

Town of Romulus Planning Board
August 4, 2014

Roll Call:

Tom Bouchard
Al Nivison
Bill Karlsen
Cindy Meckley
Sue Ellen Balluff
Mary Joslyn
Kate Sinicropi, excused

Pledge of Allegiance
Moment of Silence

Sue Ellen motion to approve June Planning Board meeting minutes. Al seconded.
Approved unanimous.

New Business: Sam Alejo and Matt Hilbert are here from Anderson on the depot and we asked them here to update us on the railway.

Bruce Habberfield from Finger Lakes Railroad also present.

Matt: We started just over a year ago on the depot for general repairs with Finger Lakes Railroad. Number of employees varies (7 average in Romulus but we are short handed). We couldn't even say how many we have had thru the shop (railcars) We are pushing forward to get our employees certified F&G so they can do more technical repairs. Once we get certified then it really starts. (we have 2 certified shops in Ohio with 60 people per shift.)

We've pushed 200 cars thru the depot. We are on the downhill side of a 300-car project. We are the 6th largest rail repair in North America. We also do repairs for other companies all over North America.

Bruce: Finger Lakes used to lease a lot of cars from Andersons. In January 2012 they decided on the depot.

Tom: Did you work with the IDA or Flaum?

Matt: Flaum. Federal regulations have become stricter with railroads because of all the accidents. The short lines we are contracting from are regulated by the feds with huge manuals of regs that we must abide by and inspections FRA (Federal Rail Administration) AAR (American Association of Railroads) PUC (Public Utilities Commission) and NYS DOT.

We are trying to get workers. Finding help that will show up is the problem. We do drug testing, which may be part of the problem also. WWW.Andersonsrail.com has a career page. We are severely shorthanded and are hiring people with no experience.

Tom: What other businesses would be complimentary to what you are doing over there?

Matt: Any industry that uses rail. And manufacturing.

Bruce: The facility that they have is huge. Our current service is two days a week.

Matt: Ideally, I'd like to get those two other buildings.

Tom inquires if they have contacted any other businesses on the depot. Matt replies they are not in that position yet.

Tom tells Matt about the rezoning we are doing, as well as Varick's.

Tom explains what Special Use Permits/process is for and what it entails.

Bruce offered to give us a tour and show us how they interact with Anderson. He says Finger Lakes Rail wants to take over the rail and they've already put in money (half million dollars) to be sure that Anderson is kept in operation.

Bruce: These guys (Anderson) have the major footprint on the depot.

Bruce reiterates the point that special use permits may dissuade industries from coming to the depot.

Visitors Matt, Sam, and Bruce leave.

Status Report on Depot: Tom says he spoke with Barb and she said she would be sure the zoning definitions would reflect that no landfills are allowed.

Board discusses whether or not we should revisit the special use permit use. We agree to look over the zoning and decide if we can do away with any.

Lakeshore project: Tom talked to Mike and he says the hold up is finding out who owns the property down there. Tom says, "Mike, Dave, Steve Getman and I may get together to figure out what needs to be done."

Planning board members terms/composition/contact updates:

Members list email addresses. We discuss the term length for serving on the board.

Sue Ellen says she will be happy to operate as an alternate once her term is up.

Tom brings up signage around the town are on the increase. A discussion ensues about the zoning for signs.

Discussion of Comprehensive plan revision. All agree to take some time to review it and come back next month with notes for possible updates/revisions.

AI motioned to adjourn. Sue seconded. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 8:50

Submitted by Mary Joslyn