

Hello,

After a few months as Chair of the Town's Board of Supervisors, I wanted to reach out to you and share my vision for the Town of Verona. First let me start by telling you that I have lived in the Town for 28 years, and I'm very proud to be town resident. While my surroundings have changed with the addition of Epic (which owns land on three sides of my home), I still see the town as a community that's here to stay for the foreseeable future. That was solidified when the Town/City consolidation failed, and now the Town needs to focus on building its own future. Part of that new future is the construction of a new town hall and garage. As many of you know, the town purchased 7685 County Highway PD in December of 2014. Over the past six months, we have been working on design options and cleaning up the site. Along the way, people have asked a few questions that I'd like to take this chance to answer:

- **Why build a new town hall and garage at all?** The current town hall building and site are in need of major repairs. While those could be made, the space is tight both inside and on the site. In addition, town hall is completely surrounded by the City of Verona.
- **Why not just renovate the existing town hall and garage?** In 2011, the Town hired a consulting firm to look at options for the current site. Renovation cost ranged from \$820,000 to \$1,150,000. The Board decided investing money in the existing 1.3 acre site was not prudent.
- **Why build a new town hall and garage if the town is shrinking?** The town has lost a lot of acres to annexation. However, the population has remained relatively steady because the land annexed is typically farmland and not housing. The town government has the same functional obligations it has always had (i.e. to hold to hold elections, keep records, issue permits, and collect taxes). The town population, and tax base, can continue to grow in a smaller geographical area.
- **When was the decision made to build a new town hall?** The Town Board started putting money aside for a new town hall (or a major renovation of the existing one) in 2000. Money has been set aside consistently since then. In 2009 the Town attempted to buy a new site, but was outbid. In 2014, electors authorized the Board to purchase property at 7685 County Highway PD.
- **How has the public been involved in the decisions?** All budget meetings, annual meetings, and town board meeting where the concept of a new town hall has been discussed have been open to the public and advertised. In addition, multiple articles about the idea of building a new town hall have appeared in the Verona Press. In 2013, the Town Board asked for volunteers for a building committee, but no volunteers came forward. In February 2015, a meeting was held to discuss initial concepts. In April 2015, a community survey was developed. The Town Board and staff will continue to try to keep people informed throughout the planning process.
- **Why was the site on CTH PD chosen?** The site was in foreclosure so the town was able to purchase it and avoid it being purchased by someone with unknown intentions. It's also on a major road making it a highly visible and easily accessible site. The site is close to trails and recreation and is a beautiful piece of land.
- **What will this do to my taxes?** So far the purchase of the land and planning has had no impact on taxes. The land was purchased with cash saved over the last fifteen years. Design services have been donated. The Town plans to sell excess land to cover the majority of the building costs.

In the coming months the Town will be doing more outreach. I hope you'll choose to be involved. One of the best ways to stay informed is to sign up for the town email list by going to www.verona.wi.us and clicking in the upper right hand corner. You can also contact me with questions at mgeller@town.verona.wi.us.