

## **Dear Friends and Neighbors,**

*I have been honored to serve as your President for the last four years. We have made great progress in the operations of our Village, transparency and participation, and preserving our unique rural, equestrian, and open space character. But there is still much work to be done. Working with our Trustees and the many volunteers on our committees, we can continue to keep Barrington Hills one of the most unique communities in the country.*

*The primary issue in this election is simple:*

- *Should we continue to preserve Barrington Hills as a unique rural, equestrian, wild life, open space community of close neighbors, or*
- *Should we negotiate with developers for their convenience?*

*I wanted to make clear two main issues that have had some confusion surrounding them:*

1. *the Duda Disconnections – why we won and why oppose developers who wish to break our zoning, and*
2. *the sound Financial Health of the Village*

*I invite you to read through this letter and if you have any questions please contact me through [www.BobAbboud.com](http://www.BobAbboud.com). I look forward to your vote on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and your support of Trustee Gohl, Trustee Ramesch, and Peter Wessel.*

*You can be sure that I will continue to protect and preserve the unique character of the Village of Barrington Hills without compromise.*

## **The Duda Disconnections: Why We Won!**

Most of you are aware of the disconnections by the Duda/James team involving two major parcels of land stretching from Chapel Road on the north to County Line Road on the south. It runs east and west from the western boarder of the Village adjacent to Algonquin, and east beyond the power lines in certain spots.

These disconnections were precipitated under the previous Village President. Mr. Schueppert says he wants to return to this same style of Village management, which would make us vulnerable to continued disconnections, ultimately threatening every acre of land in our Village.

Mr. Hayward, a Village resident and attorney brought this development to us. He originally represented Mr. Duda in 2000 before I was on the board, and Mr. Hayward assisted with helping to attempt to develop the land at densities and composition inconsistent with our Village's comprehensive plan and vision.

Disconnection from the Village was a key component of the developer's overall plan. Mr. Hayward continues to have a strong relationship with Mr. Duda and Mr. Schueppert, including raising money for Mr. Schueppert's campaign.

While we still have more work to do, the Villages character, its unique zoning, and the property values within the Village and surrounding communalities have been protected.

Let me make clear some facts on the Duda case.

**1. The current zoning of both Duda / James parcels is 40 acre, Agriculture A-1 in McHenry County.**

- There is no application before the County Board on a new plan and McHenry County and Algonquin have both advised the developer to return to Barrington Hills.
- Duda / James have no authority to build anything on this site.

**2. Barrington Hills is close to an agreement with Duda to bring ALL the property back into the Village at R-1 (5 acre) zoning with a few properties in the 2-3 acre range under our R-2 (3 acre) / R-3 (2 acre) zoning.**

- The Duda / James group is most likely waiting until after the election since people with close relationships to them are helping to fund Mr. Schueppert's campaign.
- We are working with the Duda / James group getting soil samples and borings to complete a land use plat for return of the property back to the Village.

**3. The 2008 total Duda expenditures were: \$48,126.97. As compared to:**

- **The total 2008 legal bill for the Village, including Police, was \$937,106.54**
- The total 2008 expenditures in all budget items for the Village was \$8,953,558.26.

**4. Barrington Hills has controlling jurisdiction 1.5 miles from its borders by state statute and we have a boundary agreement with Algonquin giving us sole municipal authority on the jurisdiction covering the Duda / James properties.**

**5. The McHenry County Board and the adjacent and nearby communities are all in very strong support of Barrington Hills' position on the land use.**

- The Village of BH WON the ZBA hearing at McHenry County with a unanimous vote in favor of the Village.
- Mr. Schueppert attended only 2 of the 18 hearings and never spoke in favor of the Village.
- Mr. Schueppert never bothered to read the case transcripts on the most important land use case in the history of the Village so he was unprepared when the Village took the confirming vote.
- Because of our efforts, we won decisively at the County Board supporting the Village and the MC ZBA hearing votes.

**Much has been made of our 'losses' regarding the Duda cases. *Nothing could be further from the truth.***

If we had 'lost', hundreds of homes in a development inconsistent with our character would be sitting unsold or only partially finished on the property today. Sort of a higher density version of South Barrington east of Rt 59, south of Penny Road.

As residents, our property values would have been crushed, we would have had to cover millions of dollars in roads and infrastructural improvements, more stress on our police department, and loss of our character and Village brand.

**So if we lost these court cases, why can't the developer develop the property for his sole profit?**

Part of the changes we made in Village government from 2005 to today was to create protective functions covering a wide domain of methods including legal, political, planning, health and safety, media, legislative, and grass roots efforts. By coordinating all these different mechanisms, into a solid front we were able to achieve protection of our zoning and character. All these other mechanisms, working alongside with the effort we put forth on in legal arena carried the day.

In the end, we were able to **WIN** decisive victories at both the ZBA and subsequently the McHenry County Board rejecting the plans from the developer for high-density housing. This took some 18 meetings, which were heavily attended by Village residents. I cannot say enough good things about their participation in the process. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about Mr. Schueppert:

- Having attended only **2** of the **18** meetings,
- **Never spoke** in favor of the Village, as he was asked to speak by the President.
- **After 6 months of effort by the community never bothered to read the case transcripts** causing us to have to hold up the Village Board proceedings on a confirmatory vote.

Because we worked closely with Algonquin and McHenry County, we were able to form a strong alliance with the County and surrounding communities providing a united front on next steps. Barrington Hills, and surrounding jurisdictions all believe that the disconnections were not helpful to the region and that the property should be returned to the Village, and zoned consistent with Barrington Hills zoning. To that end, Mayor Schmitt of Algonquin and Chairman Koehler of McHenry County worked with the Village to discuss future plans with the developer.

The current status is that we are close to an agreement that will bring all of the land back into the Village and any development will be consistent with our character. Since those with the developer's interests are helping to fund Mr. Schueppert's campaign, it's perfectly logical that the developer is waiting until after the election to sign off on any re-annexation agreement.

### **Why do we fight developers who do not conform to our Comprehensive Plan and Zoning?**

There are 3 major disconnections we are dealing with at the moment: Duda I, Duda II, and Iatarola on the SE corner of the Village. Because we vigorously protect our borders, we protect the character of the Village for all residents, we keep your taxes low by limiting the need for new infrastructure including roads, police, fire, and schools; reduce traffic congestion; and we protect your property values by limiting the number of unsold and half completed homes. Municipalities that have not challenged aggressive developers are now saddled with unsold and half finished housing stock that cheapens the overall value of the community.

Because we have been vigilant in these cases, other developers have shied away from challenging our Village and its dedicated residents. This has saved us money

and protected our character and community. Because we have been conservative in development and stuck to a plan that forms the basis of the Village character and vision, we are as well prepared as possible to weather the very serious situation in the economy today.

The fact is that while we did not receive judgment in a number of court cases in our favor, these are only battles in a larger war. These court cases provided valuable information and case law that is critical to changing the state statute on disconnection (65 IL-CS 736) to a more balanced position and protection community planning. We are working with a large array of municipalities to change this statute and protect our community in the future.

Some of you may think that because you are not adjacent to an 'edge' or Village boundary, you are safe from the behavior of those developers who have little regard for community. Ask the residents who live near the western end of Otis road what they think about the development that stripped the land of its trees in direct violation of the Village code. Ask the residents near Lake Cook and Ridge road who stood strong on a development and protected our Comprehensive Plan and equestrian trail system. I can go on with a long list of zoning issues deep within the heart of the Village. To sell out the edges is simply to create a new edge deeper within the Village.

All Barrington Hills residents have a right to enjoy the character of the Village and I and our supporting Trustee candidates will continue to fight for that preservation.

### *The Healthy Financial Position of the Village*

The Village is in its best financial health in the recent history.

I appreciate that there is some rhetoric being thrown about regarding our fund balances. Below is the chart of reserve funds posted in the Winter 2006 newsletter on our Village WEB site. Walter Smithe, chairman of Finance Committee, wrote the article in 2006.

**Note that our current average Fund Balance over the course this year (12 months Jan to Dec 2009) will be \$1.4M.**

As you can see, this number is right in line with our historical finances. The highest fund balances the Village has ever had have been while I have been President since April of 2005. In fact, in November of 2006, we were so high in fund balance, Trustee Schuppert, and Trustee Smithe, who sit with me on the Finance Committee, voted to lower our fund balance by reducing tax 2007 and 2008 revenue from property taxes.

Frankly, fund balance is not a good metric of overall fiscal health any more than looking at your checking account to determine your personal financial health. Fund balance goes up and down month to month depending on cash expenditures and revenue deliveries from the 4 counties we have jurisdiction in, and state and utility taxes. March and April happen to be our lowest yearly balance. Currently, we are just over \$1M in cash.

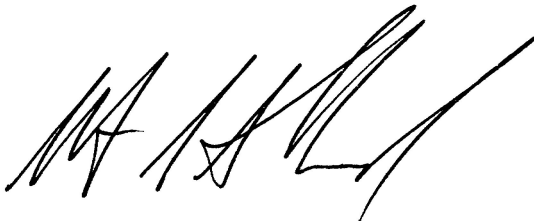
Overall, we have less debt than any time since President Kempe took out a \$3.2M bond. We are fully funded in our IMRF pension, and we are well funded in our Police Pension and that fund is growing. We have the highest financial rating for a municipality. Our police salaries are now in line with the market place, and our Police Department is now equipped with the most modern systems and training. We have just completed major renovations to our Village hall. And our road maintenance program is continuing to expand including a much need drainage and water management program. All this was done while gasoline went well over \$4/gallon, the stock market crashed, and salt went from \$55/ton to \$155/ton – note that we use 4,000 tons of salt annually.

Our budgets for 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 were unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees. Additionally, every month your trustees have unanimously approved every expenditure the Village makes.

It's time to cut through the pasture patties. Anyone who tells you different is not telling the truth (this is called 'lying' in our household). Mr. Schueppert should know that facts given that he is in charge of Zoning and he is the co-chair of Finance. I am shocked about what he is saying at his coffees.

I hope this evaluation of the facts will help you with a clearer picture when you vote on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Please let me know if you have any further questions, I would be happy to respond.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. G. Abboud', written in a cursive style.

Robert G. Abboud  
President, Village of Barrington Hill  
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/>

