

Public Hearing
January 9, 2013 5:15 p.m.

Chairman Grattidge called the hearing to order.

The Clerk read the notice of public hearing on “the disposition of the Maplewood Manor Nursing Home, a 277-bed nursing facility located in the Village of Ballston Spa, New York (the “Facility”), such Facility being more particularly described as an approximately 15.49 acre parcel of real property identified as Tax Parcel No. 216.00-3-9, and located at 149 Ballston Avenue, Ballston Spa, New York 12020, including all buildings, improvements and operational equipment and personal property located thereon. The Disposition of the Facility shall include two adjoining parcels of real property owned by the County of Saratoga (the “County”), to wit: Tax Parcel #216.48-3-3.1 consisting of 1.01 acres in the Village of Ballston Spa, and Tax Parcel #216.56-1-4 consisting of .09 acres in the Town of Ballston (the “Adjacent Parcels”). The proposed Disposition would involve the Sale and/or Lease of the Facility and Adjacent Parcels by the County to the Maplewood Manor Local Development Corporation, a not-for-profit local development corporation duly established pursuant to N-PCL Section 1411, subject to the County’s retained interest to operate the Facility.”

Chairman Grattidge told all in attendance the Rules of the Public Hearing and then called the speakers in the order they signed up.

Barbara Thomas, 220 West Milton Road, Ballston Spa, NY 12020: Started by commending her Supervisor Dan Lewza and the other Supervisors who voted against the development of the LDC. She said she is opposed to the transfer of Maplewood to the LDC as a way to borrow money for the operating costs of the facility. She requested that the operating costs for Maplewood be included in next year’s budget and every budget going forward until the nursing home is sold. She also requested that any contract contain a clause that says the purchasing entity continue operating it as a nursing home for at least 10 years after the sale. If this does not happen, then the facility will revert back to the County.

Dennis Kaups, 12C Cass Court, Round Lake, NY 12019: He said his first experience with a nursing home came this past year and he was blown away by the exceptional services at Maplewood Manor. He has two questions. The County has a budget a little over \$300M that means that a little over 3% reductions elsewhere would cover the deficit. Secondly, everyone hates taxes but has it been considered that this become a ballot question to the County. Would the taxpayers be willing to pay a little bit more to keep it going.

Cliff Ammon, 238 Nelson Ave., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: Shame shame on the supervisors who seem pre-programmed to dump our most inactive citizens by privatizing Maplewood Manor. He said the supervisors have not fulfilled the obligation to the residents of the facility. The supervisors are bound to get rid of this critically important asset. Where was the oversight of Maplewood in the past 10 or 15 years. Either the Board has been derelict in not overseeing or remiss in not assigning the task to the County Administrator or if assigned the County Administrator is guilty of neglect. He said the Board has stated they would have to raise taxes to save Maplewood yet the Board boasts it has the lowest taxes in the State. He told the Board to raise taxes and that he would be willing to pay an extra \$10 a month or so. He said he was involved in a study last year with regards to this subject, he found the salary and services provided went down. He said this is not over and there will be a petition circulated to put it to vote.

Tino Liggero, 13 Lakeview Road, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: He said his mother is a resident of Maplewood Manor. He frequently visits his mother and got to know the residents and staff. He encouraged the Supervisors to visit the facility, if they haven’t already, and walk the hallways and see what goes on during all shifts. He said 13 months ago he was at the same podium telling supervisors that he had contacted Chris Gibson’s office and was told that any grants submitted would be spot checked and follow up calls made. He thanked Joann Yepsen for starting the group.

Dorothy Tyler, 63 Loudon Road, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: Her mother's home is Maplewood Manor. She has not been able to find one positive and successful example of a County run nursing home privatizing in NYS recently. Two have closed their doors and others have numerous citations. Orange County has slowed down the process to take time. If you don't have a solid plan, why are you going forward. If you don't have a plan on how to take care of future Medicaid patients in this county, why are you going forward. If you care so deeply about the residents, why haven't you openly and honestly answered questions and initiated meetings with the residents. Meeting with just a few residents is not caring. She asked the Board to put themselves in their shoes for just a few minutes. She thanked the Supervisors that met with them and listened. She asked the Supervisors to slow down the process and answer the questions. On January 15th vote not only with your budget in mind but also with the citizens of this county. They will be working on a permissive referendum.

Ann Sheppard, 9 Kirby Road #31, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: She came on to this subject quite lately. She is a social worker who has worked in nursing homes for the past four years and is very impressed with Maplewood Manor. She said in County homes like this, the residents there are the ones that aren't taken care of by their cultures. This is a necessary part of the culture to take care of the ones that are most needy.

Sam Brewor, 109 Gilbert Road, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak. He views this subject a little differently. He believes it undermines the democratic institution. He said he got this opinion after he came back from serving overseas. He got a call from a friend that one of his friends had been shot. After 6 months he took himself off life support because he did not want to be a burden on his family or society. He views this issue as the same issue here. The bonds that form a country together are the ones that develop when someone is vulnerable and we have an obligation to care for those people. This process is not a democratic process. It's a totalitarian process which you don't know what it is until you have been in service and return home. He urged the Board to not go forward with the LDC and encouraged the Board to do a permissive referendum.

Rev. John Ekman, 40 Bump Hill Road, Greenfield: He asked how many remembered Barkersville. He said it was the County Nursing Home and was in deep need. Tom Clements was Chairman of the Board when Maplewood Manor was built. His wife lived at Maplewood for many years before being transferred to Wesley. Tom was always proud and grateful for that facility. When he goes there, the facility is clean, doesn't smell, the workers care and have energy, and has yet to see a bad apple in the bunch. He said when the private/profit company comes in the salaries and care of the patients suffers. This facility is a treasure that a Republican board built many years ago. And once it's gone it's gone. He urged the Board to not complete the sale.

Joe McMullen, CSEA: He said he is at the hearing on behalf of the families in the facility and of Saratoga County and the CSEA members that work there. He's not sure why the counties around NYS are looking at selling their nursing homes. Around the country they are not. Since when are nursing homes meant to make money. They are there to take care of the elderly when they can not afford an alternative. Delaware County sold their home and has since closed their doors after many citations from the State. He strongly suggests that a vote by all County residents be considered prior to the sale of the facility. You have to look to the future and not put it up to a private company.

Kathy Garrison, CSEA, Town of Wilton: She said she has been through this fight in other counties and other areas and always seems to turn out the same. The materials are presented, studies are done and when you go around the room everyone says the services are to be commended, they are the best. The beds are needed and the employees are doing a good job but it can no longer be afforded. She said the supervisors are turning their back on their own constituents. Supervisors should not feel like the enemy. They should talk to the employees and talk to the residents. These are the people who have worked on your campaigns and got you elected to sit in those seats. She asked the supervisors to stop the process and do the right thing. A private non profit or for profit company will buy Maplewood and when that

happens things will change. They will serve garbage food. Ask Fulton County. It's happened there. She asked the Board to stop the process and work with them.

Mike Richau, 7 Timothy Drive, Schuylerville, NY: He is disheartened by the current trend in society. There was a time when families took care of families. This is a thing of the past and now we have the nursing home system. Now that it's too hard to do that they are hearing sorry, too bad, you are on your own. He doesn't think the answer is to walk away. Seniors have paid their taxes to support the services provided by the Government. Now that they need the services they aren't being provided any more. It's just wrong. Government has a morale obligation to protect their citizens. Serve humanity, it is our job, it's your job. He said he is pretty sure that everyone in the room and everyone in the County would be willing to pay \$10 a month or \$100 a year if that's what it took.

Nick Berardi, 4645 Route 50, Gansevoort: He said for the last 10 months he has spoken before the Board. He said before you guys cast your votes, you need to look at the broad picture that is going on. Now everything has come to a head. He said that they were told if ideas were brought you would listen. That hasn't happened. Us as a union is willing to make concessions, it's never happened. You guys have already made up your minds on what you're gonna do. It's a sad day in this County when our dogs and cats become more expendable than our senior citizens. You are all elected to your positions, and that can all change. It can all change in the matter of a vote just like the one we are asking you to make now. We are asking you to keep the County running the nursing home and not sell out our seniors. That's what I am asking.

Pat Reed, 12 Clubhouse Drive, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866: She said she is opposed to Maplewood Manor being transferred to an LDC and sold. If there is the will on this Board, you can find a way to solve the problems and continue to keep Maplewood a pliable County run nursing home.

Thomas Day, 147 North Main Street, Mechanicville: He said he has been a Maplewood Manor Nursing Home employee for the last 22.5 years. Beside that his grandmother was a resident there. His dad was there every day. He said he wasn't going to try to change the minds of the Supervisors cause he knows their all set but he wanted to say thank you to the people who spoke to try to change your minds. He said he was brought up with three morals. One, you take care of your kids. Two, you take care of your veterans. And, three, we take care of our elderly. He said if it wasn't for the elderly we wouldn't have what we have now. Some day all of you will be elderly and where will you all be. A lot of families don't have millions of dollars to take care of their families at home. Private nursing homes aren't what you think they are. His grandmother had been in other homes and she had bruising. So they put her in Maplewood and all that changed. He said shame on us. For the almost 23 years he has been there, the care has been great, the staff has been awesome but in the last year there has been fear and caused retirement which has cause shortness of staff. Shame on you for letting this happen. You need to stand up for what was right and not about the money.

Chairman Grattidge asked if the Clerk received any written correspondence. There was none.

Chairman Grattidge adjourned the Public Hearing at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Hargrave, Clerk