

**Regular Meeting**

These minutes are for the regular meeting of the Beacon City Council, held in the Municipal Center at One Municipal Plaza on July 3, 2017. Please note that the video recording of this meeting is available at <http://vimeo.com/channels/40154>.

**Council Members Present:**

Lee Kyriacou, At Large  
George Mansfield, At Large  
Peggy Ross, Ward One  
Ali Muhammad, Ward Four  
Randy Casale, Mayor

**Council Members Absent/Excused:**

Omar Harper, Ward Two  
Pamela Wetherbee, Ward Three

**Also Present:**

Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator  
Nick Ward-Willis, City Attorney

*A moment of silence was observed for those who serve and have served in the US military*

**First Opportunity for Public Comments:** Each speaker may have one opportunity to speak up to three minutes on any subject matter other than those which are the topic of a public hearing tonight.

**Speakers:**

**Ronna Lichtenberg:** Spoke about the connection between job development and residential development. Would like to bring manufacturing back to Beacon. Is impressed with the revitalized Main Street. Would like to create more weekday traffic on Main Street.

**Theresa Kraft:** So much history took place here during the Revolutionary War and now feels like our city is under attack. See attachment 1.

**Michal Mart:** Thanks the Council for all their work. Asked that they take a pause on approving new development. Decisions about development are often based on data provided by the developers themselves. The median home price in Beacon is the highest in Dutchess County.

**Dennis Pavelock:** Participated in the City-wide yard sale. Did not feel that there was enough signage to encourage visitors to the participants at the Rec. Dept. Gave details about the July 3 Reading of the Declaration of Independence. Asked about the Kristie Drive drainage project.

**Ana Joanes:** Agrees with Michal that the city should take a pause. Wants development that is thoughtful and mindful. Read a letter from Joan and Peter Underwerger: We need to plan for the future by thinking about infrastructure. Does not feel that the PB and ZBA have been making good decisions.

**Lisa Alvarez:** Mentioned the crosswalk that was recently painted but the City did not eliminate the parking spaces. Urged for a moratorium on development projects until we can assess the impact. Added that we need to keep the community diverse.

**Kelly Ellenwood:** See attachment 2

**Jeff Domanski:** Would like the City to look at the climate impact. Need to take a pause on development. We should follow best practices and follow the energy code.

**Kristen Flynn:** Gave details on school district data. Agrees that the City should halt development and assess the situation.

**Beth Poague:** Asked for a moratorium. Is worried about the rate of expansion. Feels like a correction is coming soon. We need to continue to grow but should do so slowly. This City has been revitalized by its long term residents, not by developers.

**Elaine Ciaccio:** In favor of a moratorium on development. Feels that we will reach capacity on Water usage soon. Gave statistics on water and the population. Asked about the outcome of the Liberty Street site (possible well water). Agrees the City should step back.

**Samantha Britton:** Agrees with everyone's comments. Spoke about the need for more affordable housing. Since 49% of the city's students are eligible for free lunch feels that the priority should go to single mothers and families.

**Antony Tseng:** Supports the moratorium. Has lived here for 18 years. The allure of Beacon is the River, the mountains and the art and the community. Believes that increasing the tax base to help with infrastructure is a vicious cycle. [See attachment 3](#)

**Michael Haimes:** Moved here 6 months ago on a friend's recommendation. Believes that job creation and housing are related. Would like to live here and start a business here. The future of jobs now is in the tech industry. Wants to start a business here and train young people for those jobs but does not want to upset the long-term residents by going against what they want for Beacon.

**Meredith Heuer:** Advised that she is a member of the school board and gave statistical info about the impact of development on the school district resources. Stated that she does not think that the school district has recovered from the recession. Supports a pause in development.

**Rodney Weber:** Advised that he respects the Council for the work they've done on the Comprehensive Plan and the Waterfront plan. Applauds John Clarke's recent report. Agrees about the importance of greenspace. Concerned about the effects of a moratorium and its impact on economic development.

#### **Community Segment:**

**I AM Beacon:** Brenden Willard gave details on the pod cast project and invited participation.

#### **Council Member Reports:**

**Ali Muhammad:** Appreciates everyone who attends meetings and those who watch on television. Would like council to look into the possibility of turning the old highway garage into a BOCES.

**Omar Harper:** Excused.

**Lee Kyriacou:** Noted that during the Comprehensive Plan revision project several hundred people were involved. Is interested in hearing everyone's views. Can we workshop the idea of relocating the Tironda Bridge.

**George Mansfield:** Appreciates everyone's opinions on the development issue. Advised that he and his fellow council members would never compromise the future of the City. The loudest voices have no more say than the softest voices in our town.

**Pam Wetherbee:** Excused

**Peggy Ross:** Appreciates the public's opinions. Noted that the Comprehensive Plan was developed through civic engagement. Feels that the moratorium is a short-term solution. Would like to discuss a more stringent approach to granting variances. Appreciates the idea of light industrial zoning. Cautioned about painting all developers with the same brush. We should distinguish between good development and predatory development.

**Mayor Randy Casale:** Assured that the public's concerns are being heard. Read a letter from a resident thanking the Fire Department for their assistance with a bike injury.

**Anthony Ruggiero:** Advised that City Hall will be closed tomorrow but the pool will be open. Gave details about the summer camp and the drop in center.

**Jerry Landisi:** Gave details about the senior picnic and the Dutchess County Human Right Commission Listening Sessions.

**Resolutions, Ordinances and Local Laws:**

**1. Resolution to Awarding the Bid for the Kristy Drive Drainage Project**

- Motion by Council Member Muhammad, second by Council Member Mansfield  
5-0

**2. Resolution to Accept the Dedication of a Portion of Judson Street**

- Motion by Council Member Muhammad, second by Council Member Mansfield  
5-0

**3. Resolution to Award the Bid for the Control and Telemetry for the Water System Project**

- Motion by Council Member Mansfield, second by Council Member Ross  
5-0

**4. Resolution to Award the Bid for the Generator Service**

- Motion by Council Member Muhammad, second by Council Member Mansfield  
5-0

**Approval of Minutes:**

**5. Minutes of June 5 and June 19, 2017**

- Motion by Council Member Kyriacou, second by Council Member Muhammad  
5-0

**Second Opportunity for Public Comments:** Each speaker may have one opportunity to speak for up to three minutes on any subject matter on which the Council can take action.

**Speakers:**

**Gary Pavlovic:** Lived here in the 40s and 50s when Beacon was very nice. Then came back and it was not so nice. Does not want to see the momentum stop.

**Braden Smith:** Understands that we just completed the update to the Comp Plan. The Comp Plan is intended to be a long-term document. There is a lot of development activity which will affect the population-the schools, the traffic and parking and water. The moratorium is an opportunity to take a break and make sure that the City can handle this growth.

**Paula Barris:** As the owner of the new hotel, thinks that the moratorium will be a mistake. It is smart to grow economically. Has created jobs for 15 people, uses local food and produce.

**Adjournment:**

- Motion by Council Member Muhammad, second by Council Member Ross  
5-0

Next Workshop: July 10, 2017

Next Meeting: July 17, 2017

City of Beacon

City Council meeting 7-3-2017

Theresa Kraft - Statement read during public comment

As we look towards the sky this Fourth of July celebrating our country's Independence Day lets reflect on our own cities Historic Heritage. To the men who stood guard and kept the signal fires burning on top of Mount Beacon as a series of alarm posts to alert the troops of pending attacks. So much American Revolutionary War history took place in this historic Hudson Valley and what is know today as the City of Beacon. Alexander Hamilton billeted at the De Peyster House near Dennings Point for its accessibility to the Generals headquarters located across the river in Newburgh. Mount Gulian served as the headquarters of Major General von Steuben, and General George Washington made visits to the Madam Brett Homestead, and routed his troops over Mt. Beacon to his encampment at the Fishkill Supply Depot.

Again this strategic location is under attack, with the revolution of overdevelopment, the one that is on the verge of splitting Beacon into two sides. Gentrification of the haves and the have nots will happen all along the river and waterways. We're seeing a big push for high density development, which at some point will make our life long residents feel the financial burden to relocate out of their family homes, and this community. We know all to well that routine happened here before. I don't dismiss anything when so much money is at stake. Our city's budget only talks about increasing the tax base and less about what it's residents want and need. Development is probably the only course of action our local government will take along with New York State.

Profit. That says it all right there. There's a value to such a connection to the river and even the "developers" recognize it.

It's an exciting, but yet again, a volatile time to be living in Beacon. To see all the possibilities. To create a dynamic Beacon while preserving our undeveloped lands, historic overlays and natural resources for they are this city's real treasures, the scenic vistas and the strategically located and majestic waterfront that originally brought our Founding Fathers and Madame Brett to our shorelines and into our history books, they must be protected from over development and expansion.

Beacon should be expanding its historic overlay districts rather than allowing development to encroach on it.

We have the rare opportunity to set the standard here in the Hudson Valley for how to do revitalization right! We must make sure our collective vision for Beacon is seen, as well as heard, and that open communication with our appointed and elected officials is vital. The decisions we make together in these times will define the new renaissance of Beacon only while honoring and preserving its past can we bring it into our future history books.

Theresa Kraft [914-456-3258](tel:914-456-3258)



**Beacon Arts  
Community Association**  
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[www.beaconarts.org](http://www.beaconarts.org)

July 3, 2017

The Honorable Randy Casale  
Mayor, City of Beacon  
One Municipal Plaza  
Beacon, NY 12508

**Re: 23-28 Creek Drive and other parcels currently zoned for Light Industry or Commercial Use**

Dear Mayor Casale (cc City Council, City Administrator),

On behalf of the makers, artisans and innovators that reside in Beacon, and those who are interested in creating more jobs and opportunities for all of our citizens, the Board of Directors of BeaconArts would like to request that the City-owned property located at 23-29 Creek Drive remain zoned for Light Industry. I have read the RFP for the former Department of Public Works property, and I am dismayed to see that the City believes that this site is best suited for residential development and/or other compatible uses. There are also many other parcels around the city that are being considered for residential that we request remain zoned for Light Industry or Commercial use.

We are in agreement that urban planning is a complicated process, and that density of population can make sense within the confines of a City, if done thoughtfully. However, our city also needs places preserved and promoted for light industrial "Maker Space" use. Innovation in manufacturing and job creation is shifting towards a shared space and resources model, and we believe that by keeping available and eventually establishing spaces for these types of light industry (i.e. [Niche Modern](#), [Wickham Solid Wood Studio](#), [ModCraft](#), [Rexhill Furniture](#)) or [innovative start-up hubs](#) is the most important consideration now for our city and for our city's future. In the past, Beacon was host to many successful traditional industries, and thrived during that period. Beacon's current profile as a home to creative endeavor must be sustained and encouraged. Beacon's future to once again be a hub of industry and of imagination can be achieved, by leveraging our creative community now and encouraging the establishment of innovative maker spaces.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kelly Ellenwood  
President, BeaconArts  
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BeaconArts Board of Directors: Theresa Goodman (Vice-President); Aaron Verdile (Treasurer); Erica Hauser (Secretary); Pamela Dailey, Sommer Hixson, Terry Nelson, Rick Rogers (At Large)

cc: Peggy Ross, Ward 1; Omar Harper, Ward 2; Pam Wetherbee, Ward 3; Ali T. Muhammed, Ward 4; George Mansfield, At Large; Lee Kyriacou, At Large; Anthony Ruggiero, City Administrator

**Subject:** Re: Moratorium

My name is Antony Tseng. I live at 18 Rende Dr in Beacon, NY. I am here to represent myself as a citizen of Ward 4.

I wanted to speak in support of the moratorium. I have lived in Beacon for 18 years so I'm not sure if I am new Beacon or old Beacon. It is my opinion that a moratorium would appeal to both.

I am not anti-development. However, while variances are granted to build multi-unit projects, we still have empty buildings and large lots that can be subdivided further. If we are back to our peak population in 1950, then now would be a good time to go through some vision development on what Beacon could look like decades from now.

I am not against affordable housing. We want our teachers, teacher's assistants, cooks, security guards, and other staff in our schools with their families to afford Beacon.

The allure of Beacon is not dense building construction. The allure of Beacon is the River, the Mountain, the People, the Art, the Beer, and most importantly the space. Of note when I moved to Beacon, the Art was picking up and I don't remember that much beer. But what Beacon had to offer the residents was a community with families varying from single to multi-generations. The success of Beacon is a functional relationship of the community that resides here.

As you know, Beacon is currently thriving on a tourist economy. While our comprehensive plan preserves some spaces, I believe the rate of variances and site-plan approvals, while individually evaluated, are not summarily in sync like missing the forest within the trees. I am glad to hear from the Mayor that the Comprehensive Plan is a live document. I echo Lee Kyriacous' statement that as we become more urban, this raises the stakes on how we do that, and it is important to get it right. The new structure at the old Beacon Salvage on Churchill St has now guaranteed that a trail along Fishkill Creek along that property is probably now forever lost. We don't have a hardware store anymore. We have also lost some our industrial commerce and we can do more than letting our city simply turn into a bedroom community. We can debate theories or we can pause for further study. Once we lose the tourists, what is next?

The belief that seeking a larger tax base simply to make infrastructure upgrades cheaper to residents is not a multi-dimensional solution as we succumb to a cycle where we need to increase capacity, which means we need to upgrade our infrastructure, so we increase our tax base by increasing development to pay for it, which generates more need to increase capacity, which means we need to upgrade our infrastructure, etc.

I believe a moratorium would help focus Beacon towards a longer term vision beyond the comprehensive plan.

Thank you Mayor and City Council for your time and service.