

A Public Hearing of the Village of Potsdam Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 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 Queor, Village Clerk/Registrar  
Cara Adams, Village Treasurer  
Greg Thompson, Administrator  
Fred Hanss, Planning Director  
Jim Corbett, DPW Superintendent  
Mark Murray, Police Chief  
Trey Smutz, Recreation Director

Mayor Tischler opened the hearing at 5:37 p.m. He stated that this public hearing is to receive public comments on a proposed local law to amend Chapter 180 Zoning to rezone the current H-2 properties to H-1 and the R-2 properties on Waverly Street per the map to H-1.

He took the roll stating that all members were present.

Village Clerk Queor then read the Legal Notice as published.

Public Comments:

Brent Bishop from St. Lawrence Heath Systems gave the board a brief presentation on the proposed expansion at Canton-Potsdam Hospital.

Monique Tirion of 8 Circle Drive spoke. She stated that the village is 4.39 square miles, fiscal appropriations for 2018 were 10.5 million dollars, 69% of the village assessed property is tax exempt, population is decreasing, and she pays 5.13% tax rate which is insanely high. She stated that she was concerned about the tax revenue that would be lost and hoped the board will execute its due diligence.

Tom Baker of 48 Wavery Street spoke. He stated that he supports the hospital expansion and modernization but wants to see the character of Waverly Street maintained. He asked how many parking spaces are needed for employees and suggesting shuttling them would solve some problems. He also stated that the design including a park would help mitigate the feel of the nature of the hospital.

Doyle Dean of 14 Broad Street spoke. He stated that he agreed the hospital needs modernization but to remember that this is an ask of the Village Board and the hospital is a business. He stated that the board should ask what is in it for us. He also stated that there has been a broken ashtray in the area of the hospital that has been there for 9-10 months and he has taken photos of it. He stated that we should judge their neighborliness by our experience with them.

Daniel Ben Avraham of 8 Circle Drive spoke. He stated that the population of the village is not growing, taxes are getting higher, and the hospital should look to expand outside the village. He further stated that today is the start of Rosh Hashanah, there is a large community of Jewish, Hindu and Muslim people in Potsdam and the Village Board should schedule meetings around holidays accordingly.

Kathleen O'Rourke of 36 Waverly Street spoke. She stated that she is concerned about the transition from R-2 to H-1. She stated she purchased her house on Waverly Street two years ago because she liked the feel of the neighborhood and she would like to see the integrity of the street kept. She stated that she can see the hospital parking from her house and the parking lot is never filled and that what is filled is what is closest to the hospital. She further stated that there is noise from the HVAC system, the lights are bright and using trees as a barrier takes a long time for them to grow big enough.

Rebecca Weld of 11 Washington Street spoke. She stated that the buffer zone on Waverly Street should be a continuation of the feel of Waverly Street. She further stated that once you chip away at an asset it is hard to re-create it.

Shirley Christman of 31 Waverly Street spoke. She stated that her main concern was parking and that employees of the hospital had been parking on Waverly Street. She asked how many additional parking spaces would be needed for additional employees.

Lynn Hall of 12 Waverly Street spoke. She stated that she is concerned that the quality of life will be minimized. She stated that she is concerned about water and sewer issues because in 2010 they had four inches of water in their basement. She stated that she hoped the board would do their due diligence in regard to those utilities if the expansion happened.

William Pena stated that he does not live in the Village of Potsdam but owns rental properties here. He stated that knocking down a home changes the looks of the neighborhood. He stated that a vote on this less than two weeks from now seems a bit rushed.

Gina Hazen of 7 Chestnut Street spoke. She stated that although she understands the vision she is not sure it fits with the neighborhood. She asked where it is going to end and that it seems like a run away train. She asked when will the hospital expansion get pushed out to Market Street.

The Mayor then closed the hearing at 6:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori S. Queor  
Village Clerk