On March 23 the Penfield Town Board adopted a one-year moratorium on redevelopment of both the Shadow Pines and Shadow Lake golf courses. The moratorium is a “stop gap” zoning measure for a reasonable period to preserve the status quo while the town considers amendments to the zoning law to ensure that future development preserves the character and quality of life within Penfield.

The town board wants to make certain any potential development of these properties is compatible with the needs of Penfield residents and the town’s existing infrastructure. To meet this goal, we believe there is a need to conduct a study of these properties to address potential issues and impacts future development could bring to existing infrastructure, the school district, and historic preservation.

Further, although the Shadow Lakes property is being offered for sale as a continuing golfing operation, the town board wants to include this property in a study of future zoning and uses to ensure that in years to come we are not again faced with a property sale and proposal of significant development.

The next step is the appointment of a citizen advisory committee to conduct this study and report back to the town board with recommendations for the best uses of the properties and the expected impacts of those uses over time.

Our goal is to name that advisory committee at the April 6 town board meeting. Members are being selected from a pool of nearly 90 applicants who asked to serve. The committee will consist of 11 direct neighbors of the two golf courses, six residents from across the town, and one representative each from the school district, conservation board, and the historic preservation board. Professionals from the state, county, and town will be made available to support the committee with any information or data required to help them conduct their work throughout the process.

The Town Board is also seeking an individual to facilitate this process. Our interest is to identify a person who is not a Penfield resident, has experience leading and facilitating groups, and has land-use knowledge. Our goal is to identify this individual so the committee can begin its work in April.

All committee meetings will be open to the public; however, only committee members and the professionals supporting the committee will be actively participating. There will be an opportunity early in the process for the committee to hold a public information meeting to receive public comments and ideas regarding the properties and future uses. When their work is completed, the advisory committee will provide various recommendations to the town board for review and consideration.

As many of you are aware, we have created a section on our website entitled “The Shadows Golf Courses.” We will keep this updated with the latest information about these properties and the work the committee is doing throughout the process. As you can imagine, social media does not always provide the most timely or accurate information—and in many cases, individuals take comments on Facebook and Twitter as “gospel” without seeking any or all of the facts. As I have said several times throughout the discussion of The Shadows golf courses, please go to www.penfield.org for the most accurate information we have on these properties.

I will provide brief updates on the advisory committee’s progress in my weekly columns for your information.

Until next week, be well and be safe!

Tony

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