

## Google Groups

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### Town of Ulysses News

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**Elizabeth Thomas** <supervisor@ulysses.ny.us>

May 17, 2017 3:00 PM

Posted in group: **town-of-Ulysses**

Hello Ulysses,

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**TOWN OF ULYSSES NEWS:**

**FROM THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE:**

The 2017 Dog Census is in full effect! We have a great response rate so far and hope that it continues. Thank you to all who have responded! As a reminder, responses are due by May 31, 2017. Link to our webpage for more information as well as an easy on-line response form. <http://www.ulysses.ny.us/departments/dept-clerk/clerk-dog-control/>

**CODE ENFORCEMENT-An update on houses in disrepair**

--Written by Nancy Zahler, Tom Myers and Liz Thomas

You may have noticed some changes in the landscape around the Town of Ulysses. In 2014, the

Jacksonville Community Association urged the Town Board to do more to strengthen building and maintenance code enforcement in the hamlet and throughout the Town. Since then, the Town Board has made several changes in the Town's Code Enforcement Law to strengthen our local law, to better explain the enforcement process, and to increase penalties. When the Town's new Code Enforcement Officer Tom Myers was hired in 2016 he compiled a list of properties that have been identified as problems and developed a list of criteria to determine which were the most important to address first. He has begun to systematically address the highest priority properties by first sending letters to property owners alerting them to violations and offering to help resolve those issues. Working together with property owners, a number of long-standing issues have been resolved.

One of the most visible changes was the demolition of the property at 1858 Jacksonville Road. The old white store, previously known as Moe's National Brands general store operated until it was sold in the 1970s as a residence. It has changed hands a number of times and was purchased in a tax sale a number of years ago. While the demolition of this property that longtime residents remember fondly as Moe's Store took place quickly, the process leading to this decision took several years. The owner discovered after the purchase that the lot was too small to install a Health Department-approved septic system, making it impossible to use the property. As it continued to deteriorate, it became a public hazard. The Town condemned it and worked with the owner to help arrange for demolition, which occurred on March 29, 2017. The owner has agreed to smooth and re-seed the lot, using surplus fill available from the Town Highway Department.

Three homes tragically burned beyond repair on Falls Rd, Trumansburg Rd in Jacksonville, and Halseyville Rd, have been demolished to eliminate hazards. Two other homes that were seriously neglected have been sold and the new owner is going to take them down soon.

The enforcement process can be quite slow. There are periods of time allowed between initial notification, requests for compliance, notice of violation, court appearance tickets being issued, going to court, and final resolution. Not all these steps will necessarily happen, but can if the process is not cooperative.

After the Town finishes working on its top tier priorities, the next set of properties that have serious violations will be reviewed. Bringing the identified properties into Code compliance is and will continue to be an ongoing, developing process. In addition to working down the priority list, new properties will be added as they are identified. Currently the list contains 33 properties; 4 are now demolished, 5 are in the active process of being required to be brought to Code compliance.

To learn more about Town Zoning and Building Codes or to report a property with serious concerns, visit the Town's website at

<http://www.ulysses.ny.us/departments/zone/>

**FROM THE TOWN SUPERVISOR**

## Are We a Welcoming Community? Housing Discrimination Based on Income

-written by Town Supervisor, Liz Thomas

Recently in both Trumansburg and Jacksonville, concerns have been raised about allowing low income people or families into new developments in the community. This is troubling to me in a number of ways.

Studies have shown that mixed income housing is a stabilizing force for those who would otherwise be living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty. Noted are decreases in crime, improvement in educational outcomes, less exposure to violence, lower teen pregnancy, and more opportunities for good-paying work. As the Kirwan Institute studying this topic notes, "Neighborhood racial and economic segregation is segregation from opportunities critical to quality of life, financial stability and social advancement."

The U.S. Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing across the country on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability. Under this federal act, based on these groups, it is illegal to: refuse to rent or sell housing; refuse to negotiate for housing or make it unavailable; set different terms for housing; set different conditions or privileges for sale or rental; or falsely deny that housing is available for sale or rental. Unfortunately, income is not part of the U.S. Fair Housing Act, and although many states have additional regulations that prohibit discrimination based on income, New York does not. States have tried to use techniques, such as Section 8 housing vouchers, to incentivize low income residents to move to higher income neighborhoods knowing that a mix of incomes provides improved societal benefits for all.

Housing affordability is an active topic across the county right now, with most local governments working together to find solutions to the high cost of housing for both middle and low income residents.

As this topic is currently before us, all residents need to consider, are we a community that accepts those who are different? Will we act as mentors and reach out to those who differ either by income, race, disability, sexual orientation, or other status? Or are we a community that fears those who are not like us, and will we work to subtly restrict groups from moving here? I would hope the majority feels that a community based on diversity offers a richness that a homogeneous society does not. Can Trumansburg and Ulysses consider themselves welcoming communities to all? I hope so.

If you are against discrimination, please let your local elected officials know.

Briggs, X. d. S (Ed.) (2005). *The Geography of Opportunity: Race and Housing Choice in Metropolitan America*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press; Dreier, P., Mollenkopf, J., & Swanstrom, T. (2004) *Place Matters: Metropolitcs for the Twenty-first Century*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press; Sampson, R. J., Morenoff, J. D., & Gannon-Rowley, T. (2002). Assessing "Neighborhood Effects": Social Processes and New Directions in Research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28: 443-78; Ellen, I. G. & Turner, M. A. (1997). Does Neighborhood Matter? Assessing Recent Evidence. *Housing Policy Debate*, 8 (4): 833-866.

and

<http://www.kirwaninstitute.org/research/opportunity-communities/>

### **Board of Assessment Reviews – Deadline for Appeals**

The Board of Assessment Reviews will hear assessment grievances from Ulysses residents on Friday, May 19 from 3-6pm at the Ulysses Town Hall. The deadline for appealing assessments is May 23, 2017.

For more information, contact Tompkins County Assessment department at 274-5517.

### **Homeowners Encouraged to Practice Sustainable Lawn Care to Protect State Waterbodies**

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is urging New Yorkers to practice sustainable lawn-care by reducing fertilizer use, especially fertilizer containing phosphorus as more than 100 bodies of water in NYS cannot be used or enjoyed as a result of too much phosphorus. "By choosing sustainable lawn care, homeowners are helping protect water quality and public health," said DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos. "Excess phosphorous is causing problems in many NY waterbodies making them unusable for swimming, fishing or as a source of drinking water.

Phosphorus applied to lawns that do not need it will not be used and can cause water pollution. Regardless of the location, excess phosphorus from lawns can wash off and pollute lakes and streams.

Consumers can review fertilizer bag labels for phosphorus content by looking at the 3 bold numbers on the label, such as 22-0-15. A zero in the middle indicates it contains no phosphorus.

Other measures to promote a healthy lawn without using phosphorus include

- landscaping with native plants
- use organic lawn treatments
- treat lawns with a thin layer of compost
- cut grass no shorter than 3 inches to help them compete against weeds.
- leave lawn clippings on lawn

Visit the DEC's helpful resources to learn more:

Sustainable Landscaping

Lawn Care

Look for Zero Lawn Fertilizer

**VILLAGE OF TRUMANSBURG NEWS:**

**Sign up for 2017 Summer Recreation Program**

Forms are now available for the 2017 Summer Rec. Program (Playschool, Swim bus, Sports etc) at <http://trumansburg-ny.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Summer-Rec-registration-2017.pdf>

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**TOMPKINS COUNTY NEWS:**

**Bicentennial events:**

Tompkins County is celebrating its bicentennial this year and has events planned around the county over the next few months. Visit their website here to see what's happening: <http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/tc200/upcomingevents>.

**UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS: (All are open to the public and meet at the Town Hall)**

Democracy depends on citizen involvement! Grab a friend and drop in to a meeting to see what's happening.

All town meetings are held at the town hall at 10 Elm St., Trumansburg, unless noted otherwise.

For agendas and other meeting information, click on the event on the calendar here: <http://ulysses.ny.us/calendar/?category=Government>

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**DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY CALENDAR!**

Check our community calendar at <http://www.ulysses.ny.us/calendar/>. You can also submit your own events.

Respectfully from the staff and elected officials at the Town of Ulysses

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Forward this message to anyone else that you think would be interested. We'd love to connect with more residents. To send questions or comments, or be removed from this list, please e-mail [clerk@ulysses.ny.us](mailto:clerk@ulysses.ny.us)

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