



Sue Anne Vogelsberg <samv1021@gmail.com>

written comments from 5-21-2021 Public Hearing to amend local law re: house of worship

Sue Anne Vogelsberg <samv1021@gmail.com>

Sun, May 23, 2021 at 2:00 PM

To: George Kalaj <mayor@vosbg.com>, Christine Bodeker <deputyclerk@vosbg.com>, Deputyclerk <deputyclerk@villageofsouthbloomington.com>

Cc: chief@bloomingtonpolice.com, BGmedic1@gmail.com, Asorensen@orangecountygov.com, Robert Jeroloman <supervisor@bloomington-ny.gov>, John Salka <fdny48cap@aol.com>, Simon Gruber <sgruber100@verizon.net>

Mr. Mayor,

The re-scheduled Public Hearing on 5-21-21 was very disturbing from a procedural standpoint. Allowing certain residents and non-residents alike to speak for longer than the stated 3 minutes, for allowing certain residents/ non-residents to commend you for this resolution.. a resolution that has the potential for bankrupting the Village, for not keeping this Public Hearing open to receive written comments, for not allowing Village Engineer Fusco to research/answer questions from the Public, for presenting to the taxpayers of VSBG, 2 different versions of "Attorney Client Work Product"/SEQRA, for not taking charge of this hearing by allowing certain residents/non-residents to make the topic about religion vs. the environment, for continuing to include non-elected volunteers Joel Stern/Issac Ekstein in conducting business on behalf of VSBG, etc

Your report neglected to include the Town of Blooming Grove, the Town of Blooming Grove Police Department, the Blooming Grove Ambulance Corps, Independence Fire Company, all agencies that will be impacted should this resolution be passed by the VSBG Board, so i have "cc'ed" them here. There is a mention of the Orange County Planning Department, but there is no report listed, so they are also "cc'ed" here.""

My comments from 5-21-2021 11 AM Public Hearing:

* cover letter of both 4-12-21 and 5-11-21 marked "attorney client work product" from Village Engineer Fusco to Village Attorney Ugell include VSBG 'volunteers' Stern/Ekstein but not Village Trustees. As Stern/Ekstein are not elected officials and cannot conduct business on behalf of the Village, could this void this resolution?

* if single family residences request to become a house of worship-why would the the ridge-overlay need to be eliminated unless future plans are to increase the size of these residences?

* if these single family residences will be re-purposed for large groups on a routine basis, will fire exits, indoor sprinklers, dedicated parking areas, etc be required--for health/safety of both First Responders/participants? In reaching out to various NYS agencies for guidelines, I was advised to contact local Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer as this is a local issue. I emailed Town of BG BI on 4-29-21 and am awaiting a reply.

* Report Part 1 "Project and Setting"

p. 1 of 13: purpose or need not stated

p. 2 of 13: application to OC Planning Dept 2/21 yet report not listed. No request to regional agencies-project within Moodna Watershed yet not included (Chair Simon Gruber is "cc'ed" on this email).

p. 3 to 13: blank, including absence of both Mayor's signature and date

* Report. Part 2 "Full Environmental Assessment Form"

p. 1 to 10 : report lists no impact on air, animals, flooding, traffic, ground water, etc..yet provides no evidence to these "no's"

* ends with "consistent with community plans and character" yet provides no evidence to support this

Report ends with "This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the environment and therefore an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. Accordingly, a negative declaration is issued."

SEQRA is about the environment yet this proposed code change will have a financial impact as well. As of 4-30-21, there were 7 designated houses of worship in residential homes, as per 2021 Town of Blooming Grove Tentative Tax Rolls. With an increase in exemptions, there will be decreased tax revenue of VSBG...how will this deficit be met? Section 462 of Real Property Tax Law, authorizes an exemption from real property taxation for property owned by a religious organization while the property is actually being used by the officiating clergyperson of that organization for residential purposes. Who will monitor that? Will additional staff need to be hired? Exemptions under Section 462 must be applied for annually--will additional clerical staff need to be hired for this as well?...etc etc etc
In my opinion, more research needs to be presented to the taxpayers before considering to amend this Village Code.

As always, awaiting your reply,