

Town Board (Continued from page one)



Dominic Piestrak's proposed subdivision would contain 40 lots. Under the open space overlay, these lots would be smaller than a typical home's in exchange for conserving 50% of the

overall property as green space. Above, drawings show the dimensions of the proposed lots, with preserved green space colored green.

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protect 50% of the parcel as permanent green space, but some residents expressed a preference for more traditional homes instead. Town Supervisor Patrick Casilio shared his thoughts that open space design protects residents from having neighbors abutting their backyard and saves some space for wild animals displaced by development – but in contrast to his description of the subdivision's proposed structures as “in character with Clarence Center,” resident Michael Powers called the project “incompatible and inappropriate for the space where it's being proposed.”

Powers also felt that the 45 acres east of this project should be reviewed alongside it. Though the land to the east is expected to be left undeveloped, Ken Zolitsch of the firm GPI said that the developer would have considered expanding eastward to get 40 traditional lots if the open space overlay had been denied.

Traffic was another common concern, with frustrations primarily centered on two topics: the age of the traffic study, which was done in 2016, and increased demand on the neighboring Kamner Drive. Traffic studies look at peak a.m. and p.m. traffic, which has decreased in many places post-pandemic, so the town chooses to use pre-COVID traffic studies in case the

old traffic patterns eventually return.

“It has been our determination that traffic studies conducted during the COVID pandemic are inherently flawed. ... They have lower numbers than what we should be seeing,” said Jon Bleuer, the town's director of community development. However, residents felt the traffic study was too old, and they pointed out that the parcel is near both the soccer fields and a school. The safety of neighborhood kids was also mentioned, because Kamner Drive doesn't have sidewalks. Although the Sept. 14 public hearing had included discussion about gating the subdivision's access to Kamner Drive, restricting it to first responders only, Bleuer confirmed during the Sept. 28 meeting that the approved concept plan included full, non-gated Kamner access.

Distrust for the developer was also hinted at by a few commenters.

“Every time he seeks phase approval it seems like there's a little more given, there's a little more taken,” said Robert Knoer, speaking on behalf of a group of residents, “and we're just concerned that this project needs to step back because this is part of the Spaulding Green project. I don't care if it was excepted; this is part of it. It's owned by the same people.” Knoer and at least two others also expressed

a belief that the bike path may not proceed as planned unless the town forces the matter.

“Mr. Piestrak has made a lot of promises about a bike path,” Powers said. “I think it's time to make him live up to those promises, and I would hope that if anything gets approved with respect to this project that not one nail gets pounded into one board, not one shovel gets into the ground, until that bike path is completed.” According to Councilman and Deputy Supervisor Peter DiCostanzo, the bike path promises are being enforced separately from this proposal as the town is already “holding them hostage” on some Spaulding Green phases dependent on bike path progress.

Resident Eric Sobczynski had property damage concerns, as Ransom Creek will take on some water from the development's retention pond and already overflows onto people's properties each year. However,



The homes in Dominic Piestrak's proposed subdivision would be in the residential single-family zone, near Clarence Center Road and Kamner Drive. Above is one of the renderings presented during last week's Town Board meeting, showing a general idea of what one home could look like. Structures and designs could change.

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Town Engineer Tim Lavocat said that strict stormwater requirements set by the Environmental Protection Agency cause a reduction in runoff from proposed developments. Lead washing down the creek was another concern, as Sobczynski said that farmers have hunted in that area in the past.

Out of about 21 acres of land associated with this development, 11.5 acres would be protected by a conservation easement as permanent open space.

In other Town Board matters:

- Love Your Dog Inc., will go to the Planning Board for consideration of a temporary conditional permit and site plan approval for a pet care facility at 8625 Transit Road, to include grooming, day care, overnight board-

ing and a nature and play area.

- There will be a public hearing on Wednesday, Oct. 26, to consider annual excavation permit renewals for New Enterprise/Bufalo Crushed Stone, 8615 Wehrle Drive; Emeritus Holdings, 10051 Wehrle Drive; Lakeside Sod, 6660 Goodrich Road; and Michael Development, 10001 Wehrle Drive.

- Spaulding Green Open Space Design Subdivision received final plat approval of its phase 4b, which includes 13 residential building lots and the dedication of about 960 linear feet of Serenity Court.

The next Clarence Town Board meeting will be at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, in Town Hall auditorium, 1 Town Place.

David and Goliath (Continued from page one)

the scarecrow builders. With the difficulties of the last few years, these giants come in many forms, and the story also struck a chord with the church, which has had its own struggles to overcome.

The scarecrow builders had plenty of chances to stretch their creative muscles, from the desire to make the scarecrows free-standing to an idea that they may be able to look like they're in action to some stylistic inspiration from “The Wizard of Oz.” Miller's grandkids, Noah, Elise and Caleb Munn, said that they particularly enjoyed working on the faces, which were one of the most challenging parts of the project.

“It took a lot of work,” said 11-year-old Noah. Goliath may look a bit misshapen, in Miller's words, because he was made first, but he still fit perfectly into their plan: “We didn't care because he's supposed to look ugly,” Miller explained. And although their Goliath is taller than a lot of people, 9-year-old Elise noted that they had to limit the height so it would fit into a garage.

David was a more polished project, made of clay over a tinfoil skull. The kids molded the features, from the nose to the teeth to the eyes, and then Miller taught them how to paint the face to look properly three-dimensional. The kids tried their hands at plenty of other skills throughout the project too; they've cut PVC pipe, made a skeleton from a sketch, built with polymer clay, glued, stitched, stuffed and more.

Noah also described the cloth slingshot they were making for their David.

“We're going to put epoxy resin or something on it so it holds in place and doesn't fall [then] put it in his hand like he's in motion,” he said.

While winning a competition is always fun, the church's main motivation for participat-

ing in the Clarence Hollow Scarecrow Festival is connecting with the community.

“David and Goliath, for most of our culture, is a pretty accessible story,” said Pastor Eric Farley. “Our goal as a church is not just to be a presence in the community but also to proclaim a message in the community. As a church, we have a message and want every man, woman and child to hear the good news of who Jesus Christ is. By choosing the story of David and Goliath, it gives us an opportunity to do both – to be a positive presence and send a message.” Farley added that the church wants to engage with the community and positively contribute to its culture in a meaningful way.

Formerly Harris Hill Baptist Church, Fieldstone Church recently purchased the former Shepard Bros. Funeral Home and has placed its scarecrows at the post right outside its new location. For some time now, the church had sought and prayed about finding a place in the Hollow, which Farley described as a center of activity and life – a place to meet people where they are already spending their time. With its placement and parking accommodations, the funeral home ticked all the boxes.

“It's really everything we could hope for in terms of a location. It's just been a good thing all the way around,” Farley said.

The David and Goliath scarecrows were a team effort by Miller; his wife, Jodi Miller; and the Munn family, Brian, Brittany and their three children. Their David and Goliath were set up on Friday and can be seen along Main Street in the Hollow as part of the scarecrow festival.

This will be the second time the church has entered the contest; its “Jonah and the Big Fish” scarecrow was part of the festival two years ago.

Against the Storm Foundation to hold charity golf outing

The Against the Storm Foundation will hold its fifth annual charity golf outing on Monday, Oct. 10, at Transit Valley Country Club, 8920 Transit Road, East Amherst. Proceeds will benefit foundation-supported organizations and projects.

The schedule of events begins at 10:30 a.m. with registration and use of the driving range and practice facilities, followed by an 11:30 a.m. lunch. There will be a shotgun start at noon, an open bar at 5 p.m. and dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Foursomes are available for \$800, and individual golfers can participate at a cost of \$200. The entry fee includes golf, lunch, drinks and snacks on the course, dinner (food stations), and an open bar. For those who do not wish to golf, individual dinner/open bar tickets can be purchased separately for \$100. Supporters can also become a sponsor at levels ranging from \$1,250 to \$5,000.

In partnership with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, funds raised in previous years helped establish the Against the Storm Travel Fund, which provides individual grants of \$500 each to qualifying families and caregivers of pediatric blood cancer patients living within a 90-mile radius of Buffalo.

For additional information about the golf tournament, contact event chair Justin Andreozzi, an Against the Storm Foundation board member, at 716-565-1100 or jja@andreozzibluestein.com.