

Forest Home Improvement Association

Annual Meeting

Oct. 26, 2022

7:00 PM

Present: Michael Bend, Valerie Hans, Herb Engman, Connie Stirling-Engman, Sally Grubb, Jonathan Lunine, Ellen Lane, Kyllikki Inman (arrived late and didn't vote)

Zoom participation: Alex Nading, Bruce Brittain, Doug Brittain, Cindy Bowman, Bill Arms, Caroline Arms, Dani Novak, Jon Miller, Rosemary Silbey, Linda Copman, Ruth Mahr, John Foote, Ari Lavine, Elizabeth Sanders

The meeting started at 7:10 PM with a hybrid format with both in-person and Zoom participation. See https://www.fhia.org/wp-content/uploads/Minutes/FHIA_2022_Annual_Meeting_Agenda_20221026.pdf for the agenda.

1. Herb Engman opened the meeting and declared a quorum of 15, and the meeting officially started. Next, those in attendance (both in person and via Zoom) introduced themselves.
2. Herb proceeded to give the president's report. He highlighted the accomplishments of the past year and emphasized the Flat Rock Improvement Project headed by Charlie Trautmann and the Brittain brothers' monitoring of the RaNic project. [See https://www.fhia.org/wp-content/uploads/Minutes/FHIA_2021-22_PresidentAnnualReport_2022-10-26.pdf.]
3. Treasurer Valerie Hans gave her report next. [See https://www.fhia.org/wp-content/uploads/Minutes/FHIA_2021-2022_TreasurerAnnualReport_2022-10-26.pdf.] She stated that FHIA has had very low expenditures compared with past years and collected very little in dues during 2021-22. She said that this might be pandemic-related and she is hopeful that households will contribute now that the community is post-pandemic.

Resident Jonathan Lunine asked a question about whether or not FHIA has liability insurance. Sally Grubb explained that Forest Home Chapel has liability insurance and FHIA is considered part of FH Chapel. This is a longstanding collaborative agreement. Sally explained that if an outside group met at FH Chapel, they would have to prove that they have liability insurance.

Adding to the discussion, Ari Lavine shared that since FHIA doesn't have incorporation papers, it is a little amorphous whether or not we are required to produce liability insurance. He asked if we are even enough of an organization to be considered an insurable entity. He stated that he would clarify this with Herb Engman.

Herb wondered if we could apply for New York State tax-exempt status and asked if anyone ever applied? No one knew.

Herb encouraged anyone who still had expenses for the year to report them to Valerie.

4. Next, Caroline Arms spoke about the process of producing an updated directory. She suggested that the board consider whether work on an update should be started. She emphasized the process needs volunteers and takes time.
5. Caroline presented the slate of new officers for next term: Herb Engman, President; Charlie Trautmann, Vice-President; Valerie Hans, Treasurer; and Connie Stirling-Engman, Secretary. She asked for any other nominations and no one responded. Bruce and Doug Brittain moved Caroline's slate and seconded it. Sally Grubb called for a vote and Herb Engman counted 18 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.
6. Moving on to the next item on the agenda, Herb asked for consideration of issues.
 - A. The first one was cyclist designation, and Herb asked for peoples' opinions. Doug Brittain raised the issue of warnings at all six entrances: share the road signs, what is the safest bicycle commuter road, and how can we encourage car drivers to start thinking about bicyclists?

Alex Nading said Cornell should be doing more to get motorized transportation drivers to be aware of bicyclists and pedestrians and prioritize non-motorized over motorized.

Ruth Mahr stated that she used to do a lot of bicycling in Forest Home and felt very vulnerable. She said we need a more assertive approach than just putting up "share the road" signs. Elizabeth Sanders added that she used to bike a lot in Forest Home and some roads are better than others.

Next, Herb Engman mentioned that as Town Supervisor, he never got the impression that Cornell was interested in improving safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. He said that he tried to work on this during his term, with no real results. Herb asked if anyone wanted to approach Cornell about this issue. Elizabeth Sanders said that she would like to be part of a group, but not lead it. Sally Grubb asked if anyone had considered working with Walk-Bike Tompkins and suggested maybe we could collaborate with them. Ari Lavine wondered if Plantations Rd. might be wide enough for a dedicated bike lane. Ruth Mahr replied that the hilly Plantations Rd. is not good for older or less accomplished cyclists. Herb closed the topic and took the names of those who seemed interested.

- B. Moving onto the next item on the agenda, Herb brought up the idea of a bench and flower box to be placed at the top of the FH Walkway. He said that the Town of Ithaca offered to make a bench and flower box. Valerie reminded us that FHIA offered to pay for these crafted items, since FHIA started this project. Herb said anyone who is interested in becoming involved with this project can contact Connie Stirling-Engman.

C. Herb asked if and how much FHIA should contribute to the Forest Home Chapel since it loaned tables for the picnic and provided space for FHIA meetings. He suggested \$300.00, to take into account inflation and the fact that we haven't donated since June 2020. Our last contribution was \$250.00. Valerie reminded everyone that FHIA has always contributed to the FH Chapel and we have an excellent relationship with them. A vote was taken and there were no objections.

D. Paths for Warren Rd. construction, Herb wants to invoke the state's Complete Streets Law. He said that we should argue for a walkway path at least from the top of FH Walkway down to Forest Home Drive. He reminded everyone that boatloads of money should be coming from the recently passed infrastructure legislation and pandemic funds, and Tol also has Complete Streets regulations, so we already have some backing. He advised people to go look at the sidewalk on Giles St. going all the way down to the Mulholland Wildflower Preserve, which is very similar terrain to Warren Rd. Herb said if it could be done there, it could be done on Warren Rd., but it would require a retaining wall in sections. Jonathan Lunine said he would like to see a sidewalk extended up to Fairway Drive, Herb said why not take it all the way up to Hanshaw Rd. to join the beautiful sidewalk there. John Foote brought up his serious sidewalk issues in front of his house on the S-curve on Forest Home Drive that need to be addressed, and asked why Warren Rd. is more important than his deteriorating area in front of his house. Herb replied that Warren Rd. and Forest Home Drive are managed by different municipalities? in that Warren is managed by the County and FH Drive is managed by Tol and that they fall under different categories for renovation or improvement.

Doug Brittain added this was all included as a goal in previous traffic calming plans and sidewalks in both areas are definitely doable.

E. Vehicle Length Limits Law: Herb brought up that FH has been left out of this recently-adopted Town law and the reason we were given by Tol was that FH is considered a "rural collection route" a minor arterial route classified by the Federal Highway Administration. Herb said Tol told him that the reason inclusion in the law is being denied is that a potential lawsuit could result (if FH were covered under the law) claiming that Forest Home Drive must be widened to meet guidelines and property on either side of the S-curve could be seized to do this. Herb also stated that weight limits don't seem to be working and we need something else. Doug suggested talking with Fernando d'Aragon of the Ithaca/Tompkins County Transportation Council to try to get the Forest Home Drive reclassified. Herb asked why not have an advisory sign rather

than a legal one warning truck drivers that they would not be able to pass around the sharp curve?

- F. RaNic: Herb reviewed plans to so everyone was updated. He reminded us to be careful of what we wish for, because if the golf course goes bankrupt, all of that land could be sold off to development and then we would have no control over what happens. He said we need to consider the potential downside if the gold course goes bankrupt. He said that we might exert more control over how that land is developed if we stay involved, even though the project is unpopular. Ellen Lane mentioned a group based on Hanshaw Rd. that is also concerned about the RaNic Project and wondered if it would be advantageous to meet with them.

Bill Arms mentioned that re-zoning could happen. He encouraged residents to pay attention and get their comments to Tol, watch legal notices and Village of Cayuga Heights notices to stay informed.

It was suggested that maybe we could meet with others interested in the project to get a better idea of what might happen and what we can do as homeowners.

Herb replied that he'll arrange a meeting in mid-Nov. then contact the other Hanshaw Rd. group and find out what, if anything, we can do together.

Changing topics, Ellen Lane said that she has tree seedlings that might work well on the FH Walkway. She said she wonders if the upper area of the walkway could be re-forested.

Finally, Herb raised the question about a holiday party. He asked if anyone was interested in hosting. Sally reminded us that we could use the FH Chapel.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Submitted by Constance Stirling-Engman

Secretary FHIA