

Supplemental Report to HBA Members
Events Related to Our Participation in Call to the Public 10-16-2018

Further Thoughts— Tom Parshall previously provided you with a brief report on our appearance at Call to the Public with Hartland, on October 16th, and provided a link to the video of the meeting – hope you watched it (you will note that Tom and I were very respectful).

Here’s my take on this meeting, with a few quotes. Keep in mind – **this was the very first time the HBA has gone public with anything** – all prior contacts were in private meetings and emails. Our purpose was to provide one more opportunity for the Township to collaborate with us – as the desired response to our September 28th letter to the Board. (See attachment for prior efforts).

Quickly, it became apparent that two Board members (Fountain and Colaianne) were very angry with us, and **chose to be very disrespectful**. Some examples:

- When Crouse attempted to explain the purpose of HBA, Fountain interjected: **“To criticize the Township”**.
- When Crouse mentioned that a Township official, upon learning that the owner of a business providing services to his company was a member of HBA had taken his business elsewhere (obvious retribution), Colaianne interjected, justifying such action by **“That’s a private company...”**
- Colaianne – **“Yet to hear anything positive”; “Several groups within PC making changes – never saw us attending these sessions”; “Same tired claims”; “They have no clue regarding the issues on Menards”; “False reality”; “I’m tired of it and I’m tired of the HBA!”; “The HBA should take a look at its leaders.”**
- Regarding the surveys of business, it became clear that Colaianne hadn’t read them – referred to them as ancient history – dating back **“5 to 6 years ago”** (actually 2 years).

Keep in mind – *these people are our public servants*. Our only offense was to ask them to address a problem which has been clearly documented by their own surveys – upon which there has been no noticeable progress. We asked that the problem be addressed with a collaborative effort, including creation of a work plan, and new direction to the Planning Commission to create a friendlier regulatory climate in Hartland.

The Underlying Problem – *We have not yet found anyone on the Township Board that will acknowledge that a problem even exists – regarding Hartland’s regulatory climate*. We cite the clear results of the surveys, and the obvious stresses on each of the shopping centers, and receive no acknowledgment. In fact, the only direct response to such information yet received was when Fountain said (two years ago), **“Our regulations are by definition business friendly!”**

Change of Direction – Based on the open hostility demonstrated by the Township, the position tentatively adopted at our last meeting has been confirmed: that our focus has to shift to recruiting **new** Township Board members – by converting some current members to openly supporting a more business friendly posture, AND by recruiting new members who would run on a **“Make Hartland Friendly Again!”** platform.

All Board positions are up for election in 2020 - which gives us plenty of time to pursue that result.

Frank Crouse, HBA President

SUMMARY OF PRIOR HBA EFFORTS TO LAUNCH COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Meeting with Township Representatives – In early 2018, Dick Krueger and Frank Crouse met with Bill Fountain (Township Supervisor) and James Wickman (Township Manager). Later, Doug Kuhn, Tom Parshall and Frank Crouse met with Fountain and Joe Colaianne. Both meetings were attempts to start a collaborative effort aimed at the HBA's principal objective – to make it easier for Hartland's businesses to choose Hartland as a location, and to prosper here. We suggested a working approach – and asked that we work together to accomplish a work plan – which we had drafted for discussion. We have never heard back on our proposal for a collaborative effort. Once, an email was sent the morning of the day some changes to zoning regulations were proposed – without any material that could be distributed and too late for our membership to respond. That was absolutely the only response to our efforts.

Given that situation, our Board submitted a letter to the members of the Hartland Township Board, noting that the Township had not responded to its request for establishment of a Committee to address the less than friendly conditions reported by existing businesses. These conditions have been quite adequately documented in three surveys of business taken in 2012, 2014, and 2016. The Directors requested in that letter that Hartland specifically acknowledge that there was a problem, or at least significant room for improvement), agree to the establishment of a joint committee charged with a mission to make the regulatory environment more friendly, and to task the joint Committee and the Township's Planning Commission with accomplishment of that mission. It was made clear that the HBA was willing to work collaboratively with Hartland if such a project were defined.

On October 11, we received a response from Bill Fountain that recounted specific actions taken during the last several months regarding specific business situations – but which failed to mention either the collaborative effort that we had proposed to the Township, nor the development of anything like a statement of the problem or a mission statement. *The letter was completely unresponsive to our requests.*

It is the inescapable conclusion of any objective person reading the Township's own surveys of its businesses that Hartland is not business friendly. And, even without the surveys, the struggles of each of Township's shopping centers are quite obvious. Most unfortunately, to date, we have not had single member of the Township Board (privately or publicly) acknowledge to us that they believe there is a problem related to the regulation of businesses in Hartland. Nor does there seem to be any desire to make this Community more business friendly.

At each Township Board meeting, a member of the public may respectfully address the board during the Call To The Public. On Tuesday October 16th, both Tom Parshall and Frank Crouse addressed the Board regarding our recent letter. The comments were brief including a handout, and were intended to provide clarification. During Crouse's comments, both the Hartland Business Association and its leaders were treated to the following specific comments (which are in the video of the meeting)(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHj8zy_ZGHw, Frank and tom @ 1:30 Township response @ 29:00)