

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Forest Home Improvement Association Meeting**  
**Forest Home Chapel**  
**April 4, 2016**

In attendance: President Montana Petersen, Treasurer Jennifer Loucks, Vice President Cindy Bowman, Secretary Connie Stirling-Engman, Valerie Han & Michael Bend, Bruce Brittain, Kyllikki Inman, guest Addisu Gebre, (City of Ithaca Engineer)

Meeting opened with an introduction of City of Ithaca Engineer Addisu Gebre. Addisu explained the current deteriorating situation of two areas on Forest Home Drive and plans on what to do about it. *Here is Montana's summary of the information Addisu provided:*

At the intersection of FH Dr. and the Thurston Ave. bridge in the City of Ithaca, there are two areas of concern. First, the City engineers, along with new and former bridge project contractors, will speed to fix erosion closest to the intersection that is undermining the road and could cause problems with the City owned bridge. In my non-engineering terms, the wooden planks in the corner aren't holding back the soil anymore. Construction will continue through the summer and may be finished by the end of the year, or sooner. A chain link fence will go up around this small portion of the closed road soon. Pedestrian access is maintained for now.

The second, more complicated problem is erosion slightly further east along the road, where the stone wall has collapsed into the creek. Road ownership, project funding, the source of the problem and the fix are still up in the air. A contractor looking for the source of water contributing to the erosion will submit their findings soon. Once funding is secured, using a 2 - 3 month technique would have it fixed by the end of 2017 summer, or following another process, fixed by the end of summer 2018. It goes without saying that this is not set in stone and to the best of their knowledge.

The City has a draft emergency plan for worst case scenario as there are a ton of utilities under the road, including a large sewer line from Varna, etc. I didn't get the impression that this part would be a problem.

FHIA would like to send a letter of support for the project to both Cornell and the City common council. For many of us, this is our primary route out of Forest Home and the road closure funnels even more traffic through our tiny hamlet. *End of Montana's summary.*

Montana said she'll draft a letter and chat with City Attorney, Ari Levine, about the impact the closing of Forest Home Drive is having on residents. These include increased traffic congestion through Forest Home Drive because traffic is diverted from the closed area (especially people who use the Human Ecology parking garage). Montana said that the closing is affecting our

mobility, both vehicular and pedestrian. Cindy Bowman stated that she walks to work on Forest Home Drive and is concerned about safety.

Montana said that she succeeded in getting the Verizon wires (left next to the telephone pole on 300 block side of FH Drive), removed from the renovation of the upstream bridge.

Montana mentioned that we now have a new street sign at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Drive and Forest Home Drive, which should alleviate confusion about the roads and reduce traffic turning around in residents' driveways.

Montana explained that NYSEG fixed the truss for the gas line, although it is a temporary fix. She added that the Town replaced the pedestrian walkway planks on the downstream bridge that had rotted. The planks on the upstream bridge have warped up, creating a safety hazard for pedestrians.

Montana raised the issue of the Forest Home walkway fence rails rotting and said that pedestrians are walking through residents' driveways (especially the Armitage's). Montana asked Connie Stirling-Engman to follow-up with Town Supervisor Bill Goodman to find out what, if any, plans are in place to correct this.

Spring clean-up **training day** for our new park and other areas of Forest Home is scheduled for Wed., May 18, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM. Krissy Boys will provide training and supervision so that we make best use of the time. Montana says the clean-up may include re-fencing to replace some rotted wood fence stakes.

Actual **Spring Cleanup Day** will take place on Sat. May 21st at 10:00 AM until...?

### **Updating the website:**

We discussed the possibility of interviewing former FH long-time resident Liese Bronfenbrenner, who now lives at Kendal. Liese wrote a history of Forest Home entitled, "Free Hollow to Forest Home." Montana had a copy of the book and shared it at the meeting. We also suggested the possibility of drawing up a Certificate of Appreciation for her, and/or making a short video/mini oral history to add to our website to create an impression of the past connecting to the present. Connie Engman said that she'll find out who to contact at Kendal (probably Residents' Assoc.) about arranging an interview/video with Liese.

Montana said that she is updating the directory. She also brought up the issue of which is the best way to contact residents: mailing list, Facebook or email. Montana said that the Facebook page is under utilized, but since it is already in place and is convenient for many residents, it would be nice to use it more.

## **NY State Historic Homeowner Tax Credit:**

Montana filled us in on which houses in Forest Home might qualify for federal or state funding (tax credits) based on historic status. Bruce Brittain and Montana showed us a map that she had found that outlines which houses fall into the designated area. We also discussed the possibility of adding some homes to the Forest Home Historic District and Historic District entryway street signs.

Montana raised the issue of code violations about number of people residing in one house. Connie Engman checked with Herb Engman, previous Town Supervisor, who said that since Cornell and Ithaca College aren't required to publish the names and off campus addresses of their students, it is difficult to prove that unrelated people are living in the same house and/or violating the lease. Connie also found out that it is difficult to prove that residents are living in any given house or just visiting. Those present at the meeting expressed concern about this situation because it seems related to deterioration of properties, disengagement with the neighborhood and creates a transient feeling in the community. We wondered what we can do about this to enforce code and lease requirements.

Bruce Brittain said that there will be an upcoming meeting about the **S-curve** next to John Foote's property at Town Hall on April 11. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss what to do about the deteriorating wall and encourage a plan to keep the wall where it is, with a walkway above street level and also keep traffic calming where it is now.

Montana mentioned that she has encouraged Dani Novak to go ahead and construct a little library, and that he can install it in her lawn, rather than waiting to get Town approval to place it in the Forest Home Park.

The meeting ended at 9:15 PM.

Connie Stirling-Engman, Secretary