

TOWN BOARD MEETING

April 8, 2008

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, New York was convened in public session at the Town Hall, 7340 South Broadway, Red Hook at 7:20 p.m.

Present: Supervisor Sue Crane
Councilman James Ross
Councilwoman Micki Strawinski
Councilman Harry Colgan
Councilman Robert Latimer
Town Clerk Sue McCann

Also Present: Attorney for the Town, Christine Chale

Supervisor Crane opened the Public Hearing to hear all interested persons on a proposed local law creating a new Chapter 3 entitled, "Alternate Members" of the code of the Town of Red Hook providing for the appointment of alternate members to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. She explained that the discussion is regarding having two alternate members appointed to each of the boards. They will serve when board members are absent or unable to participate on matters before the respective board in such instances as conflict of interest. Supervisor Crane asked if there were any comments.

Linda Keeling asked if the alternate has to have certain amount of attendance in order to vote.

Attorney Chale explained that the law does not require specific attendance however, a person would have to attend the meetings that relate to the matter that they are making a decision about.

Linda Keeling thinks it is a great idea.

Supervisor Crane said our Attorney for the Town is familiar with this concept's use in other municipalities.

Attorney Chale explained that it has been a real help and it also allows for someone new to the process to get to know it.

Councilwoman Strawinski questioned the language in section 3-1. She went on the Consolidated Laws of New York State website and read a section regarding the Planning Board. The State law only mentions conflict of interest.

Attorney Chale explained that is limited in the State law provision, but it is possible in this particular case to essentially override that with the Town's own local law provisions which are a little broader and there is specific language in this particular law which is intended to do that. She referred to section 3-3 which gives a little more latitude.

Councilman Colgan is on a board that has alternate members. The town law seems only to refer to conflict. The state law mentions conflict of interest. He said the state law also says we have the option of having three or five members from the ZBA. He wondered if we should consider having five members and two alternates instead of seven members and two alternates.

Councilman Ross doesn't see the point in reducing the number of members on the ZBA. He said the ZBA has seven members. If you have seven members and they are down three we still have a quorum. If you have five members and are down three you don't have a quorum. There have been times that they didn't have a quorum. He thinks we should set a guideline that if a regular member doesn't show by a certain time, it would be at the Chairman's discretion to appoint one of the alternates for that meeting. It would make things run more smoothly.

Councilwoman Strawinski wants to add language that the alternate cannot vote on the issue until they receive the training required.

Attorney Chale responded that we don't require that from our regular members. They have a year to accomplish four hours of training.

Councilwoman Strawinski asked what the training costs the town.

Attorney Chale answered they vary and are not too costly. Red Hook's own planner offered courses in Tivoli available for free.

Councilman Colgan agreed that the training is not too costly.

Councilman Ross would like to add a clause authorizing the Chairman of the Board to activate the alternate if they have a need after a certain amount of time.

Attorney Chale said this is structured to leave the Chairs some discretion. Members should report to the Chair ahead of time if they are not going to be at a meeting. She feels we should leave the Chairs a certain amount of discretion because situations are going to vary.

Councilwoman Strawinski asked if we are going to allow a time frame for letters of interest to be submitted in order to move on with appointments.

Councilman Latimer would want a definite date if that is going to be the case.

Supervisor Crane suggested that the letters of interest to serve as an alternate be in by April 18th, 2008. Letters the Board already received will still be considered.

On a motion of Supervisor Crane, seconded by Councilman Colgan, move to close the Public Hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Adopted	Ayes	5	Crane, Ross, Strawinski, Colgan, Latimer
	Nays	0	

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McCann, Town Clerk