

Plan for donated Village Hall to be meeting topic

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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Residents want more information before project is approved, president says

Action on a new Village Hall that Mike and John Ansay will build for free in a village square west of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center was tabled Monday until meetings can be held with the public.

A session has been set for 10 a.m. Saturday, March 2.

Village President Richard Howells told the Village Board he was asked by residents to hold a meeting to explain the project.

Trustee Ken Hirschmann said he's been asked a lot of questions by constituents and he doesn't know how to answer them.

Neither does she, Trustee Vickie Boehnlein said.

"There are so many issues that we haven't discussed as a board that I don't feel I can answer any questions from the public," she said.

The meeting will be informational for the board as well as the public and all questions will be answered, Howells said.

Trustee Jason Acevedo said it's especially important for board members who were not at the Dec. 21 meeting when the issue was discussed to attend.

"All the board members need to be up to date and informed," he said.

Following a closed session Dec. 21, the Village Board unanimously approved an amendment to the New Luxembourg developer's agreement with Ansay Associates that includes the Village Hall donation.

The agreement calls for the village to build a permanent lift station when needed and to provide incentives similar to those in the industrial park to developers for residential and senior housing and perhaps an assisted-living facility for memory-care patients in the New Luxembourg development.

The development is in a tax incremental financing district and taxes from development in the district will be used for the incentives, Neil Tiziani, director of real estate for Ansay Development, said in December.

The Ansays will provide free land to New Luxembourg developers.

"My brother and myself and other family members were born and raised in Belgium and we want to give back to the community," Mike Ansay said Wednesday.

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“John and I are donating the money for the Village Hall. My daughter Kate (Ansay-McCain, an urban planner) is working with the village to design it based on their needs.”

The final design, which will incorporate Luxembourg architectural features based on a pattern book developed in 2005, will be approved by the Ansays. The size will depend on the village’s needs, Ansay said.

Ansay said he made a commitment to the country of Luxembourg that the Luxembourg American Cultural Center will be in a village square where community events can be held.

The square, he said, will be named for Grand Duke Henri Guillaume and approved by his office.

In addition to the Village Hall, the village square will have an art gallery where artwork donated to the cultural center can be displayed, Tiziani said.

The village square and residential development will hopefully draw businesses to the village, Tiziani said.

The proposed housing concept will have a European feel with 1,500-square-foot, energy-efficient houses that have Luxembourg architectural features, Tiziani said.

The board will have to amend its zoning code to allow the smaller houses and higher density, he said.

The land is zoned multi-family. The Ansays want to use that density for the single-family houses, which are expected to sell for under \$200,000, Tiziani said.

Howells, who has been working with Ansay-McCain on the interior design, offered office space to the Town of Belgium. The Town Board will discuss the issue at its March 5 meeting.