

**Village of Lansing**  
**Planning Board Meeting**

**January 11, 1999**

The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board was called to order by Acting Chairman Halevy. Present at the meeting were Planning Board Members Brown, Dankert, Klepack, Waterman, Village Attorney Marcus, Code Enforcement Officer Curtis, and Trustee Liaison Buck.

**Public Comment**

As there was no one present who wished to speak, Waterman moved to close the Public Comment portion of the meeting. Seconded by Klepack. All in favor.

**Amendment to Small Mass Planned Sign Area (PSA) for Bill Cooke Imports**

Bill Cooke was present at the meeting and reviewed his proposal to be included as a contiguous business in the Small Mall PSA as defined in Article VI, Sec. 4a(1&2). In a letter dated January 5, 1999, Cooke proposed new identifying signage totaling 243 s.f. as well as a) the complete removal of the existing GM pylon-type sign; b) landscaping improvements; c) reconstruction of certain deteriorated areas of railroad tie retaining wall and steps; d) removal of overgrown bushes from west elevation with replacement by appropriate new cover. They have 200 s.f. of signage now and propose to have a new total of 243 s.f. after taking down a 135 s.f. GM sign. A freestanding Toyota sign would stay.

Curtis noted that an automobile company would be allowed 100 s.f. and up to 75 s.f. of that can be on a free standing sign. The Cooke operation is unique in that it started out as two companies - the Toyota and the GM Cadillac Olds franchises being separate businesses. Since they were two separate companies, each were allowed to have 100 s.f. for a total of 200 s.f. Now it is one company again - Bill Cooke Imports - showing three different kinds of vehicles. The proposal is to retain one freestanding Toyota sign (65s.f.) and add 4 new building mounted signs totaling 178 s.f., for a grand total of 243 s.f. rather than the 200 s.f. that it is currently in place.

Board members generally felt that this would be an improvement, but were concerned with the integrity of the Planned Sign Area concept because these signs have little in common with the signs at Bishops. The signs need to be different colors as Cooke is bound by the specifications of the automobile manufacturers. It was pointed out, however, that the signs are approximately the same size, and that the Cooke and the newly redesigned Bishops and Cinema 4 buildings are similar in size, shape and color scheme.

Curtis read the purpose of the Planned Sign Area: "The plan must be coordinated to cover the entire area. The plan must result in a more desirable environment than would be possible through the strict application of other articles of this law including aspects of public safety, coordinated identification, easy and pleasant communication to customers, clients, and other users of goods and services offered within the Planned Sign Area (PSA). All signs in the PSA must conform to the approved plan or there must be included a time schedule for bringing them into conformance. The plan may include other aspects to the area that contribute to its visual impact such as existing features of scenic, historic or architectural interest and proposed changes in landscaping, building design or other appropriate methods to enhance the effectiveness of the PSA."

Marcus said that this section of the Sign Law leaves itself open to quite a bit of interpretation. It is easy to interpret the language of this section to say that it is designed to give the Village the flexibility as to what to permit if the Board feels the pros outweigh the cons. There are no hard and fast rules built into this section as there is with the rest of the Sign Law. Marcus felt that since the language contained no specific requirement such as square footage, height, or color, that the Board was free to make its decision based on a balancing test to determine if the benefits resulting from the proposal outweigh the fact that it does not conform to the quantitative requirements of the rest of the Sign Law. It is open to the Board's interpretation as to just how far in that direction it is appropriate to go. If you compare just the

area of the signs and the letters, you're not going to come up with the same yardstick as in the Small Mall. But Marcus felt that trying to accomplish an overall aesthetic improvement for the area would satisfy the intention of the PSA Sign Law.

The Board asked Cooke to come back with a landscaping plan. Halevy and Curtis will provide the Board with photographs and a video of the site to help in their review. The Board felt that landscaping which unites the property would be beneficial to the area. It was noted that sidewalks would be a welcome improvement. Buck added that the Trustees are currently considering adding sidewalks in that area. Cooke hopes to come back to the next meeting with a proposal.

Curtis will see if he can locate minutes from previous meetings at which the P&C amendment to the Cayuga Mall Planned Sign Area was discussed.

### **Small Mall Planned Sign Area**

Curtis explained to the Board that Stan Goldberg is not able to complete the landscaping requirements of his Planned Sign Area during the winter season but would like to have the sign permit issued so he can put the signs in now. The Board agreed that a Letter of Credit will suffice until he is able to plant. Curtis will ask Goldberg to provide a written estimate.

### **Green Space Advisory Council**

Halevy is drafting an application for potential Green Space Advisory Council members as well as a cover letter to be signed by the Mayor. The letter and application will be sent to people that have been suggested as possible members. A notice will also be put in the Newsletter, the Ithaca Journal and the Ithaca Times.

The application will be very simple. It was suggested that it contain the question "What do you hope to accomplish on the Green Space Advisory Council?"

### **Other Business - Urban Forestry**

Halevy reported that he has been in touch with various people and agencies regarding the urban forestry issue. He has sent a packet of information to Professor Marks at Cornell who will then let the Board know if he feels he can be of help.

### **1999 Work Plan**

Halevy asked Board members to think of projects that the Board should work on in 1999 and at the next meeting they will compile a work plan

### **Budget**

Halevy said that a budget was submitted based on what was submitted last year. It includes \$15,000 for a consultant to work on development guidelines for vacant land in the CLT.

Halevy reported that the Board now has an overhead projector.

### **Reports**

**Trustee Meeting:** Brown reported that at the last Trustee meeting Marcus presented a summary of 11 local laws which the Trustees have not yet acted on. Two of the laws are concerned with property taxes, and the rest were generated by the Planning Board. Cross had recommended that consideration of the proposed law on Drainage Improvements be postponed.

That leaves 8 proposed laws and Marcus recommended that they be brought to public hearings in batches. The first 3 items will be Accessory Buildings, Additional Conditions for More than One Residential Building on a Single Lot, and

Shannon Park Planned Development District Regulations.

The Board of Trustee minutes are now on the web.

The Trustees discussed sidewalks next to the Sheraton. .

### **Minutes**

December 14, 1998: Waterman moved that the 12/14/98 minutes be approved as amended. Klepack seconded. All in favor.

December 28, 1998: Klepack moved that the 12/28/98 minutes be approved as submitted. Waterman seconded. All in favor.

### **Adjourn**

Waterman moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Dankert seconded. All in favor.