

Subject: [DPNeBlast] Meeting Monday; whither Vehe?; customers robbed in local malls; In the News--robbery at malls, Lake Michigan Water

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Conversation: Meeting Monday; whither Vehe?; customers robbed in local malls; In the News--robbery at malls, Lake Michigan Water

host_name

Greetings, Neighbors

DATELINE DEER PARK, SUNDAY, JANUARY 17 , 2010

We thank all of you for your comments, letters, phone calls and handshakes at public meetings. It's very gratifying, but what counts even more to us is seeing you turn out to public meetings. That's where the work is done and where the facts are generated. Meanwhile, here are some of our thoughts and opinions on current events in and around Deer Park. Please respond!

MEETING, MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2010, 7PM, @ THE BARN

Despite numerous requests from the public, this village continues to schedule meetings on two Federal Holidays, Martin L. King Day (Jan. 18) and Presidents' Day (Feb. 15). Is that the right thing to do?

More important, who's going to show up at meetings held on a National Holiday? But we live in hope—and think that tomorrow's meeting will be a) reasonably short, and b) more than interesting. (See below)

We were able to get a copy of the agenda packet, but we're all waiting for the web site to be updated. When it does, here's another suggestion: Once an agenda packet is posted, leave it online for future reference. Wouldn't that save a lot of FOIA requests, and demonstrate a real step forward on transparency!

http://deerparkneighbors/meeitngs/Trustees/2010_01-18_BOT_AgendaPacket.pdf

WHAT WE EXPECT TO HEAR AT THE MEETING

- Ethics Ordinance. We agree with Trustee Dave Kizior: Let's not make too big a deal out of this. Adopt the Illinois template ordinance, changing the size of the

Ethics Committee from 7 to 3 or 5 members, appoint those members and give them the task of establishing an Ethics Code and Ethics Procedures.

- Ordinance on Recording meetings will be approved, with some fluffy language about how everyone should make nice during Public Comments and that Public Comments represent the views only of the speaker.
- Roads and Drainage. Given the rough numbers conversation last Thursday, the total you can count on is somewhere in the vicinity of \$130,000 for both road and drainage projects. Yes, there might be additional state funds coming in; yes the economy might improve, raising sales taxes and making additional work possible. But for budget purposes, just \$130k or so. Trustee Dale Sands is expected to set some priorities on which work is to be done, perhaps at this meeting.
- Vehe Farm Foundation “letter of termination.” Are you aware that the Management Contract between the VFF and the village has 3 more years to run? Can the VFF simply walk away? Do they have any financial obligations to the village for computers and other supplies and expenses they’ve been reimbursed for now that they don’t want to or can’t continue? Much as we hate to see all the time wasted on Vehe, the residents deserve to have the whole story.

On the other hand, why waste any time talking about transition duties from the VFF to the village? The village has no staff or funds to take on managing that property. In fact, in our opinion, any more time or conversation spent on Vehe is a waste.

- Utilization of the Hotel Tax. At Thursday’s special meeting, Trustee Barb Evans suggested spending the Hotel Tax to underwrite some kids’ events over the course of the year, in concert with Ela Township (we think, there was no documentation available for the audience to review). Trustee Maureen Prastcher has made similar comments about using the Hotel Tax on Vehe. In our opinion, if the Barn/property were any kind of real attraction, that would have show itself by now.

The Hotel Tax must be used for Tourism, and we don’t see kids’ events at the Farm bringing people in for overnight stays in Deer Park. That’s what we need—weekend visits that include a stay in the hotel, shopping in our stores, meals in our restaurants. That’s what tourism is all about. And gut instinct tells you that the market for Tourism in Deer Park is upscale; we think that the target should be household incomes of at least \$100k+ annually, or more.

According to the Illinois Bureau of Tourism web site, <http://www.tourism.uiuc.edu/itf/facts.asp>, in 2006:

- In 2006, the top five states providing visitors to Illinois were: Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan and Missouri. The top markets for international visitors to Illinois were: Canada, United Kingdom, Mexico, Germany and Japan.
- On average, leisure visitors to Illinois spent \$129 per person per day.
- The primary activities of leisure travelers to Illinois included **dining, shopping, touring/sightseeing, entertainment and nightlife.**
- The **average age of Illinois leisure visitors was 46**; the majority was married, and had an annual household income of \$74,000.

Or look at <http://enjoyillinois.com>, and see if you think the Barn/property could ever be the primary attraction is a “getaway.” In fact, the Village of Deer Park doesn’t even appear in their search engine (there’s an opportunity for an Economic Development Committee), nor does “Vehe.” Try http://www.brides.com/local/illinois_chicago/ and you’ll fail to find the Barn. There is one (1) review at Yelp.com, but it’s pretty anonymous and appears to use Vehe’s own photo, so that’s not credible.

Let’s end the fantasy, NOW. Sell it or lease it or close it down, but please, stop wasting time and money on a lost proposition. And residents deserve REAL information, documented by emails or snail mails, that any genuine conversation has taken place with any potential LARGE users of the property: surrounding taxing districts, large non-profits and private enterprises about what might be done on the property.

1. to understand options and cost/benefit analysis for any other potential utilization of the Barn/property
2. to make the upcoming survey on residents on what’s next for the Barn to be meaningful
3. to ensure that such conversations actually take place, are documented and the outcome of those are shared with the board and the residents

WHAT WE’D LIKE TO HEAR DISCUSSED

- VODP Property Tax. As most of you know, the village already passed a property tax increase in the past by referendum. It was imposed for a period and then rescinded, as originally promised. But once approved, it’s can be re-activated at any time.

Would a property tax be a brave thing for this administration to approve, given the very sorry state of the treasury? Would they segregate the new income exclusively for roads and drainage? Would this or future boards ever be in a

position to rescind the tax? And, if roads and drainage are the number-one priority for residents, are they willing to pay for it out of their own pockets? Or would the residents, instead, now agree to a sales tax increase? It's clear that if we go that route, we'd have to go for the entire 1% increase that is permitted by law—but again, we would hope that increase would be segregated only for roads and drainage.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

Nominate your favorites in a wide range of categories, and be entered to win great prizes. More important, your votes for Deer Park businesses will increase consumer visitis, and our bottom line. Deadline is 2/7/10:

<http://dailyherald.com/readerschoice>

IN THE NEWS

Lake County News-Sun, 1/14/10 “Women are being warned to be on the lookout for a man in a ski mask after three were robbed of their purses -- one at gunpoint -- by a suspect in parking lot shopping malls in Lincolnshire, Deer Park and Wauconda.” Full story

http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/newssun/news/1990002,5_1_WA14_PRSNATCHR_S1-100114.article#Comments_Container

Daily Herald, 1/14/10 “On Jan. 8, Kildeer police Det. Paul Seekings said, the offender approached a 67-year-old woman about 7:30 p.m. in Deer Park Town Center and stole her purse.”

<http://www.dailyherald.com/story/?id=350989>

Tribune, 1/14/10 “In what could be the state's largest collective gulp of Lake Michigan water in nearly two decades, 10 suburbs are seeking approval to tap the vast but closely guarded natural resource.

With groundwater supplies drying up and vulnerable to contamination, the Lake County communities that now rely on wells are casting envious eyes on that tantalizingly close supply -- the sixth-largest freshwater lake in the world. They propose spending \$250 million to lay about 57 miles of pipe and take other steps that would bring Lake Michigan water to the western part of Lake County

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-lake-michigan-water-warsjan14,0,264777.story>

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LZ Courier, 1/11/10 “ Kildeer's Village Board voted to approve an agreement between the village, Lake County and Deer Park over a proposed bike path at its

meeting Jan. 5, with one trustee dissenting over concerns about who would maintain the path. The bike path is included in the county's plan to widen Quentin road, Village Administrator Michael Talbett said.

<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/lakezurich/news/1986251,lake-zurich-kdbikepath-011410-s1.article>

FEBRUARY 2 PRIMARY

Whatever your partisan persuasions are, clearly this primary is important to setting a new tone of fiscal restraint and real-world budgeting. Polls will be open 6am to 7pm. You can also vote early 1/11-28 at your township office; all you need is a valid government issued picture ID.

REGISTER PERMANENTLY TO VOTE BY MAIL for all elections beginning November 2010. There are programs for snowbirds, students, military. Download the form: <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/COUNTYCLERK/VOTERSERVICES/VOTINGOPTIONS/VOTINGBYMAIL/Default.htm>

Or call (847)377-2406

Remember, together we are stronger!

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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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DPNeBlast mailing list

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