

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING OF THE TOWN OF FORT ANN HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2019 AT 2:00 P.M. AT THE FORT ANN TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Supervisor Richard Moore
Councilwoman Gretchen Stark
Councilwoman Deborah Witherell

ABSENT: Councilman Dennis Fletcher
Councilman Samuel Hall

OTHERS PRESENT: Barbara Winchell, Town Clerk, Chris Round, Chazen Co., Paul Cummings, Chazen Co., Mary Ward, Andy Beers, Hudson River Valley Greenway, Laura Oswald, Washington County, Jim Boni, NYS DOT, Ken Davis, NYS DOT, Dave Perkins

Public Notice ran in *The Post Star* May 29, 2019. This special meeting appeared in *The Post Star* June 3, 2019.

Supervisor Moore called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Supervisor Moore explained that there was concern by the Town Board and a non Town Board member at the May 13, 2019 Town Board meeting when it came time to adopt resolution entitled "Resolution Approving the Empire State Trail work Agreement Between the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, NYS DOT & Town of Fort Ann." It was suggested to have the trail on Rte 4 rather than Clay Hill Road. Supervisor Moore stated this has been discussed numerous times and different options were considered.

There was a concern about the steepness and the curves of Clay Hill Road as well as the liability. Supervisor Moore stated that even if the state took liability the town would be named also because it's a town road.

Andy Beers, Hudson River Valley Greenway and Director of Empire State Trail, distributed a 62 mile map of the Empire State Trail route from Waterford to Whitehall. Mr. Beers stated that this is a 750 mile bicycling and walking route across New York State. Mr. Beers stated this is the stitching together of more than twenty (20) different regional routes. The goal is off road whenever possible by using canalway trails and/or railway trails. Mr. Beers stated there is not always an opportunity to be off road. Roughly 40% is to be off road and 60% on road and to keep in mind this isn't forever. This is the route intended for 2020. It is estimated that 2/3 will be pedestrians and 1/3 bicyclists using this trail.

Jim Boni, NYS DOT, distributed Fort Ann to Comstock Potential Routes map. This map is trying to avoid Route 4. He said it would cost \$5M to widen shoulders along Route 4. The budget we have Route would change in future going to Whitehall. It's very scenic and lightly traveled. Clay Hill was not ideal but is acceptable. It is predicated that people going North will have experience and people that don't have experience will go South.

Paul Cummings, Chazen Co., stated there was a lot of time spent on feasibility. He said it has to be thought of in its entirety for a riding experience.

Councilwoman Stark did contact Washington County Public Safety for Clay Hill data from January 2018 to present and it reflected there had been five (5) accidents. Councilwoman Stark was asked to return to Washington County Public Safety and ask what times did the five (5) accidents occur on Clay Hill

Road. Supervisor Moore asked Councilwoman Stark to get number of accidents on Route 4 from intersections of Route 4 & 149 to Whitehall.

Andy Beers, Hudson River Valley Greenway, stated he rode this himself and the safest route is Quarry Road. He stated that there are more accidents on Route 4 than Clay Hill. Everyone agrees that Route 4 is very dangerous. Having wide shoulder is a false sense of security. He stated the signs could be moved and website updated as the trail changes.

Supervisor Moore asked if anyone had a better alternative than going up Clay Hill Road. No one had a better alternative.

Jim Boni, NYS DOT, stated he will look at the layout of warning signs.

Meeting closed at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Winchell, Town Clerk
Town of Fort Ann, New York

Dated: June 6, 2019