Diminishing Returns to Yonkers Economic Development Schemes

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brothers development properties to assay their detriment tax burden. Why are Louis Cappelli and Marc Benson given a free ride? What is the legal collateral put up by Louis Cappelli and Marc Benson?

Years later, under Mayor Mike Spano’s Administration, when Ron Shemesh became a “developer” of choice of Mayor Mike Spano, particularly with respect to the Glenwood Power Station / Trettor Park development to gain support of the Albany Delegation, specifically from New York State Senate Conference Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Mayor Mike Spano, supported by the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board members, the board authorized the go ahead to afford Senator Stewart-Cousins the ability to present CoY’s “Home Rule” message and desire to alienate parkland at Trettor Park before the summer recess closing of the New York State Legislature. This was accomplished in a demeaning of “rush, rush, and wait”, known to all military enlistees.

Now we learn that when the alienation of Trettor Park “paddie land” was mitigated using the “H & I” property, it was only for a specific segment of property. The “partial” acreage of the mitigated parkland was defined with parameters so as not to encroach on the planned Fidelco Realty Group’s planned project. The inference here is simple: Fidelco, in collusion with Mayor Spano’s City Hall, were well aware, before the New York State Legislature went into summer recess of the plan that is now on the verge of coming up the “cliff”. Which

begs the question, when did Yonkers City Hall know of the Fidelco Realty Group’s plan for “H & I” and why has it been delayed all these months? Is it that the rationale for Deputy Mayor Sue Gerry stating that while the SFC Yonkers “Master Developer” status was supposed to expire in February of 2013; Yonkers City Hall stated but never proved, much less challenged in court to as whether Fidelco’s premise that the contract is in effect until September 2013. Then again, that was Deputy Mayor Sue Gerry’s premise. Truth be told, the Master Developer Designation DiFidello delay the project because of a lack of financial wherewithal, or was the project in hold by alienation of Yonkers City Hall to serve a pending political outcome? Now that the votes have been counted and Yonkersites know were every elected official is to be ensconced on the Yonkers City Council, will the Fidelco project be delayed in order that the 2014 Yonkers City Council take their seats? Again, why? What is there to hide here? A play unraveling even before any information is shared. Is it true how Yonkers Corporation Council will transfer preference to Fidelco Realty Group to develop “H & I” under a legal framework?

Remember too, that the “H & I” property was an indiction to the “Master Developer” status designated to SFC Yonkers for completion of the $1.6 billion project. Specifically, “H & I” was to be built after a commercial / residential high-rise on Chicken Island was completed. Mayor Mike Spano has induced Fidelco to “develop” “H & I” without a rational inducement that benefits CoY, and without a legal basis for developing “H & I”. Why did DiFidello get so much and CoY is left with nothing?

Yonkers Tribune has learned that the “H & I” property intended for development by Fidelco will be an impropior to 325 units, consisting of between 5 to 7 stories. The scraw tactics used by SFC Yonkers years ago that suggested a wall of high-rise buildings would create a corridor denying Yonkersites access to the majestic views of the Palisades shimering in the glowing Hudson River was disastrous and worse still, never studied. It was studied, the prospect of a high-rise would never have entered anyone image for “H & I”. Why the deceit?

It seems only 5 to 7 stories may be built; not 21 stories as professed. The reason for the reduced height is because the property upon which the structure would rest requires extremely expensive bolstering structures to maintain a greater weight burden. In fact, the Yonkers Pier, with the anticipated burden demanded by the restaurant built into its figure was as expensive as if it was, $10 million to be exact, because it had to be bolstered at such great costs.

Here, too, Yonkersites were denied knowledge of the development planned within its city limits. Yonkersites were kept in the dark, yet Sentic Hudson has signed off on the project “H & I” project promoted by Fidelco and Mayor Mike Spano. It seems clear that Yonkersites have yet to receive the memo. Let’s keep this telling between “you and I”.

The Land Development Agreement (LDA) regarding “H & I” raised a brouhaha when Cappelli Vice-President Joe Apicella lashed out about not permitting an afford- able housing component in the “H & I” dwelling yet to be built.

Typical of “spinmeisters” for creating an “issue of concern” that is non-existent because it was not studied. We studied it, the lie over height would not have gained traction; even so, that is all that people spoke about. The spin deflected people’s attention from the true concerns that were never discussed. The other reason is that 325 units will not be sufficient to generate enough density to bring about vitality to the waterfront.

Further, how was the “Master Developer” status spoken about and referred to by Deputy Mayor Sue Gerry as a still viable legal structure pertinent to the most recent Fidelco concept has been likely extended beyond its expiration of either February 2013, September 2013, and the signing of the LDA. Mike Major Mike Spano is demanding a rabbi tax from Yonkers Corporation Counsel. Was a “Request for Proposal” ever engaged for the development of “H & I”? Why not?

What CoY oversight was given the soon to be proposed project? What city departments were they? As is done in math- ematics courses in elementary school, the telling is in the process, not in the answer because the answer does not lead to a trail of excellence in thinking and procedure and prevents scrutiny otherwise. What school did these “wizards” attend that they have been able to stray from the rigor of protocol and acceptable standards Mayor Mike Spano?

The “Master Developer” status bestowed upon SFC Yonkers and its succes- sive evolution names came to its demise based on the designation of a final expiration date; whether it was judged to be February or September of 2013 mentioned above or the LDA that preceded those dates. More importantly, the contract is a fraud because it was simply an “option” to buy and resold which no deposit was ever made. It was not consummated. If it was, as long alleged by former Mayor Phil Amico’s entourage of thieves, Yonkers has a right to see proof of payment. Show us the money? If you can find it, perhaps Mayor Amico should return the almost $500,000 he was person- ally responsible to pay dispersed by a federal court judge. Sue him for the money or jail him or both. Prefer the latter.

The Yonkers Tribune calls for public access to any contract regarding Fidelco Realty Group and / or its successor so as to ascertain all financial aspects of the project, as well as the deadlines that must be met to abide by every contractual term agreed and appropriate to such a project, with monetary recourse for failure to meet project deadlines, as well as a guarantee of completion and a fifty-year ability to weather the elements of decay.

Will the 2014 Yonkers City Council know to the “plan” to build “H & I”, because the soon to be seated 2014 Yonkers City Council will serve Mayor Mike Spano or they will serve the public interest. Stay- tuned.

The Common Core is a Bad Fit for Westchester

By Asst. Prof. NICHOLAS TAMPIO

Each spring, the Rein Neck school district publishes a newsletter announcing where the seniors are going to college. On the cover of the most recent issue states a picture of the valedictorian and the salutatorian heading it, respectively. Cornell and MIT. Inside, we learn that other graduates are going to schools such as Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and SUNY Cortland. An outstanding minority-top-five percent of the graduating class is going to college.

Our family moved to Westchester, in part to take advantage of its schools. Also, we are witnessing the local school district decline right before our eyes, for a very simple reason: the Common Core. Here are four reasons why the Common Core is a bad fit for Westchester.

The Common Core Standards Curriculum

Proponents of the Common Core explain that it is a set of standards and not a curriculum. Yes and no. The federal and state government does not write our school curriculum. Our school system works with corporate educational vendors. A few years ago, our district made a concerted effort to serve fresh rather than canned food in the cafeteria. Insensibly, we are reversing direction in the classroom: teachers must now serve, and students must now consume. Teachers are faced with a flawed curriculum. To understand why this is a problem, consider its effects on teachers and students.

The Common Core Demoralizes Teachers

Many teachers and their school district have advanced degrees and excellent reputations among parents. Our school district has a diverse population, and parents expect teachers to tailor the material to each student. Unfortunately, the Common Core gives teachers minimal discretion about what or how to teach. Last year, a sales representa- tive told a group of parents that teachers may not replace a single unit of the ELA curricu- lum. We are no longer treating teachers like skilled professionals.

Why is it a problem for a teacher, say, to give kindergarteners the same assign- ment? Children start kindergarten between the age of four and six. Four year olds are still learning to follow the rules of any game and play with their peers. They should learn letter recognition and phonics before being expected to read or write. Child psycholo- gists such as Megan Knochuck have warned that the Common Core standards are develop- mentally inappropriate, particularly for the earliest grades. Teachers see this and suffer and yet are forced to stay on track with the curriculum.

The Common Core Bores Students

Advocates of the Common Core are correct that it is rigorous. Rigor, from the Latin word for “stoicheion” or “rods”, simply means ineffable. The Common Core dedi- cates a large percentage of the school day to drills that bear little resemblance to what teachers do at a good liberal arts college. The Common Core requires schools to dedicate a large portion of the day to ELA. As a result, students have less time for subjects such as social studies, computer science, U.S. history, European history, chem- istry, Spanish, physical education, drama, art, and music. The Common Core goes “deeper”
The Common Core is a Bad Fit for Westchester

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into a few subjects, but the crux of this focus is that students do not get exposed to many interesting topics that create a well-rounded individual.

The Common Core, furthermore, promotes a drab pedagogy called “cold reading.” A typical Common Core assignment contains a piece of informational text followed by multiple-choice questions and an essay question that requires a formulaic response. This technique does not teach students to create something new, consider a topic from several points of view, or do research. This pedagogy is called “cold reading” because it does not presuppose possessing knowledge about, for example, history or science. In other words, the Common Core curricular content is so much as a kind of reading. style.

I ignore the rhetoric about the Common Core. Look what it actually does to schools.

What you’ll see is that it makes school a dreary place to prepare for standardized tests.

The Common Core is Undemocratic

It would be one thing if our school district deliberated and chose the Common Core. But virtually no parent in our school district knew about the Common Core until it was rolled out in 2012. How did this happen?

In 2010, during the height of the financial crisis, Governor David Patterson submitted a Race to the Top application that committed New York to the Common Core. The Common Core standards were written by a handful of people at a Washington, D.C. organization called Achieve. The copyright to the Common Core is held by two trade organizations, the National Governor’s Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Prior to the Common Core, New York parents could raise concerns or make suggestions about the curriculum before the local school board. Now, the community has little say in how we educate our children.

The Common Core promises to make a few individuals and corporations wealthy. But America is a democracy, not a plutocracy. Ordinary citizens should have a voice in how their children are educated. Educated officials have a responsibility to make this possible.

Nicholas Tampo is assistant professor with the Department of Political Science at Fordham University’s Bronx Campus http://faxy.fordham.edu/tampo/

Notes and Quotes on the Annual Journey of the Mind into Darkness

By GLENN SLABY

It comes around the tail end of August. The slight knocking on the back of conscience though. A little nudging at first, telling that change is coming, that particular, annual uncomfortable change - again.

Autumn hath all the summer’s fruitful treasure;
Gone is our sport, fled is our Cyprian pleasure.
Short days, sharp days, long nights come on apace;
Ah, who shall hide us from the winter’s fall?
Childish innocence, the ides will not cease,
And here we lie, God knows, with little ease.
Cold doth increase, the sickness will not cease,
Short days, sharp days, long nights come on apace.

Autumn challenges us to retain our
sight of normalcy with the calamity of the
winter. The sun makes its last appearance;

The sun sets and makes its last appearance
in northern climates, are a
lethargy, for others it means the onset of
winter disorders are the more
marked form. Another 14 percent of the
adult US population suffers from SAD, occurs with our earth’s cycles around
the sun. Winter disorders are the more
insidious, and it compounds daily, that it’s
impossible to wake up at night. The fig is like a
cage-without a key.

—Elizabeth Wurtzel, Prozac Nation

Notes and Quotes on the Annual Journey of the Mind into Darkness

Diagnosis and treatment suggestions best come from a doctor. When seeing any doctor be prepared with a list of medications, moods, patterns, and questions. There are three basic categories of treatment as per the web sites: medicinal, light therapy, and psychotherapy.

Some easy things to do are opening up the blinds, putting more lights on and
get out of bed as soon as possible. Do not

“Six percent of the US population, primarily in northern climates, are affected by SAD in its most marked form. Another 14 percent of the adult US population suffers from a lesser form of seasonal mood changes, known as winter blues. If one family member is suffering strongly from this ailment but the fall and winter months are the only times of the year when I do not complain (too much) about lights being left on in unoccupied and adjacent rooms. Also, I do most of my writing and some hobbies – jigsaw puzzles – near a window, avoiding that
loneliness that comes from an enclosed space. In the meanwhile, be and stay active, and get out of bed as soon as possible. Do not linger, for before you know it another
day has passed.

I didn’t want to wake up. I was having a much better time asleep. And that’s really sad. It was almost like a reverse nightmare, like

moodsiness, anxiety, hopelessness, over-
napping, craving carbs, weight gain, feeling
group, loss of interest in one’s usual
activities and daytime fatigue. The http://
mayoclinic.com list other complications and issues such as suicidal thoughts and
behaviors, social withdrawal, school or work
problems and substance abuse. It may also
be difficult to diagnose between S.A.D. and
non-seasonal depression - a listing, invisible, hell, flooding itself at our minds,
terrorizing souls, trying to corrupt the
core of our very being.

That’s the thing about depression: A human being can survive almost anything, as long
as she sees the end in sight. But depression is
ever ending, and it compounds daily, that it’s
impossible to wake up at night. The fig is like a
cage-without a key.

—Ned Vizzini, It’s Kind of a Funny
Story

I am only a patient. All the information I have gathered here is from and available through your local library, various web sites and medical professionals. Please, if you believe there is the slightest chance you or someone you love may have any form / type of mental illness do NOT

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