

TOWN OF ST. GERMAIN

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

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townofstgermain.org

MINUTES PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING THE RED BRICK SCHOOL HOUSE: FEBRUARY 18, 2004

The chairman asked all present to rise to Pledge Allegiance to the Flag.

Board members present: Wendt, Holthaus, Ritter, Odette, Nimz, Martens.

The chairman opened the hearing by stating the people who had signed the register would be called to speak in the order that they had signed. Each person would have three minutes to speak.

Deanna Buchholtz gave a short history of the school and the land. Ms. Buchholtz noted that when the school was built in 1941, supplies were scarce. There is already the Veteran's Memorial on the corner. Ms. Buchholtz was in favor of saving the Red Brick School.

Gary Guymon thought that that the board should determine the needs of the other groups in town. Would they be able to use the Community Center instead? Is the building worth the cost of maintaining it? Is it worth the cost to bring it up to present day codes of accessibility?

Linda McConnell noted that a letter dated January 8, 2004 from William Kelly stated that the building was in good condition. Ms. McConnell went on to say that the Red Brick Committee has never been given the chance to make a presentation to the town's people. A doctor's office would be all right if it meant that there would be funds available to get an elevator. A library would be a good use, but not any retail stores.

Patty Schoppe stated that she absolutely did not want the Red Brick School House destroyed. Ms. Schoppe read a brief history of Kate Pier. Ms. Schoppe also stated that Mr. Wendt had suggested to her that the town would sell the old school to the Red Brick Committee for \$1 and, give the committee land adjacent to the Chamber Information Bureau to which the school could be moved.

Tom Zimmerman began his presentation by saying that he had gone to a one-room school. Mr. Zimmerman thought that it was a mistake to demolish the building just because it was old. The building is sound. The reason for demolishing it is not.

Linda Kunelius was also in support of saving and restoring the Red Brick School. Ms. Kunelius gave a short history of Northland Pines involvement with the purchase of the land. When the Northland Pines board sold the land back to the Town of St. Germain it was with the understanding that Kate Pier's wishes would be honored.

Shirley Erickson stated that the Red Brick School House was a landmark to the people of St. Germain. There is a movement to restore America. To save old homes, churches, schools, and battlefields. Each in a way has helped to build our nation and our town.

Ellen Allen from the Red Brick Committee spoke in favor of saving the school. Ms. Allen noted that the heat was being turned back on. Donations were coming in. Rarely have the town's people shown such support on any subject.

Ray Weber thought that the town should do the maintenance and restoration. If the town had just set aside \$10,000 each of the past seven years since acquiring the school from Northland Pines, there would be \$70,000 to apply towards the building. The restoration of the Red Brick School should not be compromised with the possible construction of a new Community Center. They are separate issues.

Tom Martens noted that if the town could spend an unknown amount of money on the proposed bike trail, which may benefit a few tourists, why couldn't the town also spend a little money on the Red Brick School House, which will benefit most of the people in town.

Jim Wendt asked for names of citizens who would like to be part of committee to study the suggestions and comments that had been given tonight. Mr. Wendt stated that he did not want to see the building torn down. But, he was also looking to the future of the town and its needs.

Ray Weber asked Mr. Wendt if had gotten any quotes for moving the Red Brick School House to a different location. Mr. Wendt stated that he had a verbal quote of around \$75,000 from Lassig Brothers.

The audience asked that the town clerk read the written comments that had been received. The clerk read 26 written comments all of which were in favor of saving the Red Brick School House. Several would like to see the town maintain the building and several thought that nothing should be put on the tax roll. Several thought that businesses and doctors' offices were a good idea and several thought that the building should be used only for town purposes. The only comment that was at all negative was from Mrs. Guymon. Ms. Guymon voiced the same concerns as her husband.

The following people have signed up to serve on the committee as suggested by Mr. Wendt: Jane Powell, Sharone Guymon, Terry Backis, Mike Kubiaczyk, Patty Schoppe, Barbara Zimmerman, Tom Zimmerman, Linda McConnell, Carol Scott, Stephanie Weiter, Mary Platner, Dick Gern, Karla Gern, Ellen Allen, Tom Martens, Karen Martens.

Mr. Wendt noted that the Red Brick School House would be placed on the March town board agenda.

Mr. Wendt adjourned the hearing at 8:50 P.M.

Town Clerk

Chairman Supervisor Supervisor

Supervisor Supervisor