

A Public Hearing of the Village of Potsdam Board of Trustees was held on Monday, October 5, 2020 at 5:30 P.M., in the Civic Center Board Room, Park Street, Potsdam, NY.

PRESENT: Mayor Tischler  
Trustees Warr, McKenna, Jacobs-Wilke & Lee

ALSO PRESENT: Lori S. Queor, Clerk/Treasurer  
Andy Silver, Village Attorney  
Greg Thompson, Administrator  
Jim Corbett, DPW Superintendent  
Lisa Newby, Code Officer  
Fred Hanss, Planning Director

Mayor Tischler opened the hearing at 5:30 p.m. He stated that this public hearing is to receive public comments on the proposed relinquishing of the portion of Cottage Street from Waverly Street to Leroy Street to St. Lawrence Health Systems. The Mayor stated that all members were present.

Village Clerk, Lori Queor, then read the Legal Notice as published.

#### Public Comments:

Eric Burch from St. Lawrence Health Systems spoke regarding the discontinuance of Cottage Street between Waverly Street and Leroy Street. He stated that this area would be for future growth and would add approximately 40 new parking spaces to the campus. He stated that in the beginning there would be a gate to let the mobile CAT scan machine but after they get a permanent machine that the area will be closed off permanently and grass planted. He further stated that the parcels they have acquired over the years do have a PILOT on them and that they pay approximately \$128,000 a year on those. Mr. Burch then stated that this is a steppingstone for their master facility plan. He further stated that the hospital employees over 1,900 people of which 352 live in Potsdam. He concluded by stating that they appreciate any support, and they look forward to hearing public comments.

Architect Brooks Washburn then showed the board a rendering of the project. He stated that the hospital is growing, and it needs to expand to provide services. He stated that not much public traffic uses that section of road that it is mainly hospital traffic. He further stated that there are no non-hospital properties on that section of Cottage Street.

Tammy McGregor-Twiss of 11 Cottage Street addressed the board. She stated that there would be a huge increase of traffic, light pollution, and noise pollution to other areas of the neighborhood. She stated that she respects that the hospital needs to grow but she is curious what their capacity for growth is, at what point is it saturated. She further stated that it is nice to see that a green space would be put in but she would like to know the impact that traffic flow and walking safety would have if this were to go through.

Kathryn Deuel of 5 ½ Pleasant Street addressed the board. She provided a written statement which is on file with the Village Clerk. Some of her concerns were: Significant impact on the residential nature of the village core, PILOT on purchase properties has a 20 year time limit, negative impact on traffic flow on nearby streets, large sections of sidewalk on the south side of Cottage Street are already in disrepair, and Village Administrator Thompson recently showed outright support from the Village before a public hearing involving local residents cause her concern and she hopes the Village Board, Mayor and village officials will weigh the concerns of local residents before endorsing or approving a major change in the Village of Potsdam.

Richard Lauer of 35 Waverly Street addressed the board. He stated that he only heard of this meeting at the last minute and he feels this issue would affect his livelihood and his property value.

Kathy O'Rourke of Waverly Street then address the board. She stated that she did not feel residents had much notice on these proposed changes. She stated that her concerns are: Safety, 3 mail access points on Market to Leroy would squeeze down to 2; students walking to school and their safety; quality of life and home value; light pollution and noise pollution; taxes as the PILOT the hospital pays will eventually end; communication and transparency, the hospital needs to be good neighbors; when was the last time the village closed off a street for a company and why would the village do it.

Maggie then read comments from Facebook from Karen Besaw-Pimentel suggesting a parking garage, comments from Sean Corbett suggesting she read Eric Backus' comments on another thread explaining why one would be cost prohibitive.

Hearing no further public comments, the Mayor then closed the hearing at 5:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori S. Queor  
Village Clerk