

A STATEMENT BY WOODSTOCK'S SUPERVISOR

To my fellow Townsmen:

In February of 1960 your Town Board appointed a Planning Board for Woodstock under Section 271 of the Town Law. This was done following the recommendation of a study committee which had worked for approximately a year before recommending a Planning Board. In appointing the original seven members of the Planning Board, we sought to represent each geographic area of the Township and provide the Board with persons of varied interests and talents. The Planning Board is now five members but still sufficient according to State Law. It will be augmented by two additional members prior to the decision on the Growth Plan. The Planning Board has now seen fit to hand the Town Board copies of the proposed Growth Plan and proposed Land Use Control Ordinance. These documents were prepared with expert professional guidance in the persons of Brown & Anthony, a professional firm engaged by the Town Board to assist our volunteer Planning Board. The cost of these experts has so far been borne by private financing from some 300 individuals who made gifts to the Town for this purpose.

Under the State Law the Planning Board now has the power to adopt the recommendations in this Growth Plan as the Master Plan for the Town of Woodstock. This plan in itself has no legal effect but is merely the basis upon which Woodstock probably will grow, provided some control is exercised. Twenty copies of this Growth Plan are available on loan to civic organizations in order that they may study the full report in detail. I have asked the Planning Board to handle the management of its circulation, which they in turn have turned over to our Town Clerk, Marjorie Harder.

As part of the contract with Brown & Anthony a proposed Land Use Control (zoning) Ordinance was contracted for. This, which would have legal effect, can only be adopted by the Town Board after public hearing and is something to be considered in the near future.

As the descendant of a native Ulster County farm family, I am jealous of individual liberties in the use of land and other assets. However, I am firmly convinced that, as we need traffic regulations on our highways, we need control of land use in Woodstock. This control, however minimal, is necessary to preserve the assets of Woodstock as we now know it. To this end, as an individual, I am willing to discuss or debate the relative merits of PLANNING or NO PLANNING, or ZONING or NO ZONING, or the PRESENT PROPOSED GROWTH PLAN with any individual or group.

If we are to arrive at solutions for our problems that are acceptable to all, we must have the freest possible exchange of ideas and opinions, but in a constructive manner. There are those who would obstruct such free debate and impair understanding of what is proposed by vicious criticism, distortion, ridicule, and personal attack. What are the motive of those who employ this technique? Obviously their motive are to serve their own interests at the expense of the town.

As in any effort of this nature, personalities have inevitably become an issue. I cannot close, therefore, without expressing my personal appreciation to Jack van Rijn, founder and president of Rotron, who has contributed so much to the project. I am sure that his motives, too, have been questioned because at one point I myself was dubious. His original naivete about the community, coupled with an intense feeling of obligation to Woodstock, its people and surroundings, has given way to a fairly thorough knowledge of our present problems. He is definitely not motivated by a power complex, as some have thought and expressed. Any board or committee that successfully pursues its course finds much of the total load going to a few and Ben Webster on our Planning Board is such a workhorse. Those who have sometimes felt his personality as being too opinionated should not overlook his considerable contributions, many of which are only known to his close associates. Dud Summers, with an artist's eye and his experience as a resident of long standing, and Martin Comeau, with his legal background and wide knowledge of community affairs, have been of inestimable value. Carolyn Wilson, an officer of the Woodstock Artists Association and a person with wide civic interests, as a catalyst, has contributed much to the Planning Board's understanding of the community's needs and feelings. Each has been working for the Town, none for individual gain.

I am certain that the Planning Board will adopt a Growth Plan as provided by State Law, and thereafter your Town Board will undoubtedly take up the question of zoning. It is with genuine pride that I will always remember that this forward step in planning for the future health, safety, and welfare of our Woodstock neighbors has taken place during my administration.

Abram F. Molyneaux
Town Supervisor

