

Subject: [DPNeBlast] Happy Hanukkah; a mad plan to "save the farm"; Quentin Road update; "Little Paws Inn" update;
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Conversation: Happy Hanukkah; a mad plan to "save the farm"; Quentin Road update; "Little Paws Inn" update;

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Greetings, Neighbors

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DATELINE, Deer Park, Saturday, December 12, 2009

HAPPY HANUKKAH

For eight nights, Jews commemorate the re-dedication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem (2nd century BCE). The Jewish calendar is lunar, so Hanukkah (spell it any way you wish) may begin as early as late November or as late as late December.

Most people are familiar with the "miracle" the consecrated oil. During the troubles, the temple had been desecrated by the Syrians. In rededicating the altar, the eternal flame was rekindled. But the consecrated olive oil had been spilled; enough remained for only one day—some say all that remained was the oil that clung to the inside of the lamp itself.

A messenger was sent on an 8 day trip obtain a new supply. (They hadn't even begun, much less finished Route 53 then). Ironically, Israel has never had its own supply of oil!

Joyously, one day's oil lasted for eight days, and so we say, a "Great Miracle Happened Here." The first letter of each of those four Hebrew words—Nun, Gimel, Hey, Shin--are represented on the face of the four-sided top called a dreidl, which is used in a complicated betting game. You can find the rules online:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah#Dreidel>

And telling the story of Hanukkah, as with all Jewish celebrations, is part of the observance. Years ago, one of our kids was in a Jewish day nursery program, and all the parents were brought in to listen while the teacher elicited the story of Hanukkah, piece by painful piece, from 4-year-olds. She was teaching them about the ritual cleansing of the temple, and asked little Greg, “and how did they clean up the temple.” “They vacuumed,” Greg replied proudly. You had to know his clean-nik mother to appreciate that story more.

But for us, it’s the story of the Maccabee brothers, the scrappy rebels who defended the right to be Jews in a world of “pagans.” The Maccabbean army was a guerilla force that overcame the powers that be and replaced the High Priest who was seen as a political hack, out for the cash.

As one Hanukkah song puts it, “in every age a hero or sage comes to our aid.”

Here at DPN, we’re “holding out for a hero.”

Where have all the good men gone
And where are all the gods?
Where's the street-wise Hercules
To fight the rising odds?
Isn't there a white knight upon a fiery steed?
Late at night I toss and turn and dream
of what I need

Thank you for letting us share, and we wish this village a miraculous inflow of Hanukkah gelt—or Christmas cash. Shop Deer Park!

MEETINGS

VODP BOT, Monday, 12/21, 7pm at the Barn

PLAN COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED, Monday, Jan. 4, 2010, 7pm at the Barn

MAD PLAN TO SAVE THE BARN—OR, JOIN US IN A BRIEF OPEN SPACE FANTASY

Chicago Tribune, 12/09/09. "When it comes to buying undeveloped land in Lake County the Forest Preserve District has become one of the few big spenders in a market where everyone else is trying to sell....With \$185 million in the bank that voters agreed to supply last year, the district has been hearing from developers hoping to sell land that had been earmarked for housing. Other landowners also want a piece of the action." FULL STORY:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chicago/chi-open-space-north-zone-09-dec09,0,2595238.story>

Here's where our fantasy begins. We'll sell the whole shabang to the Lake County Forest Preserve District—as soon as humanly and legally possible.

The idea of selling the Vehe property and/or the Barn has been an anathema since the 2007 election, when the subject first came up (not in the way always misquoted and then argued against, but that's another conversation).

The village is in deficit on the Vehe property to the tune of 50 grand a year--and that may well grow as additional construction problems and staff salaries increase.

The whole point of the Vehe acquisition was to preserve open space. Preserve? As in "forest preserve"? Yes, indeedy.

Arguments against selling the property:

- we've already sunk close to \$4,000,000 into it; we'll never get that back
- we cashed land and development grants with conditions attached; if we flout those conditions, the monies would have to be paid back
- we have to preserve the farm, the Barn, its history in perpetuity
- we have to make sure the property is open to the public

Responses to above

- why throw good money after bad—the Barn continues to demonstrate construction flaws and maintenance demands and operates at a deficit
- we still have reason to hope that the Village will recover the costs, at least, of the re-work on the Barn (the old cry, "Someone owes this village a million bucks!")
- if the buyer is the Forest Preserve—or a park district or a private benefactor, the terms of the land and development grants might continue to be met, and so those monies may not need to be reimbursed
- what's more "open space" and "public access"

Now, three scenarios:

- sell the entire 14 acres, including the Barn
- sell just the one large parcel which includes the Barn, but not the small parcel that includes the farmhouse/Village Hall (or the other way around, Barn on 3, farmhouse on 1, who remembers?)
- sell it all

BUT WHERE WOULD WE HOLD VILLAGE MEETINGS OR HAVE VILLAGE OFFICES?

In any scenario, either the Village could rent a room at the Barn for meetings and others for the village offices.

Or, the Village could a great deal for, say, 3,000 square feet at the new condo office building in Deer Park Town Center—we understand they are going for a steal right now. That would give us an investment—not a frozen asset—that could grow in value over time. And wow, not buried in a dark stretch of Deer Park, but right there where the bulk of the public can easily find you, and where village staff can keep an eye on business--particularly on the hoped-to-be-developed Rand Road Corridor.

Perhaps the Vehe property could be annexed to the Cuba Marsh Forest Preserve, currently 782 acres, some of those acres right across the street from farm.

YEAH, BUT HOW MUCH MONEY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Let's do some math.

The most recent land transaction of so-called “swamp land,” unbuildable land at Quentin Road near Long Grove was sold to Red Seal Development for Deer Park Estates—in fact, they could NOT without those 2+ acres have built the development at the scale they needed to make money. The price? A ridiculous \$162,000/acre. Forget about the million or so more the village should have negotiated—we've complained a hundred times, and no one seems to care. But that property—like the Vehe property—been purchased for open space and/or parks—sorry, it all gets so convoluted, it's hard to keep straight. Mid-range guesstimate: 14 acres @ \$162k/acre=\$2,268,000.

Lest we forget, the Vehe property is NOT swamp land. It's been improved, with ADA paths and gardens and new trees and a soccer and, don't forget, the bluebirds. Well, they were already there.

Worst case guesstimate: The recent purchases by the Forest Preserve, if we get our math right, average \$40,000-\$50,000/acre. So 14 acres @ \$45k/acres = \$630,000. Again, if the improvements have value to Lake County Forest Preserve District, perhaps we can negotiate up from that. The land they have been buying is idle land, waiting for development. Vehe is already developed—well, half developed.

With several interested buyers and maybe a light at the end of the economy—who knows what we might get. If you don't ask, you won't get anything.

ANY OTHER PLAYERS?

Many of you have asked why we don't give or sell the property to the Barrington Park District. You're all pretty sick of paying "out of district" fees and, indeed, Deer Park is contiguous to Barrington, so it could be annexed into the district.

Bad news is that if it were are part of the Park District, then you might well have to face another line item on your property bill, because the Park District is a taxing district.

But since the last time the topic was discussed, the economy has tanked. Maybe the park district is a little hungry for land; maybe they would grant out-of-districts fees for a period of time, without putting Deer Park on their tax rolls.

Again, you have to ask the question.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR DEER PARK, BEYOND THE MONEY?

If nothing else, the Village would be over and one with stressing/obsessing over Vehe. The divisiveness within the village might heal if we stop picking at this particular sore.

Without a doubt, Board of Trustees meetings would be shortened by an average of one hour. The village staff would be able to do something productive instead of caring for a property that loses VODP 50 grand a year.

And what a relief for the Vehe Farm Foundation; they are down to their last 10 grand—less by now—and they would survive just long enough to see their visions realized. Open space, recreation, preservation of the village history. We think that's called a "win/win."

HMMMMMMMMM....

What do YOU think? Will we see this on the Village agenda 12/21? What will the trustees say?

Trust this: many of YOU saw the article and have had the same kinds of fantasies, so we fully anticipate that your elected officials are thinking along the same lines. We plan to be at the 12/21 meeting, just in case this comes up.

UPDATE ON BUILDING QUENTIN MEETING

"This column is about the tortoise and the hare. The hare drives along Quentin Road, a busy arterial that bisects the Deer Grove Forest Preserve in Palatine. But because the road goes from four lanes to two between Dundee Road and Lake-

Cook Road, it creates a bottleneck slowing everyone stuck in rush-hour traffic. That's why the Cook County Highway Department has proposed a plan to widen the road." Full story

<http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=342023>

Ironic to be driving in such terrible weather to go to this meeting on road use. This was a formal presentation, much like the first Canadian National open forum, but only with Cook County present. What would be really useful would be a joint Cook County/Lake County forum on Quentin.

That, and as a former trustee said so wisely, don't make Quentin improvements in bits and pieces; we need the expansion all the way to Route 22.

We were surprised to see that the maps Cook County displayed did not reflect the two new subdivisions, Deer Park Place and Deer Park Estates, both of which would be seriously impacted by the increase in traffic on Quentin from 20,000/day to 28,000/day. The traffic engineer/consultants maintain that most of those people would turn left or right onto Lake Cook—good luck with the prevailing traffic blowing through red lights at 55+MPH!

To our eyes, increasing the capacity of Quentin between Dundee and Lake Cook will make that stretch an even more attractive cut through to avoid Rand Road altogether. That would be very bad for Deer Park's two malls, for Deer Park residents and for those of us (full disclosure, we live 3 blocks away) who have to navigate the intersection of Quentin and Long Grove daily, a real hazard. We have had several fatal collisions in Deer Park in the last year (one on Lake Cook, one on Ela, if we remember). There have been at least 4 serious collisions on Long Grove at the cross over between the malls. Drivers regularly create their own right turn lane on Quentin, and the lights there have no advance green. The traffic already stacks up in Deer Park during rush hours.

So frankly, DPN doesn't care much about the 3-lane vs. 5-lane solution; we care about the impacts on Deer Park, for which there are no additional public safety resources. Do visit these web sites to learn more—especially about the very cool tunnel under Quentin to get from one side of the forest preserve to the other—including a lane for your horses! Very cool.

<http://buildquentin.com>

<http://buildquentinright.com>

If you have "testimony," or would like to comment on the project, email John Beissel, Asst. Super. Of Highways

jbeissel@cookcountgov.com

UPDATE FROM PLAN COMMISSION OF 12/7/09

To our minds, the PC meetings are the most interesting meetings in the village, having to do with matching the village's wants, needs and codes to the wants and needs of business owners or developers. The subject of Monday's meeting, a rental to open up "Little Paws Inn," located in a currently un-utilized building at 20434 N. Rand Road, would specialize in boarding/day care for dogs up to 16 inches at the shoulders. With 30 pens, no more than 2 dogs to each 3x5' space, there would be play areas for socializing and exercising indoors and out.

It was impossible to determine the TOTAL number of dogs would be on any given day. They do not plan to have any overnight staffing—a big mistake in our opinion—and the staff they would need would take almost half of the existing parking spaces.

We see this use as causing the same impacts of a day care center: the clients all arriving and leaving about the same time—in a very congested area with difficult turns onto Rand Road in both directions. And, like Crème de la Crème, which tried to locate in Deer Park twice, this is a non-retail use.

Hence the need for a Special Use ordinance.

Many of you know that the properties along Rand Road south of the town center would have to be aggregated, improved (water/sewer) and then resold for retail development. What a shame this village has no treasury to acquire some of the properties to hold until the economy improves. Meanwhile, even a temporary, non-retail use leaves the village holding the bills for traffic and security, without any inflows to underwrite those.

Imagine car accidents, dog fights, potential theft of valuable dogs, and so on. Commissioner Jan Koe said it very well: we could see a news bulletin about "dog disaster in Deer Park."

There are know issues in this area with drainage, there's a lot of bad feeling between the owners of the various plats and there are still some residents in this area. The first charge by the PC was that the business owners have the well on the rental site tested for safett, since a neighbor claims his well barely meets code.

The business concept itself is a popular one, and clearly, the village must listen to petitioners. But this particular use in this particular place feels like a lose/lose all around. Why not communicate that to the business owners administratively,

help them understand the many hurdles to be overcome and not waste time on a hearing until sufficient information is presented.

The hearing was continued to Monday, Jan. 4.

SPA AT GOOD SHEPHERD

We see many Neighbors at Good Shepherd Health and Fitness Center on Northwest Highway in Barrington. If you are looking for superb physical therapy and/or a great club with lap pool, therapy pool, public whirlpool (plus private whirlpools in the men's and ladies' locker rooms, spa services, private trainers, pilates, the exclusive TRX system, and the Squeeze, a snack/smoothie concession--well, we love the place. Ask for Donna and mention Deer Park Neighbors, you might be able to make the initiation fee go away.

Meanwhile, did you know you do NOT need to be a member to use the massage therapists or other spa services. While DPN would encourage you to do your spa-ing in Deer Park, it is great to know that when you make an appointment at Good Shepherd Spa, you can use the fitness facility FREE that day. To schedule your appointment please call us at 847-620-4510.

Childcare is available on site in the Kids Klub. M-F 8am-2pm and 4pm-8pm, Sat. 8am-1pm. Please call child care 847-620-4520 for availability.

For a tour of the facilities, call 847.620.4550 1301 South Barrington Road, Barrington, IL (about a half mile north of Dundee)

<http://www.advocatehealth.com/gshp/body.cfm?id=118>

HO, HO, HO, WAY TO SHOP, DEER PARK!

Deer Park Town Center-wide gift cards are available for purchase AT THE MANAGEMENT OFFICE (SUITE 133): Monday – Friday: 8 am – 5 pm. Beginning December 12th, the management office will be open on weekends during the following hours:

Saturdays: 10am - 3pm

Sundays: 12pm – 4pm

Or by phone: 847-726-7755

Postage fee required Cards available in denominations from \$10 - \$500. Accepting Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or Cash.

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Deborah Barry, Secretary | Al Barry, President
847-867-1867 <http://deerparkneighbors.com>

Deer Park Neighbors, 412 Bramble Lane, Deer Park, IL 60010

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