

**Village Of Chaumont**  
**Minutes of the Restore NY Applications Public Hearing and**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**September 20, 2022**

**Location of Meeting:**

Village Office  
12175 State Route 12E  
Chaumont, New York 13622

**Present at Meeting:** Valerie Rust, Jim Morrow, Jose Sosa, Michael Nichols, Karen Fitzgerald, Erin Fulton, Adam Fuller, Pat Reome, Hartley Bonisteel-Schweitzer, Reggie Schweitzer, Ed Valentine, Will Lipczynski, and Tom Humiston.

The Public Hearing for the Restore NY Site Plan Applications was called to order at 6:00 PM on September 20, 2022 at the Village Office by Mayor Valerie Rust.

Hartley Bonisteel-Schweitzer presented the Site Plan Application for the George Brothers Buildings and Chaumont Hardware, in conjunction with the Village of Chaumont's Restore NY Communities Initiative municipal grant application. A Letter of Intent to apply was submitted to Empire State Development prior to the August 11<sup>th</sup> deadline, and subsequently accepted. The Schweitzers held a pre-submission conference with the Village Planning Board, before their full Site Plan Review with the VPB on September 19, 2022. The site plan designates seven (7) new residential apartments (four above Chaumont Hardware and three on Mill Street), a tentative French bistro, and other ground-level commercial space. The historical façade will be maintained, and no change in footprint is planned. Deputy Mayor Morrow asked about parking and was told that while no parking requirements are in place for this village zone, the Schweitzers will be adding additional off-street tenant parking - three or four spaces on Mill Street and a couple behind Chaumont Hardware. Parallel parking is to be expected along Mill Street, with potential sidewalks constructed there and improved in front of Chaumont Hardware. Mayor Rust gave the Board of Trustees support in helping with sidewalk repairs through downtown by getting other businesses involved for sidewalk repairs in front of their establishments as well. The Schweitzers are covering the \$500.00 application fee for the Restore NY municipal grant as well as paying the local match (as is required of the local developer whose blighted buildings are benefitting from the grant). Mayor Rust said that the DEC and DANC must be contacted to make them aware that we will be adding new recipients of water and sewer service within the village – for this project as well as the Ruby Development LLC project.

Ed Valentine presented the Site Plan Application for Ruby Development LLC's restaurant on the corner of Morris Tract Road and NYS Route 12E, in conjunction with the Town of Lyme's Restore NY Communities Initiative municipal grant application. A Letter of Intent to apply was submitted to Empire State Development prior to the August 11<sup>th</sup> deadline, and subsequently accepted. Ed Valentine also held a pre-submission conference with the Village Planning Board, before his full Site Plan Review with the VPB on September 13, 2022. Although Mr. Valentine is applying for the municipal grant through the Town of Lyme, he is looking for full Village of Chaumont support, as well. When he (as Ruby Development LLC) bought the old Munger property through

foreclosure, it was estimated by Jefferson County that cleanup of the location (general and environmental) would cost approximately \$50,000 – it actually cost the LLC between \$100K-\$120K, which is why any new development on the property has been delayed. The current site plan calls for complete demolition of the current building, and construction of a brand new restaurant in its place. “Because the Restore NY grant is focused on removing blight,” Ed said, “it is perfect for this project, and will benefit the Town of Lyme as well as the Village of Chaumont.”

Deputy Mayor Morrow gave his intention to abstain from voting in the George Brothers Building / Chaumont Hardware project decision, as he is a former employee of Mr. Schweitzer. Mayor Rust wished good luck to both applicants and, as no further members of the public attended to voice any thoughts or concerns, closed the Public Hearing at 6:30 PM.

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Chaumont was called to order at 6:30 PM on September 20, 2022 at the Village Office by Mayor Valerie Rust.

### **I. Privilege of the Floor**

Mayor Rust began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaumont Fire Department Chief Will Lipczynski and member Tom Humiston, current Village of Chaumont liability insurance broker Adam Fuller (with Fuller Insurance Agency), and resident Patricia Reome showed up for Privilege of the Floor.

Pat Reome followed up on last month’s presentation to the Board of Trustees of a quote she received from Laurie Koelmel at A Cozzi & Company Monuments for restoration work on Memorial Drive. She said she had received the anonymous donation of \$500.00 – half the cost of the project – to be used toward the restoration, and would deliver to the Village Clerk’s office this week. Mayor Rust asked when the work could begin, and Pat said it really depends on Cozzi’s schedule. She showed Mayor Rust the photos of Memorial Drive from the previous meeting, and shared the quotes. She said she hadn’t yet contacted Kathy Carr about cutting back the trees in the area, and Mayor Rust said she would email her. She thanked Pat for all of her work toward ensuring the maintenance of Memorial Drive.

Ms. Reome also brought up two other requests to the Board, which may need attention from the DPW staff. She is once again having water issues at her residence on Co. Rte. 125, where it appears to be discoloring her glass dishes. Mayor Rust said she would talk to Greg and they would look further into it – they are currently in discussions of replacing that section of village waterlines as a previous repair showed old pipes that need modification and upgrading. There is also a pothole on the right side of the road, right past the Fitzgerald residence, which needs to be filled.

Chaumont Fire Chief Will Lipczynski presented the case of having two (2) water meters at the Chaumont Volunteer Fire Department – one that is used for the general fire hall water usage, and one that is used only to meter the water which fills the fire trucks. The department is requesting that sewer usage fees be waived for the meter which gauges fire truck water usage, as that water is not going through the sewer lines. Will gave a breakdown of their water and sewer bills, and the Board of Trustees agreed that sewer fees should not

be charged for water relevant to that specific meter. Mayor Rust said she would send a DPW employee over to verify that meter, and going forward the Village Clerk would waive sewer fees on that line. The Board also agreed to issue a sewer credit for the past two reads.

The firefighters also brought up the Fire Department being used as one of the Village of Chaumont and Town of Lyme's public water testing sites. Mr. Humiston questioned why the DPW conducts their testing there, and then the VFD is charged for the water and sewer usage used during those tests. Deputy Clerk Fitzgerald explained that there are only so many places that they can perform testing. It is currently executed at the 7-11, Town Barn, Town and Village Municipal Office, and Fire Hall per the Department of Health. She said the Lyme Coin Operation has been considered in the past, but was rejected due to possible outside contamination in the testing samples. Mayor Rust said she would look into this process, and if they were looking for a cost respite, the Board would see what they could do after learning the protocol involved. Chief Lipczynski claims that the water for testing is often run for over 45 minutes, which causes hefty bills that are difficult to pay as they are saving for a new fire truck. Mr. Humiston questioned if the Town of Lyme and Village of Chaumont's buildings pay water and sewer bills. Mayor Rust confirmed that, yes, they both are metered and billed for water and sewer. "Organizations have utility bills, and we all have to pay our share," she said. Chief Lipczynski made a final request to the Board in relation to structure fires: when the temperatures are freezing, they don't like to open the water hydrants. If the VFD keeps track of how much water they are using per structure fire, could they go back to the department to fill the tankers and get a cost respite on water usage? Mayor Rust said if they want a credit for not only sewer, but water usage as well, we would need full documentation: address of structure fire, date and time, and gallons used. They were amenable to these requirements, and the Mayor thanked them for their continued service.

Village of Chaumont liability insurance broker Adam Fuller, with Fuller Insurance Agency, came to present the insurance binder for October 15<sup>th</sup> 2022-October 15<sup>th</sup> 2023, as the village is getting ready to renew and has been given a very competitive quote from another insurance agency – Eastern Shore Associates. A warm nod to the late Mike Gillette was given, and appreciation for loyalty from the Village of Chaumont, as we've done business with Fuller Insurance for almost 30 years. Although Mr. Gillette had the municipal focus, Mr. Fuller said he is learning quickly. He touched on the village's recently denied insurance claim for the WWTP's rotating biological contactor repair – and that recent claims haven't been a frequency issue, but rather a severity issue. Larger losses with equipment breakdown at the sewer plant have made our current insurer (Glatfelter / Hartford Steam Boiler) make exceptions in our coverage. Mr. Fuller admitted he did not know why the RBC wasn't covered, but could possibly have been carved out of the plan intentionally so Glatfelter would cover us at all, as it is clearly stated on the front page that it would not be covered. Mayor Rust gave a brief breakdown of our history with liability insurers. The village lost coverage through Trident after our first sewer plant claim. Then, going with another company more than doubled our premium. Three years after Trident covered the equipment breakdown, the part went out again. It was found to be an equipment defect by Darlington Equipment and we had no recourse, because Trident had washed their hands of it – they paid good money for something that was destined to fail, and then weren't

there to fight for us. Glatfelter / Hartford Steam wouldn't cover it either, as it had been excluded from their coverage, as it will be going forward. Mr. Fuller stated that as far as village liability insurance premiums go, they don't have a lot of leverage, and as our brokers they were very unhappy to learn about the lack of coverage for the RBC, as well, and tried to fight for us. He gave the Board of Trustees the current insurance proposal from Glatfelter, which had gone up an additional 10%, and as Mayor Rust stated, still does not cover equipment breakdown of the RBC. He went through the proposal item by item, real property coverage (buildings) and personal property (contents), and said he feels their general liability is strong. While they may have a higher premium, he does believe they have superior coverage. Their customer service is incredible. Mr. Fuller believes the cost increase is due to inflation, liability losses, and increased property values. Mayor Rust asked how many municipalities they cover, and Mr. Fuller believes it's about two dozen between towns, villages, and fire departments. Eastern Shore Associates has exclusive access to NYMIR in Jefferson and Lewis Counties, and although Mr. Fuller did not see an RBC coverage exclusion with NYMIR, he's not certain they will cover it either. He also mentioned that NYMIR is reciprocal, as you are considered a "subscriber." There is no owner or stockholders – the subscribers own. Many of Mr. Fuller's clients in St. Lawrence County use NYMIR, and many throughout the tri-county area use Trident. Only a handful currently use Glatfelter, and none of *those* use Hartford Steam through Glatfelter because they don't have water and sewer plants, thus smaller equipment breakdown exposure. Mayor Rust told Adam that they have done a great job by the Village of Chaumont, and she appreciates his honesty, transparency, and information. She and the Board of Trustees thanked him for coming.

## II. DPW Update

Village DPW Supervisor, Greg Ingerson, is requesting a personal computer to perform village work to include emailing, completion of reports, water and sewer training, etc. Mayor Rust said she will reach out to Ben Rubacha for a quote, and asked Clerk Fulton to look into prices at Best Buy and Staples. The Board agreed to an inexpensive laptop to help Greg with his duties.

The DPW crew will be installing Paul Norton's inline heating cable to prevent future water line freezes at the marina this upcoming week. Work should be completed by September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mayor Rust will be out of commission for about six weeks beginning on October 6<sup>th</sup>, due to medical, but plans on meeting with Mr. Norton upon her return to discuss responsibility as it relates to any further water issues on his property.

Clerk Fulton again presented a request by DPW Supervisor Greg Ingerson to increase Gleason's pumping schedule in the village. While discussed in the last meeting, the Board requested the Mayor's approval before moving forward. Currently, tanks are pumped twice a year. Greg is proposing that Gleason's pump the tanks four times a year to alleviate breakdown of sand filters and RBC. As the cost is related to weight and not service calls, our expense should remain the same. Mayor Rust approved this and said it's time to start the new schedule, which going forward, should be done quarterly.



METERED WATER	O&M AND DCC	UNMETERED WATER	INT AND PEN	WATER METER FEES	SERV CONNECTION	RET CK	TOTAL	USAGE FEE SEWER RENT	DEBT SER	INT AND PENALTY	O&M AND CONNECTION	TOTAL
F2140-1	F2140-2	F2142	F2148	F2144	F2145	FEES	WATER	G2120	G2122	G2128	G2770	WASTE
4439.15	1624.28		20.00				6083.43	\$ 2,782.93	4266.98	20.00	3220.69	10290.60
2616.11	860.34		16.34				3492.79	1356	2185.48	16.33	1531.40	5089.21
6305.28	1915.32		20.00				8240.60	3438.82	4822.19	20.00	3404.36	11685.37
2318.04	814.65		14.99				3147.68	1316.03	2088.77	15.00	1428.89	4848.69
350.42	159.98						510.40	228.67	445.86		358.25	1032.78
767.44	222.17		10.00	9.12			1008.73	558.85	665.47	10.00	465.68	1700.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
							0.00					0.00
16796.44	5596.74	0.00	81.33	9.12	0.00	0.00	22483.63	9681.30	14474.75	81.33	10409.27	34646.65
WEBPAY												

## VII. Old Business

Deputy Mayor Morrow gave up update on the ongoing code violations at 12234 NYS Route 12E. After personally visiting the residence three times, he was finally able to secure a face-to-face conversation with the property owner. They discussed how the resident's accident had caused a setback in property maintenance progress, but also acknowledged how some improvements had been made – a nonoperational boat had been moved from the front yard, some trash was gone, and various piles of brush were moved. “I will give him three weeks before I talk to him again (to give him time to complete the work),” the Deputy Mayor said, “and then one final week before citation.” The Board discussed how unpaid property maintenance citations, by adoption of a local law, can be relieved onto land taxes. This was presented by Zoning & Code Enforcement Officer Jim Millington at the last Board of Trustees meeting. Mayor Rust will look into this further.

## VIII. New Business

Per section 3-312 of NYS municipal law for villages, “Vacancies in offices caused other than by expiration of the terms thereof shall be filled by the mayor, except the office of mayor which shall be filled by the board of trustees, to the extent and for the periods of time set forth.” In accordance with this law, and by unanimous recommendation of the Village Planning Board, Mayor Rust appointed Jennifer Sosa to fill the Planning Board position made vacant when Bryan Stumpf accepted his appointment of VPB chair last month. It was mentioned that Jennifer may also be interested in the administrative duties of the Village Planning Board. This includes, but is not limited to, Public Hearing notices, 239-m reviews, neighbor notifications of site plan applications, meeting minutes, etc. Mayor Rust asked Clerk Fulton to pull together a list of responsibilities so the Board of Trustees could decide on appropriate compensation for a VPB secretary. All ink, paper, and other supplies would be supplied through the Village Clerk's office.

## **IX. Correspondence**

Clerk Fulton presented monthly correspondence.

- A thank you to the Village of Chaumont from Watertown Lions Club President Karen Strife for allowing them to hold their Cardboard Boat Race at the Chaumont Village Beach. They had five boats enter the race, and several village and town residents came to watch the event, which was also covered by 7 News. They are already planning for next year and would like to come to a future board meeting to discuss their plans.
- Michael Pierson of Pier Sound & Data, Inc. provided a quote for new phones and monthly VOIP telephone service for the village office and sewer plant.
- Governor Hochul signed NYCOM Legislation authorizing cities and villages to act locally to impose a city- or village-wide speed limit as low as 25 miles per hour on city or village roads.
- The Village of Chaumont has a short term principal payment in the amount of \$4,000.00 due on November 19, 2022 to EFC for costs related to the waterline betterment project.
- Kent Collier of the NYS DOT informed the Village of Chaumont that the Chaumont River Bridge Replacement project was re-let back in mid-August and they received three (3) bids this time around. While the lowest bid was more than 15% above the engineer's estimate, it is currently under review. He will let us know when the review is completed (within 2-3 weeks), and the determination whether the project will be awarded to go to construction.
- The Village received a September AIM (Aid and Incentives to Municipalities) payment in the amount of \$4,319.00.
- The NYS Deferred Compensation Plan is changing their bank trustee services on October 1, 2022.
- Final approval from New York State Department of Financial Services was received for the merger between Citizen's Bank of Cape Vincent and Gouverneur Savings and Loan. The closing date was scheduled for September 16, 2022.
- A notification from Homeland Security and Emergency Services to inform the Village of Chaumont that all eligible claims for disaster assistance under FEMA 4348 DR NY have now been paid, with the State closing out our claim on August 19, 2022.
- A letter from Town of Clayton Supervisor Lance Peterson requesting municipal support in sending letters to the Jefferson County Administrator Robert Hagemann to encourage legislation that requires the collection of Occupancy Tax from Short-term Rental Properties.

- An Annual Comprehensive Inspection Report from the NYS DEC for the Village of Chaumont’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. At the time of the inspection, the plant was operating in general compliance with the conditions and requirements of the SPDES permit and was producing effluent of good visual quality. Therefore, the inspection was rated satisfactory.

**X. Motion to Schedule a Final Public Hearing for the Round 6 Restore NY Communities Initiative Municipal Grant Program**

**Resolution No. 38**

**NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** by the Chaumont Village Board of Trustees that it hereby schedules a public hearing for the Round 6 Restore NY application for October 3, 2022 at 12175 NYS Route 12E Chaumont, NY 13622.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a Notice of said hearing will be published for three days in the Watertown Daily Times.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that it will include the following property assessment list:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Size (sq. ft)</i>	<i>Building Type</i>	<i>Project Type</i>	<i>Building Category</i>
12119 NYS Route 12E	7,476	Comm./Res.	Rehabilitation	Comm/Vacant
NY Route 12e	4,400	Comm./Res.	Rehabilitation	Vacant
Mill Street	1,400	Commercial	Rehabilitation	Vacant
27428 Mill Street	1,643	Comm./Res.	Rehabilitation	Vacant

Valerie Rust, Mayor: YES  
 James Morrow, Deputy Mayor: YES  
 Dori-Ann Froelich, Trustee: Absent  
 Jose Sosa, Trustee: YES  
 Michael Nichols, Trustee: YES

**Resolution No. 38 ADOPTED.**

**XI. Motion to Approve Ruby Development LLC Site Plan and Restore NY Application**

**Resolution No. 39**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Village of Chaumont Board of Trustees is in full support of the RESTORE NY application for the project identified as Ruby Development, LLC, parcel # 61.51-1-36, to demolish a blighted building located at 12319 NYS Route 12E in the Village of Chaumont and to reconstruct thereon a 4000sf building to be operated as a family-style restaurant business. The proposed financing has been determined appropriate



and the project found to be consistent with the local development plan, in that it will facilitate efficient use of existing and future public resources, promote both economic development and preservation of community resources, and create and sustain employment opportunities. A motion was offered by Trustee Nichols and seconded by Deputy Mayor Morrow, and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly approved as follows:

Valerie Rust, Mayor: YES  
James Morrow, Deputy Mayor: YES  
Dori-Ann Froelich, Trustee: Absent  
Jose Sosa, Trustee: YES  
Michael Nichols, Trustee: YES

**Resolution No. 39 ADOPTED.**

## **XII. Motion to Approve George Brothers Buildings / Chaumont Hardware Site Plan and Restore NY Application**

**Resolution No. 40**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Village of Chaumont Board of Trustees is in full support of the RESTORE NY application for the project identified as George Brothers Buildings & Chaumont Hardware, parcels # 61.43-1-7, 61.51-1-27.1, 61.51-1-27.2, and 61.51-1-26, to renovate a buildings located on NYS Route 12E and Mill Street in the Village of Chaumont as a mixed commercial and residential use facility. The proposed financing has been determined appropriate and the project found to be consistent with the local development plan, in that it will facilitate efficient use of existing and future public resources, promote both economic development and preservation of community resources, and create and sustain employment opportunities. A motion was offered by Trustee Nichols and seconded by Trustee Sosa, and upon roll call vote of the Board was duly approved as follows:

Valerie Rust, Mayor: YES  
James Morrow, Deputy Mayor: Abstains  
Dori-Ann Froelich, Trustee: Absent  
Jose Sosa, Trustee: YES  
Michael Nichols, Trustee: YES

**Resolution No. 40 ADOPTED.**

## **XIII. Mayor's Report/Committee Reports**

Trustee Nichols wanted to take the opportunity to thank Mayor Rust for all that was accomplished with the widening of Church Street. He expressed his pride as a Board member when progress like this is made in the Village of Chaumont. Mayor Rust once again expressed her gratitude for Town of Lyme Highway Superintendent Pat Weston and crew, as well as Marty Mason and the Village of Cape Vincent – without which the project

could not have happened. “Church Street will be paved by the end of October,” she said, “and Park Drive, as well.”

Trustee Sosa gave a brief update on the Youth Commission, informing the Board that Heather O’Brien will be resigning in November.

Mayor Rust asked Clerk Fulton to procure two bills from the NYSLRS, for December 2022 and projected 2023 as she will need them for the AUD report. She informed the Board that while we didn’t have enough remaining funds from our waterline betterment project to complete the work on Church Street, our engineers and DPW were looking into the possibility of a 10 inch waterline installed on County Route 125. The lines out there are deteriorating and in need of replacement, and a larger line may help facilitate a potential

#### **XIV. Motion to Adjourn Meeting**

Mayor Rust said she’d accept a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into Executive Session at 9:10 PM. Deputy Mayor Morrow made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Nichols.

Respectfully Submitted

*Erin Fulton*

Erin Fulton  
Village Clerk/Treasurer