

Regular Town Board Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Van Buren, held on January 3, 2017 at 7:30 pm at the Van Buren Town Hall, 7575 Van Buren Road, Baldwinsville, New York.

Present:

Mr. Rick Zaccaria	Councilor
Ms. Darcie Lesniak	Councilor
Ms. Mary Frances Sabin	Councilor
Mr. Howard Tupper	Councilor
Mr. Claude Sykes	Supervisor

Absent: Mr. Ronald Dudzinski and Ms. Patricia Dickman

Also present:

Mr. Kevin Gilligan	Town Attorney
Mr. Jason Hoy	Town Engineer
Mr. Doug Foster	Highway Superintendent
Ms. Lynn Precourt	Town Clerk

Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

Citizens Comments: None

Approve minutes of the Regular Town Board Meeting on December 20, 2016:

011-16-000 MOTION BY Mr. Zaccaria, seconded by Ms. Sabin, to approve the minutes of the Regular Town Board Meeting held on December 20, 2016 as published.

Mr. Zaccaria – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Mr. Sykes – Yes

All Ayes – Motion Carried & Adopted

Resolution regarding maintenance of existing alignment of Interstate 81 through Syracuse:

Mr. Zaccaria said this discussion on the future of I-81 has been going on for three years and ideas other than a boulevard are only now being considered since no one seems to think the boulevard concept is a good one.

Mr. Sykes said he has traveled through many states and parts of Canada and has never seen an interstate turn into a boulevard. It is a ridiculous idea to consider.

Regular Town Board Meeting January 3, 2017

Mr. Tupper said this should not be a top down decision, it should be made with the interest of those who travel the road in mind.

Ms. Lesniak thinks any alternatives should be considered with Rt. 481 and Rt. 690 in mind so that other options for reaching the city are available.

012-17-025 MOTION BY Mr. Zaccaria, seconded by Mr. Tupper, to approve the following resolution:

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF VAN BUREN, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors and through travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of Van Buren; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster and general maintenance and repairs, and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting local neighborhoods and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the Van Buren Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; and

WHEREAS, Town of Van Buren supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options; and

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, THE Almond Street “boulevard” and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York State Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, and a convoluted route to access I-690 West. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of Van Buren is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

Mr. Zaccaria – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Mr. Sykes – Yes

All Ayes – Motion Carried & Adopted

Resolution regarding elimination of Thruway tolls:

Regular Town Board Meeting January 3, 2017

013-17-025 MOTION BY Mr. Tupper, seconded by Ms. Lesniak, to approve the following resolution:

MEMORIALIZING THE NEW YORK STATE GOVERNOR, THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE, AND THE NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY AUTHORITY TO TAKE ACTION TO ELIMINATE THRUWAY TOLLS FOR RESIDENTS TRAVELING ON THE THRUWAY AT ANY POINTS BETWEEN AND INCLUDING THRUWAY EXIT 34A AND EXIT 39

WHEREAS, there are six New York State Thruway exits in Onondaga County, starting at Exit 34A and extending through Exit 39 in the Town of Van Buren; and

WHEREAS, the Thruway provides a convenient option for Town of Van Buren residents who are traveling to and from work or traveling in the course of the day's events; and

WHEREAS, because travelers who opt to use the Thruway must pay tolls, many Town of Van Buren residents resort to using the local roads rather than the Thruway; and

WHEREAS, Syracuse is one of very few cities within New York State that are bisected by the Thruway; and

WHEREAS, using the Thruway removes traffic from the local roads, saving the taxpayers from paying additional costs for maintenance and repair of local roads, preserving the residential nature of local roads, and enhancing the safety of local roads; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Van Buren Town Board to request the State and the Thruway Authority to eliminate tolls for all motorists who enter the Thruway on any exit between 34A and 39 and who exit the Thruway at any exit between 34A and 39; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Town Board hereby requests the New York State Governor, the Legislature of the State of New York and the New York State Thruway Authority to take appropriate action to eliminate Thruway tolls for all motorists who enter the Thruway on any exit between 34A and 39 and who exit the Thruway at any exit between 34A and 39; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Town of Van Buren is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the Governor, the State Legislators representing Onondaga County, and the New York State Thruway Authority.

Mr. Zaccaria – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Mr. Sykes – Yes

All Ayes – Motion Carried & Adopted

Regular Town Board Meeting January 3, 2017

Councilor Committee Reports & Comments: None

Highway Superintendent Comments: None

Supervisor Comments:

Mr. Sykes said Assemblyman Magnarelli will have a Town Hall meeting on February 16, 2017 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm here at Town Hall.

Citizens Comments: None

Engineer Comments: None

Attorney Comments: None

014-17-000 MOTION BY Mr. Zaccaria, seconded by Ms. Sabin, to adjourn to the next Regular Town Board meeting on January 17, 2017 at 7:30 pm.

Mr. Zaccaria – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Mr. Sykes – Yes

All Ayes – Motion Carried & Adopted

Meeting closed 7:47 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Precourt

Town Clerk

Dated: 1/4/17