Town of Penfield Supervisor’s Column
Week of January 25, 2016

I am dedicating this week’s column to the topic of the recently announced “for sale” listing of Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake golf courses. This has become a hot topic for the community and the Penfield Town Board.

First, I’ll provide a brief background. Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake are privately owned by the Dolomite Group, an Oldcastle Company. On January 13 both properties were listed for sale. As we understand, Shadow Pines closed as a business at the end of 2015. It is now being marketed as a 200-plus acre residential development property. Shadow Lake is being marketed as an operating golf course.

For the past 30 to 40 years Shadow Lake and Shadow Pines have been active golf courses. It’s what we know. Residents of Penfield and beyond have enjoyed decades of golf and outdoor recreation on those fairways. Many of us never imagined those properties being used for anything other than golf courses, just as we never imagined seeing buildings come down at Eastman Kodak. Both are notions most of us did not consider.

Yet despite being used as recreation spaces, both Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake have actually been zoned as residential since 1929. The current zoning is R-1-20, meaning one-half acre residential lots are permitted. It wasn’t done, but it was permitted.

Upon learning of the intended sale of the golf courses just a few weeks ago, the Penfield Town Board had immediate concerns about a large-scale residential development on the Shadow Pines property. Specifically, we are concerned about roadways, sanitary and storm sewer capacity, overall drainage, EPOD impacts, school district impacts, public safety, and proximity to an active quarry. Preserving the historic nature of this part of town is also a concern.

So what’s going on as I write this column? Many residents have already informally shared their reactions to Oldcastle’s decision to sell the properties. On behalf of our residents, the Penfield Town Board is proposing to introduce a local law to place a moratorium on all development of the Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake properties for a minimum of six to twelve months to slow the process down so we can better understand and explore all possible scenarios and impacts.

To do this we have to craft a local law and hold a public hearing on the proposed moratorium. The process is detailed and deliberate, and it will involve formal milestones over the next several months.

Once a moratorium is approved, the Town Board would then look to establish a committee with a cross-section of interested residents and involved agencies and charge them to study any potential uses and impacts of these properties. Any resident who would like to serve on this committee should send an email expressing their interest directly to me at supervisor@penfield.org.

At the end of the study period, the committee would report all findings and recommendations to the Town Board for action.

I will continue to keep residents updated as we become aware of—and verify—information by using www.penfield.org and other town communications.

Be well and stay warm,

Tony