long before the start of construction. Material had to have been identified and ordered well in advance. He’s not going to suggest that any buildings get demolished, that the project starts over, or that any part of the hotel gets removed. He believes that we have gone past the point of no return on this project. Let’s carry on, but let’s not forget that the legal process must be followed going forward. This is sad, because it represents the erosion of good principals that sets us apart from other nations around the world, where lawlessness and corruption are the lay of the land. He encourages that those steps that took us down this path should be reviewed. He does feel that the project itself will be an asset to the Hudson Valley and this neighborhood. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to share his concerns.

James Warren, of 502 Riverside Avenue, stated that he has worked for pretty much his whole life down on Reeds Landing. His first job was at the Homestead. In keeping with some of the remarks we’ve heard here today, it was a wreck. It went through many owners, and it was just not a house that you’d want to live in. Finally, the new owners came, and put in the work that should have been done, and it is a beautiful place now. The same thing happened down there on Reeds Landing. Somebody earlier mentioned that absentee landlords were a problem, and that is absolutely true. Finally, we have someone who has the drive, and the means, to fix up downtown, and he is all for this. He has heard complaints that the hotel is too big, or too modern, and it is not too big. There are a lot of buildings downtown that are the same size and scope of the hotel. The Dolan Block is not that much different in height as the hotel. He feels that it doesn’t impair the nature of the downtown area. He just feels that this is a project that has been a long time coming. Back in the late 80’s, Reed Street didn’t have much going on, with businesses opting to move out to Route 9W. The National Bank of Coxsackie needed to expand, and there was a thought about not expanding down street, and instead going up to Route 9W, or to where the Village Building is now. They decided to stay down street because they felt that someday that area would flourish again. He feels that it has something to do with the river. This hotel is right for the river and for tourism. There is no greater waterfront than Coxsackie’s village waterfront. When you look in either direction it is completely natural with no power lines, high tension lines, no bridge, no train tracks. It is just spectacular. He feels that this is going to be a great thing for Coxsackie.

David Clark, (via Zoom), stated that he’s not sure anyone is doubting the contribution Aaron Flach has made to the village. However, that is irrelevant to the purposes of this meeting. Surely the rules apply to everyone, and you don't get a pass on the basis of your track record.

Bashir Chedrawee, owner of Simone’s Kitchen in Hope Plaza on Route 9W, stated that they have been closed for about a year now, but they are coming back and are not leaving. He stated that he would like to give a little background as to his business. In 2017, his mother stumbled on this town when trying to find a place to start her café. Coxsackie was the one place where they found a space that they really loved. They also found a landlord that was willing to work with them and allow them to bootstrap this business with very little cash. This landlord was Aaron Flach. The main reason for their success was because Mr. Flach was willing to work with them, and has continued to work with them, even when a year ago they closed due to the pandemic. Even though they have opened another location elsewhere, Coxsackie is still their home base that they fell in love with through the people and connections that were made. They have invested a lot of time and money at this location, and with the help of Mr. Flach it has turned out to be a beautiful space. He feels that we need to look to the future. Although he didn’t grow up here, and doesn’t have family here, Coxsackie has become like a second home for him and his business. It is a place that he wants to stay for a very long time. In order to keep business going, we need to develop more projects that bring more money and more people to this area. He understands that there is a lot of anger and frustration with how this all happened, and the issues with moving forward with this project, he doesn’t feel that Mr. Flach was trying to be sneaky. This appears to be a genuine slip up. He knows that there are a lot of moving pieces and knows the hoops that you have to jump through in order to get a small shop like theirs open. He can only imagine the number of things you have to take into consideration when working on a project of that size and magnitude. It doesn’t make sense to him that this was something that was done to be sneaky. He does believe that discussing Mr. Flach’s track record is important because it is very telling of the type of person that Mr. Flach is, the type of company he has, and what they are willing to do. From time-to-time mistakes are made, but you have to look at the big picture of what Mr. Flach has done for this town and community. He thanked everyone for listening to him. He said he knows that he doesn’t have generations of family here, but he really does love this town, and can’t wait to see everyone very soon.

Claudia Braymer, of Braymer Law, representing New Amsterdam Fine Arts, (via Zoom), stated that she asks that the applicant be required to update the site plans to show no use of the disputed property area. She also asks, per Village Code, to provide a landscaping buffer, on applicant's property, between her client's building and the proposed parking area to reduce negative impacts. Also, since this is a Type I project, an environmental impact statement should be prepared to analyze and mitigate potential negative impacts of the project, including the impacts on historic resources. The State Historic Preservation Office wrote in a letter from April 2022 that the demolition of the State and National Register eligible Newbury Iron Works - Office/Machine Shop constitutes an Adverse Impact to historic resources. Thank you for your careful consideration of this proposal.

Village Attorney, Robert Stout, stated that the Public Hearing will be held open for the submission of written comments through the close of business on Tuesday, September 6th.

Barton Wallace stated that he is a lifelong resident of Coxsackie. He said that he would just hope that this was truly an oversight from the beginning. With that said, he is very supportive of the project continuing. He wants to thank Aaron Flach for bringing affordable housing to Coxsackie. He stated that in the early 80’s he was newly married, and Coxsackie at that point had very little housing to offer. At that time, there was only one rental apartment available in downtown Coxsackie next to the park. They moved down into that apartment. At that time, it wasn’t very fashionable to live downtown. Unfortunately, their landlord was from New York City and owned numerous properties and wasn’t around to maintain them. They decided to open an ice cream parlor on the 1st floor of their apartment building, and they had success for many years. He said that he is in support of the project, and he is glad to see all the work that has been done up until this point. He wished Mr. Flach good luck.

No further public comments were offered.

Planning Board Chairman, Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr., stated that he would like to reiterate that the Boards welcome written comments presented to the Village Clerk up until the close of business on Tuesday, September 6th. He thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Bereznak

Clerk