

TOWN OF POTSDAM and VILLAGE OF POTSDAM  
SPECIAL JOINT PUBLIC HEARING  
JANUARY 12, 2016

Supervisor Beattie called the Joint Public Hearing of the Potsdam Town Board and Village of Potsdam to order at 6:15 PM on 11/12/2016. The meeting was held at the Town Hall, 18 Elm Street, Potsdam, NY.

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Rollin Beattie  
Councilperson Judith Rich  
Councilperson Rose Rivezzi  
Councilperson James Grant  
Councilperson Ann Carvill

**ALSO PRESENT:** Cindy Goliber, Town Clerk  
Frank Cappello, Attorney

**VILLAGE OFFICIALS:** Mayor Tischler, Trustees War, Hopke & Sheehan, Clerk/Treasurer Lori Queor and Administrator Everett Basford.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Nick Sheehan and Eleanor Hopke – Village of Potsdam Trustees, Dean Laubscher.

Supervisor Beattie opened the hearing at 6:15 P.M. He stated that the purposes of the public hearing is to receive any comments presented for or against a petition submitted by Clarkson University to annex property from the Town of Potsdam into the Village of Potsdam.

Supervisor Beattie said the Legal Notice was published in the Courier-Observer on 12/19/2016.

The supervisor opened the floor to comments.

Scott Goldie, Attorney for Clarkson University presented a map showing the parcel included in the annexation petition. He said that Clarkson University did not include this parcel in the last annexation petition, since it was in litigation. This parcel is assessed at \$60,000.

Councilperson Rivezzi asked what Clarkson's vision for the property is. Ian Hazen of Clarkson University said that a facilities complex would be built in the vicinity of 152 Maple Street. Councilwoman Rich asked for clarification and Mr. Hazen said it would house custodial, maintenance, grounds staff. George Giordano, of Clarkson University, said that they wanted to enhance the view from the trail and the river by getting rid of old buildings, however this will not happen for 2-3 years.

Councilperson Rivezzi said that she was pleased to have Clarkson own this property and will beautify the area, but she expressed concerns about the loss of tax revenue. She suggested that Clarkson officials work with the assessor so if the greenhouse becomes a "for profit" venture, then they will pay taxes on it. Mr. Giordano said he is in constant communication with the assessor and they will be very transparent if the Agbotics becomes a business and they will pay their fair share of taxes.

Councilperson Rich said that she is going to vote no to the annexation as more and more land is being taken off the tax rolls. Councilwoman Carvill said that she too is concerned about taxation and would like to see Clarkson University put in writing their intent to pay taxes if the Agbotics is profit-making. With regards to annexation criteria, Carvill asked how this is in the public interest. Attorney Goldie said that other than taking an orphaned parcel in the middle of village property, he had no other answer.

Councilperson Rich said she would feel better if Clarkson would pay us some money. Mr. Goldie said that Clarkson University paid a significant amount of back taxes to St. Lawrence County when they purchased the property. Town Attorney Cappello stated that the previous owner had not paid taxes for decades due to possible contamination, which made the property virtually useless. Mr. Goldie said that Clarkson is aware of the contamination and assumed all risks when purchasing the property. Administrator Basford said that he would defer to Mr. Cappello but that state law would not allow the boards to demand any payment in order to complete the annexation. Cappello agreed.

Dean Laubscher, Lower Pine Street, Potsdam, NY said that he is not opposed to annexation, but expressed concerns about the growing number of tax exempt properties, with expansion of the hospital, and churches. He said when the tax base gets smaller the rest of the structures have to support that. He thanked the boards for looking out for the taxpayers.

Supervisor Beattie closed the meeting at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Goliber  
Town Clerk