

Walton Board Has No Support for No Parking

By Glenn Graves

WALTON — The village of Walton Board of Trustees held a public hearing on Monday to determine if there was any support to limit parking on Gardiner Place opposite the United States Post Office building. Almost all of those who spoke were opposed to the restriction.

The only person to speak in favor of the ban on parking on the western side of the street was also the only resident of that street to speak. He said he liked the idea and said it would offer more safety and prevent any "bottlenecks" of traffic.

Three other members of the community spoke in opposition to the ban on parking.

Mayor Ed Snow said the hearing was scheduled, "just for discussion," adding, "The idea was brought to us by the police department." Last month, a car being backed from the diagonal parking spaces in front of the post office struck a car that was parked across the street, which prompted the re-

quest for a public hearing.

After the hearing was closed, Trustee Teresa O'Leary said, "I don't like that we keep restricting parking, without offering any more places to park. Maybe this will be a reminder to people to look in the rear view mirror when they back up."

No resolution to prohibit parking was introduced by board members and no further action was taken by the board.

During the monthly meeting, which had been rescheduled to accommodate pending surgery for the mayor, village resident Mary Phraner asked the board to reconsider the policy of the past summer, which was to close the village swimming pool during the evenings to save money. "I decided I'd come in here early this year and ask that you think about parents who are working and can't get there any earlier." She said her family used to enjoy going to the pool after supper, which was not a possibility last summer.

Mayor Snow responded that the

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swimming pool at SUNY Delhi was not going to be available to the residents of Delhi and Hamden, due to construction at Farrell Hall, and those communities had made overtures to be allowed to use the Walton pool for swimming lessons. Snow said the revenue that would be generated by charging Delhi and Hamden for use of the pool could be used to expand the hours of operation. He also assured Phraner that first priority for swimming lessons would go to Walton residents, if the demand was so great.

Paula O'Brien, representing the Walton Theatre Preservation Association, informed the board that the group intended to make electrical improvements in the upstairs "Museum Room," which she said is used for smaller venues when the main theater is determined to be too large for the event.

Village resident Richard Kelly asked if the board had a traffic safety committee. He said he had an issue with a stop sign and wanted to know who to address that to. He was told to send a letter to the public safety committee, which would address the issue with the police department.

Kelly also asked about the trailers that are parked in the lot alongside 181 Delaware Street, particularly one that had "hazardous materials" markings. He said as a member of the Walton Fire Department, he would like the department to be informed of what those materials may be.

Code Enforcement Official Stephen Dutcher said he asked the property owner about the trailer and was told it didn't contain hazardous materials. Dutcher also explained that the trailers shouldn't be left on the property. "They need to be

screened or removed," he said, and added that the property owner was aware of the options. Snow said the property owner had told him they would be removed by last November and asked Dutcher to talk to the owner again.

Kelly had a third subject he wanted to discuss, outdoor wood boilers. He said his neighbor owns one and he wanted to know if the village had any restrictions in place for their use.

Dutcher explained that New York state had just established rules and regulations for the installation of new wood boilers, but hadn't finished setting standards for those already in use. However, he said, "If the emissions from a boiler already in use is causing anyone discomfort, I can address that with (the owner)." He said that he has the authority to have the owner lessen or eliminate the nuisance. "The short term fix is send me a letter of complaint," he told Kelly. "I can have the owner raise the stack height."

Dutcher also said the regulations for new wood boilers would likely preclude anyone in the village from installing one, due to the set-back requirements.

Village resident and businessman Keath Davis asked some questions about the Federal Emergency Management Agency's proposed flood insurance rate maps, which have been released but are currently not in effect. He said he believes the government is going to have to compensate owners of property that is located in the identified flood ways, because the property values decrease with that designation and are going to be much more difficult to sell.

Mayor Snow answered that the Walton Flood Commission is look-

ing at ways to alleviate flooding by identifying places where floodplains can be reclaimed. He said that by excavating several acres of fill on village property on Water Street, the village may be able to lessen the size of the flood way, which envelops almost all of Delaware Street.

Snow also advised that the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District and county Planning Department are working to establish guidelines, or a book, for reducing the impact of flooding and the cost of flood insurance. He said the project is being piloted in Margaretville, where many methods for alleviating damage have already been implemented.

Davis also asked if the board would consider charging each person who uses the village pool a dollar for each visit. He said it isn't much to pay for a day's entertainment and would help bolster the village's recreation budget.

On a similar subject, Snow asked the board to consider whether it wanted to set a policy that would require organizations that charge a fee to enter tournaments at the village ball park at Austin Lincoln Park to pay a fee to the village for use of the village facilities.

Before closing the meeting, Snow read a letter from Dan St. Jacques, who commended the village police department and fire department for the handling of situation at the Delaware County Fair in August, in which a worker was seriously injured. St. Jacques said the quick and professional response by the departments may have saved the worker's life and certainly saved a his leg, which was pinned under a piece of equipment.

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