

I would like to take this opportunity to make some personal comments on the recent rezoning on Highway 52 in the Granite Place development.

The Board discovered early in the rezoning process that there had been administrative errors made by previous staff. Once realized, we moved to correct those errors. Unfortunately, these errors caused the whole process to appear unprofessional and disorganized. The Board made staff changes to begin the process of reviewing our zoning ordinance to be sure nothing like that would happen in the future. Our entire zoning ordinance was reviewed and discussed at length by the board. At the time I thought we had done a good job. But after our last planning board meeting, I have come to the realization that we still have work to do.

When the issue of rezoning first came up in the Granite Place subdivision last year, many concerns were voiced by local residents. The one issue that I personally was concerned about was traffic on 52. I was worried about it 20 years ago and I still am. I had been assured over the years that access to the site could be controlled by the requirements of the State DOT, with the final decision resting with the Town Board through our zoning ordinances.

The board in the 1990's spent both time and money to build streets and utilities off of 52 as a way to protect the residents and traveling public.

It was with those assurances that I felt I could support rezoning both 20 years ago and last year.

When I attended the planning board meeting on March 20, it was to hear public comment and the discussion of the planning board members. I did not speak at that time since I thought we would be discussing it tonight. Two days later I was informed that the Board would not be voting on the drive way access issue. That because of the way our ordinance is written there is really nothing that can be done once certain requirements are met by the petitioner.

Unfortunately this fact was buried in the text of our zoning ordinance. I did not catch it and that is my fault. It will not happen again.

The only reason I felt safe with any rezoning in this area was with the fact that we could at least control curb cuts onto 52. Had I known last year what I now know, I would not have supported rezoning in that area.

I want to urge my fellow board members that we need to further review our ordinances to be sure that any future decisions similar to this come to the Board of Aldermen for a final decision and no one else, if at all possible.