

February 4th, 2014

- CITIZEN RESPONSE TO 17/20 PROPOSED ANNEXATION
 - FACTS AND FIGURES ON PROPOSED ANNEXATION
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CITIZEN COMMENTARY- DECEMBER 13TH, 2013

“I just watched the recording of the Public Hearing on December 12, 2013 regarding the proposed annexation of Districts 17 and 20. I am going to ask a question which I have asked before but to which I STILL have not received a response! (I note that several speakers at the hearing asked similar questions.) ”

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“...The various presentations provided a great deal of facts and figures regarding the savings to the residents of Districts 17 and 20 and to the Village of Briarcliff Manor, but no real figures were provided about the financial and services impact of those residents who would remain within the Unincorporated Area, i.e. "The Town Outside." Has any analysis been done of the potential tax increase for those who remain in "The Town Outside" as well as the impact on services? Finally, it was stated in your presentation that those residents who would remain in "The Town Outside" would not "automatically" become a part of the Village of Ossining. The presumption was that this might indeed be a possibility. Has anyone conducted an analysis of the potential impact on taxes if those remaining in "The Town Outside" were to be incorporated into the Village of Ossining?” –Abby Bergman, Deerfield Lane

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- DECEMBER 13TH, 2013

“My name appears on the petition proposing this annexation by the Village of Briarcliff Manor, of a portion of our Town of Ossining. I am NOT in favor of this proposal. When this group of women approached me about this petition they told me this was not a positive vote for the petition, but just a request for a dialogue to begin to investigate the possibility. I am distressed to think that now my signature may be used to express a "Yes" vote in this proposal. I am NOT and never have been, in favor of this annexation and want you to know that my signature is NOT a yes vote in this regard. Thank you for your time.”

–Elizabeth Grano, Ridgeview Drive

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- DECEMBER 24TH, 2013

“My name is Ed Miller. I reside at Bracken Road and have been a resident of Ossining for 74 years. I’m writing to you to share a concern I have with the talk of splitting of District 17 and 20. When all of this talk began you had an article in the Journal stating to affect that the only residents who would have any say in this would be District 17 and 20 residents, this is by the law according to the article. If this is true I think it very unfair that the remaining residents would have no say when they are the ones who will be left holding the bag. I do not see how the unincorporated town could survive with the loss of the two best ratable districts. Would there be any way of having the law amended to give voice to other residents/ taxpayers of the town outside of District 17 and 20? This may be far fetched, I’m not a lawyer, but we need to do something to override this tentative program.”

–Ed Miller, Bracken Road

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 4TH, 2014

“I have attended almost all of the meetings regarding the annexation of 17/20, therefore, I believe I have an idea of the entire process, like it or not, that we have all been thrown into. I am writing this letter to voice my objection to the annexing of districts 17 and 20 from Ossining to Briarcliff. I can't even imagine the turmoil that this would set forth for the remaining parts of the district in the Town of Ossining if it were to happen. I am with the hope that the above will be sufficient in helping the Town of Ossining support a decision of NO to the annexation of districts 17/20.”

–Jill V. Cesa-TenEyck, Deer Trail

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 6TH, 2014

“In summary, neither the Village nor the Town can really be sure that their position on tax increases or decreases will prove correct in the real world, given all the judgment calls required to project results, and the uncertainty of real-world actual results which probably depend on a whole different set of factors. So, with such uncertainty on the tax impact on residents, and further, given that Town services are excellent and that Briarcliff would have to "staff up" to provide services for districts 17 and 20 (that is, the quality of such tentative services is uncertain), there is no public benefit to annexation.” –Eric Illowsky, Cooper Drive

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 9TH, 2014

“I was unable to attend the public hearing on the proposed annexation of Election Districts 17 and 20 on December 12, 2013 but wanted to briefly express my view on the matter. I have been a resident of District 17 since 1996. Overall, I am happy with the level of services the Town Board has worked to provide Town residents in a cost efficient manner including through inter-municipal agreements. Like many Town of Ossining and Westchester County residents, I would prefer to have lower taxes. However, I am opposed to the proposed annexation as I am not convinced an annexation would lower taxes or improve services. Further, the annexation process will likely be long, arduous and costly. I don't see how the Town Board will be able to conclude that an annexation is in the best interest of all Town of Ossining residents including those that would remain in the Unincorporated Area. Consequently, the proposed annexation is likely to involve expensive legal proceedings.”

–Brian J. Cooney, Ganung Drive

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 10TH, 2014

“As a long time resident of the Town of Ossining I wish to make known my strong objection to the acquisition by the Village of Briarcliff of two districts of my town. I can find no advantage to myself, but certainly a financial advantage to Briarcliff.

This acquisition would most certainly raise havoc for the districts in the Town of Ossining not included. If it comes to a referendum vote I will certainly vote against it and urge my neighbors to do the same.” – Robert TenEyck, Deer Trail

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 13TH, 2014

“I feel this is a frivolous endeavor. There is no need for 17 and 20 to be annexed. Services in our area have always been excellent. Ex. Last snowstorm, Ganung Drive was cleared by morning. Village of Briarcliff roads were a disaster. How is Briarcliff going to handle the additional responsibilities? They will need to hire more people and our taxes are only going to go up. Please fight this proposal.”

–Rhonda Halpern

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 14TH, 2014

“I have read the minutes of the meeting re: 17/20 Annexation. As a long term property owner and resident of the Town of Ossining - unincorporated area, I am opposed to the request to permit the 17/20 Annexation or the use of my representatives and tax dollars to fund this exploration. What I am in favor of, to generate a tangible and actionable return from this mandatory exercise, is that as part of the 90 day exploration phase is that you compare the benefits of 3 vs 2 options; 1) Annexation, 2) No change, 3) Consolidating the governing bodies, personal, vendors etc. of the Village of Briarcliff, Village of Ossining and the Town unincorporated.

I firmly believe that the financials projections etc. of #3 will clearly illustrate that consolidation vs further segmentation generates the greatest return for all of the residents in the form of reduction of taxes, quality and number of services both in the short and long term. Knowing that our area is “built out” it is imperative that we consolidate the power of our households and our representation as a bigger unit to control our costs/taxes in both the short and long term and spread the benefits from our business districts across all of our households.” **-Jamie Black & Jim Levis**

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 14TH, 2014

“After watching the video and reading the transcript multiple times of the Joint Public Hearing regarding annexation on 12/12/2013, I am absolutely against annexation with the Village of Briarcliff Manor.

Before addressing the issues which brought about my decision, I would like to thank Wayne Spector, Town of Ossining Attorney for explaining the annexation process, rules and Article 17 of New York State Law. Also, thank you to Dan Pozen, Village Counsel for the Village of Briarcliff Manor for adding the role of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQURA); with the exception of these teachable presentation, my issues are:

1. The Village of Briarcliff Manor's Presentation of financial figures and services raised doubt in my mind. Just as stats can be manipulated, I believe so were their finances and services figures. They clearly stated what would be included in Village taxes, raised my concerns as the village does not identify how their monies are allocated. The Village of Briarcliff Manor sounded as though they are in support of this annexation, but not for the reasons of adding territory and population to the village. I firmly believe they want to gain North State Road, which would strip 30% to 40% of the Unincorporated Town of Ossining revenue.

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2. Mr. Godfrey's explanation, (speaking for petitioners), for wanting this annexation to improve the value of their property and lower their taxes. This paradoxical statement/concept is not only illogical but naïve. Their desire to be part of a municipality of no political parties is sad to say. Their other desires just proved to me they desire to be part of an elite groups and are only interested in themselves. They clearly did not research Annexation and Article 17 of the State of New York. They seemingly also did not look at the ramifications of such an action on all the people. They, apparently, truly believed there would be no effects on all the people whether in District 17 & 20 or not. Another naïve concept.

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3. The Town of Ossining's presentation did spell out ramifications such as: paying for 2 libraries, paying the remaining debts of the Town of Ossining in the form of outstanding contracts, water, sewer, municipal street lighting and police, fire protection, ambulance protection; paying twice for refuse collection. These are all services that are all in place. But, this is all information that was publicized previously. The question is, doesn't the town have any added new information or insights to contribute, which would assist the people in making a decision. Just more confusion added to the process. This is a concern. I wonder if the town board will put in the energy to follow through for the people of the Town of Ossining. Unfortunately, their actions (decisions) of recent time concerns me, in their ability to be objective instead of vindictive.

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4. Upon researching the Annexation Timeline, I found that this Public Hearing (12/12/2013) did not follow the rule spelled out in the Annexation Timeline. Step three reads: “The two municipalities will hold a joint public meeting for anyone who wishes to speak or ask questions and for the boards to receive information on whether annexation would be in the overall public interest and not harmful to any segment of the community.” The public had the right to ask questions at this meeting and were denied.

Bottom Line: I am adamantly against the annexation of District 17 & 20 to the Village of Briarcliff Manor due to the fact that both boards failed to convince me there would be quantitative improvement to the quality of life or improvements in services and lower taxes. “–SandraAnn Dellano, North State Road

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 14TH, 2014

“As a resident of the Unincorporated Town of Ossining, I am strongly opposed to any annexation. I can see no benefit to the residents of Districts 17/20 in this proposal at all. The Town of Ossining provides us with excellent services, including garbage pick-up, road maintenance and snow removal, and I strongly doubt Briarcliff will be able to provide such timely, quality services to the “town outside” their village.

Clearly, there’s no benefit to residents of Districts 17/20 paying library taxes to both Ossining and Briarcliff. The Westchester Library System provides access to all libraries to all residents of Westchester County; why should we pay for two?

The enticements suggested by the Village Board of Briarcliff are fairly useless. Parking at Scarborough is not an attractive option, particularly since only local trains stop there. And the right to swim at the Briarcliff pool for 2 months is insignificant, as Ossining has a pool that’s open all year.

And finally, on a personal note, I’ve been living in Ossining for 30 years and I feel a strong connection to this place. I’m proud to say I’m from Ossining for a lot of reasons: the convenience, the diversity, the riverfront, just to name a few. Briarcliff is nice, but I do not identify with it as my hometown, nor do I want to.

Please consider these positions.” –Joan Mulee, Ganung Drive

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 15TH, 2014

“I believe that the plan to annex districts 17 and 20 to Briarcliff does not make any sense. As a resident of the Town of Ossining since 1994, I have always been more than satisfied with the services provided by the town. That includes EVERYTHING. This whole thing will end up costing more money.

At one of the first meetings at AMD regarding the annexation, one of the women who is part of the original group that started this movement started talking to me. When I questioned the whole idea she said, they have a nice pool. I replied that Ossining has a great pool. She said something to the effect, 'if you would actually want to swim in it'. I think the whole thing is just an attempt to distance a section of the town from the diversity of Ossining. Racism, period.”

–Andrea Erstling

CITIZEN COMMENTARY- JANUARY 15TH, 2014

“As a longtime residence of Ossining (We have lived in our house for 25 years.) we don't feel it is in our, or the towns best interest to become part of Briarcliff. We feel that some people seem to think that being part of Briarcliff will give them an extra edge and that their houses will be worth more. Seem like their main motivation for this charade. We are concerned that the opposite will be true. Our house might be worth less since the taxes most definitely will increase and we won't have the excellent highway department that we have today. Taxes most definitely would have to increase in the rest of Ossining to make up for the loss of the two districts. “

– Ingela & Peter Rodriguez, Morningside Drive

TOWN OF OSSINING'S ANALYSIS

- ✖ Although the Town still takes the position that, legally, the decision to annex cannot be based on finances but rather availability of services, our residents have asked us to perform a financial analysis.
- ✖ The slides that follow detail this analysis based on the numbers available to us. However, Briarcliff failed to provide us with much of their reasoning presented on December 12th.

THESE QUESTIONS REMAIN UNANSWERED

- ✘ Where have you included the anticipated new employees in the calculation for the taxation of the residents of 17/20 (page 33, 60% of new Police and DPW)? Where does your presentation reflect the 40% (page 33 added Police and DPW) added to the current of Village of Briarcliff Manor residents tax bill?
- ✘ If you have not, are you planning on using the fiscal years that you used with the adjusted payrolls for the Police and DPW Departments to show the correct taxes?

THESE QUESTIONS REMAIN UNANSWERED

- ✘ Can you give us more details on what you mean concerning OVAC, Fire District 20 and Administration (page 33)? How did you calculate the costs of the three sections and how does this affect the tax bill of both 17/20 residents and Briarcliff Manor residents?
- ✘ What Capital Projects (ex: the expanded Community Center) are you planning during the next 5 years and how will that increase your debt?

THESE QUESTIONS REMAIN UNANSWERED

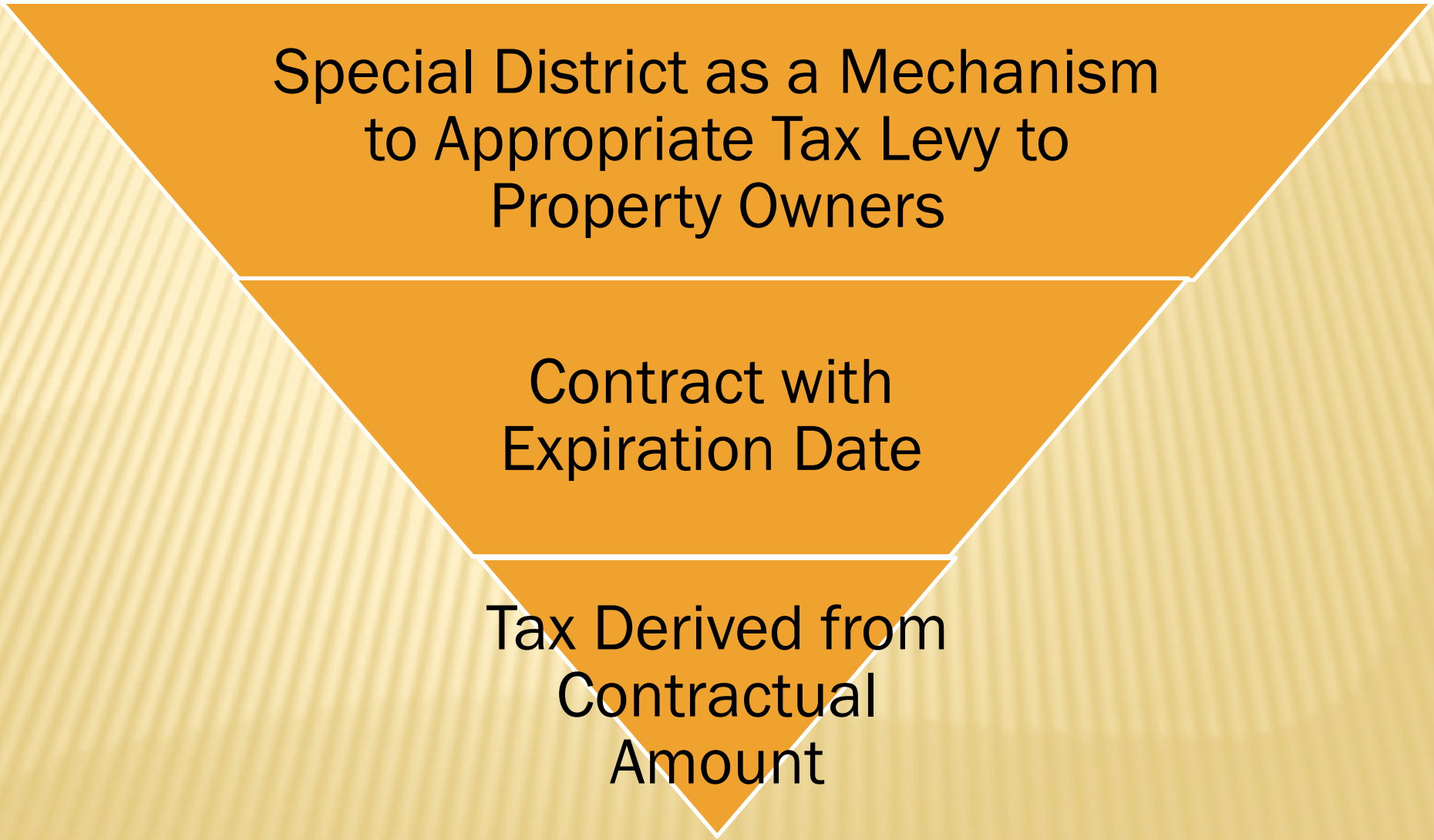
- ✘ What are your anticipated Bond payments for the next 5 years (both interest and principal) for both existing projects and new ones?
- ✘ The page concerning salaries (page 32) is misleading. Please supply us with your administration costs. You are aware that I am the CFO, COO for the Town. “Apples to Apples” is our goal.

HOW A CONTRACT WORKS

Contract with
Expiration Date

Tax Derived from
Contractual
Amount

HOW A SPECIAL DISTRICT WORKS



Special District as a Mechanism
to Appropriate Tax Levy to
Property Owners

Contract with
Expiration Date

Tax Derived from
Contractual
Amount

WHAT BRIARCLIFF RESIDENTS PAY TODAY

Village of Briarcliff Rate
(2013-2014 Budget Year)
\$93.99 per \$1000 AV

PLUS

Town General Rate
\$12.28224 per \$1000 AV

× \$106.27224 Tax Rate

VBM TAXES AFTER ANNEXATION

- ✖ Village of Briarcliff Rate (2013-2014 Budget Year)
 - + \$93.99 per \$1000 AV
- ✖ PLUS Cost of 5 Police Officers
 - + \$776,282 as per VBM presentation
- ✖ PLUS Cost of 5 DPW Workers
 - + \$973,000 as per VBM presentation
- ✖ PLUS Additional Administrative Costs (\$50,000)
- ✖ PLUS Cost of TOS Contracts & Debt (17/20 Portion)
 - + \$1,053,284
- ✖ Multiply all this by 90.73%, Applicable to Town of Ossining
 - + Remainder to Mt. Pleasant

VBM TAXES AFTER ANNEXATION

- ✖ Assessment Adjustment:
 - + ADD \$16,705,798 to Village of Briarcliff Assessment
- ✖ PLUS Town General Tax Rate
 - + \$12.2822 per \$1000 AV
- ✖ New Tax Rate for entire Village of Briarcliff within Town of Ossining:
 - + \$115.1319 per \$1000 AV

8.33676% Increase
over Current Rate of
\$106.2722

VBM TAXES AFTER ANNEXATION

✖ PLUS Special District Charges

+ \$41.9867 per \$1000 AV

✖ (Includes \$7.68634/ \$1000 AV for North State Road Sewer)

✖ New Tax Rate for 17/20 residents:

+ \$115.1319 per thousand assessed

+ \$41.9867 per thousand assessed

✖ (Includes \$7.68634/ \$1000 AV for North State Road Sewer)

= \$157.1186 per thousand assessed value

0.90596%
Increase over
Current Rate of
\$155.707940