

LANSING COMMUNITY NEWS

Serving the Town and Village of Lansing, Cayuga Heights, King Ferry & Genoa

"Not quite paradise, but a nice place to live."

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Dec 4 Meeting To Discuss Water District Extension

The Lansing Town Board has called an informal public informational meeting for Wednesday, December 4 at the Town Hall at 7:00 pm to answer questions about a petition-generated request to extend public water to residents in the Lansing Station, Algerine, Bill George, Swayze, Wildlife Dr. and Ludlow Road portions of the town. (See map.)

This past summer, the Town Board received petitions from owners of 126 of the 263 parcels in an area designated as Proposed Water District No. 17, Extension No. 5. The Board responded by engaging the engineering firm of T.G. Miller to prepare a preliminary estimated project cost.

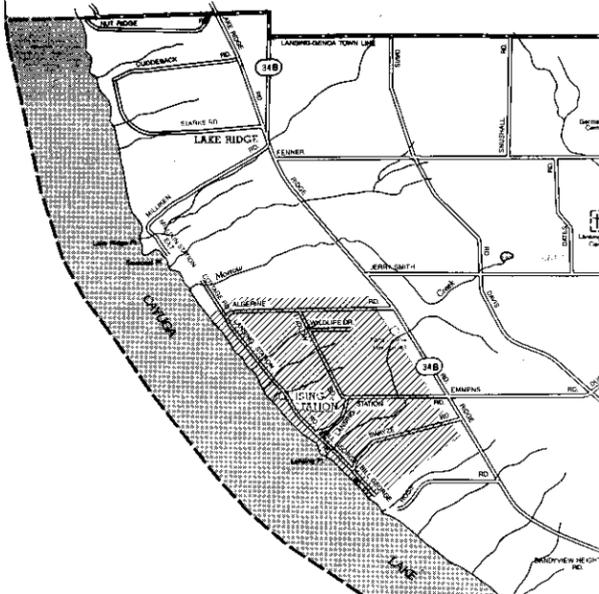
On November 6, town engineer David Herrick presented a total preliminary project cost estimate of \$1,989,700 to the Town Board. Though this works out to an annual capital recovery cost of approximately \$620 for a single house on a 2 acre parcel, the actual cost would vary considerably. The actual cost is based on the acreage and the number of dwelling units, if any, of a given property owner's parcel. In fact, projected annual costs vary from a low of \$308.80 to a high of \$10,476.04 over a 20-year payback period.

The major reason that the \$620 annual capital cost is above the state comptroller's suggested guideline for a single family house on 2 acres, explained Herrick, is that Conrail is demanding \$52,500 for the right to pass water pipes under their railbed. Without this cost, the annual cost recovery would have dropped to \$480 per year.

"These are very preliminary steps to inform residents of cost implications in response to their petition," said Herrick. "If the land-owners are not satisfied with the cost to provide the service they asked for, we need to focus on those neighborhoods and higher density areas to develop a new engineering plan to meet their needs."

History

With the exception of three districts, virtually the entire town's water system has been constructed since 1981. Water District No. 1 was originally established by the Town in 1976. It is now entirely within the Village of Lansing.



PROPOSED BOUNDARY of Water District No. 17, Extension No. 5.

Water District No. 2 was originally formed in 1967 to serve the Lansing School District. Originally, it drew water from a drilled well at the foot of Myers Road. (District No. 2 was connected to the current system in 1988 when Water District No. 7 was completed.) Water District No. 3 was formed in the 1930's. It serves the McKinney Point section of East Shore Drive and is supplied by the Ithaca City Water System.

Water Districts Nos. 4 and 5 were built between 1981 and 1983 to serve Borg-warner, the County Airport and the Cornell Industrial Research Park. The first stage was the construction of the green Burdick hill pump station and led to water transmission lines that went as far as the Village

Circle apartments before heading east on Warren Road to Cornell facilities on Warren Drive. Water District No. 6 followed in 1988 and was entirely financed by the developer of The Horizons subdivisions.

Throughout the early-to-mid 80's, Town Supervisor Philip "Pheep" Munson travelled frequently to Washington in search of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) financing to bring water northward. The HUD projects brought water mains up No. Triphammer Road across on Asbury to East Shore Drive and up to Rogue's Harbor. From there, water went to Woodsedge and down to Brickyard Hill and Wilson Road. The project finally reached Ludlowville which had suffered for years with water problems. The multi-staged Water District No. 7 now serves more than 3,500 people and businesses around the central part of town.

From that point, smaller user-financed water districts became feasible and water district extensions began filling in the gaps. In 1987, the Town authorized the small but important line that connected public water to the schools and allowed the old drilled well at the foot of Myers Road to be retired. An additional extension, financed by New York state to bring water to the Division For Youth, has now taken water northward up the Auburn Road to the Lansing School for Girls. And in 1996, construction was completed on the NYSEG-funded extension of water mains to their Milliken Station power plant.

As you read this, additional water extensions are being constructed, have been authorized or are in initial planning stages. "Every user-financed extension brings up the same questions about the fair allocation of costs," said Herrick. The important thing is to take an active part in the deliberations that will affect the expansion of water (and potential development) throughout the town.

"There's no such thing as a free lunch," a wag once said. That's true for water, too. To make wise decisions everyone's input is needed. Again, an informational meeting on Water District 17, extension No. 5 will be held Dec. 4 at 7:00 pm.

4-H Llamas Packed With Food

Motorists driving by Central Fire Station on Ridge Road last Saturday were treated to the unexpected sight of four llamas strolling around the parking lot carrying packs stuffed with dried and canned food.

No, the Earth hadn't shifted on its axis sending refugee South American llamas fleeing to America for asylum. Rather, it was a 4-H project that combined youth animal husbandry education with community service as the Banana Ears 4-H Friends used a unique appeal to collect provisions for the Lansing Food Pantry.

This out-of-the-ordinary food drive was sparked by the youngsters' desire to help boost the Food Pantry's reserves and, at the same time, share their passion for llamas. At 12:30 pm, the llamas hopped out of the back of the Chevy Suburbans and Dodge Caravans that had transported them to the fire station. "Llamas travel as easily as the family dog," explained 4-H leader Cheryl Germain.

From that point, curious adults and children turned into the fire station parking lot to ask llama questions, approach and stroke the gentle animals and, of course, contribute canned or boxed food to the Food Pantry. By the end of the two-hour food drive, more than a hundred families had met the "banana ears" and cartons of food had been collected.

Though llamas are native to the mountains of South America, they adapt well to the Finger Lakes' temperate climate. "The cold weather doesn't bother them at all," said Germain.

The 4-H "Banana Ear Kids" meet two or three times each month. It's different from many 4-H groups because there are usually 2 parents per kid at each meeting, something that gives the youngsters a chance to substantively relate to adults other than their own parents.

The 4-H leaders use llamas as the medium for teaching personal responsibility through animal husbandry, training and showing at events like the 4-H Youth Fair and the New York State Fair. In addition, the Lansing-based club also uses llamas as the central focus for other activities that range from surfing the Internet for information about llama farms to fiber crafts to community service.



BANANA EAR KIDS 4-H FRIENDS collected boxes and boxes of dried and canned food which were turned over to the Lansing Food Pantry.

In 1996, the group produced a musical video about their llama Earth Day Cleanup project; participated in community parades in Newfield and Spencer; attended a llama bazaar in Vermont; took a local nature trail hike; and showed their 4-legged members at Bakers Acres Apple Harvest weekend.

The 4-H group has eight 2-legged members (Ariel and Tyler Johnson, Sara and Devon Stickane, Chelsea and Taylor Germain and Brian and Kaitlin Stilwell), 28 llamas and 2 alpacas. Four of the llamas are "expecting."

It's easy to see that the eight children in the 4-H group all have normal ears; it's the llama that have banana-shaped ears. "The more banana-like the better," said Germain.

For additional information about the Banana Ear Kids 4-H Friends, contact the Germain family (533-7389), the Johnson family (533-7439), the Stilwell family (533-7245) or the Stickane family (387-3687).

[The group's special thanks go to the Lansing Fire District for the use of the parking lot and to "Butch" Collins for the loan of his portable sign.]

Agriculture's Future In Tompkins County

Can a healthy, local agricultural base co-exist with the steady urbanization of Tompkins County? This question will lie at the heart of this Saturday's workshop "Securing A Future For Agriculture In Tompkins County." The workshop will be held at the Ramada Inn Airport from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm and is sponsored by the Tompkins County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board and by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

Based on the 1990 census, a portion of Tompkins County encompassing the Village of Lansing, City of Ithaca, Cayuga Heights, most of the Town of Ithaca and a portion of Dryden were classified as an "urbanized area" - having more than 50,000 people with a population density of more than 1000 people per square mile. At the same time, agriculture is under-going a combination of structural shifts. These include the elimination of federal programs and increasing local property taxes as the state shifts funding burdens to localities. Local farmers are also challenged by encroaching residential development that reduces the availability of rental crop land and the difficulty of attracting and retaining qualified employees.

The net effects of this constellation of events and the strategies needed to foster a prosperous local agricultural base will be discussed at Saturday's workshop by farmers, government representatives, lenders, agri-business owners, environmentalists, land conservationists and ordinary citizens who believe that a prosperous agricultural base is, and should remain, a force within Tompkins County.

Workshop topics will include "Agriculture and Farmland Protection Planning," an "Overview of Agriculture in Tompkins County," "Perspectives of the Farm Community," "Farmland Squeeze... The Push To Protect," "Strategies from New York and the Northeast to Protect Farmland and Promote Farming," "Agriculture Plans Being Developed by New York Counties," "Options to Strengthen Tompkins County Agriculture," and "Turning Options into Actions to Secure A Future for Tompkins County Agriculture."

For information, contact Monika Roth or Charles Schlough at Cooperative Extension at 272-2292.

Loving Foster Parents Needed !

At times, all families experience challenges or crises. Unfortunately, some families are unable to withstand crisis on a temporary or continuing basis. It is during such times that children may need to enter foster care. Tompkins County children need foster parents who can provide a safe, stable home for children whose parents are temporarily unable to care for them. To find out more about becoming a certified foster parent contact Paula (274-5285), Tim (274-5266) or Sally (274-5275) at the Tompkins County Department of Social Services.