

## **Statements Regarding Amherst Town Meeting Article 5**

### **The Trustees of Amherst Carriage Shops 11/5/14**

- 1. The owners of the Carriage Shops Owners have a long-standing, demonstrated commitment to this community.**
  - All three trustees of the Carriage Shops are long-time business owners in Amherst and have raised their children here.
  - Many have served on local Boards and Committees and annually contributed to local charities.
  - The trustees *donated* the easement on which the current mural is painted.
  - For additional biographical information see the next page.
  
- 2. Buildings wear out just like people.**
  - These buildings are functionally and physically obsolete and have outlived their original construction intent which was a 1960s motel.
  - If any major renovations were made, the owners would have to bring the entire complex up to code.
  - The owners have long subsidized the rents and cannot economically continue to do so.
  - The deferred maintenance and repairs required are not economically feasible. These include but are not limited to: total replacement of the parking lot; total replacement of the roof; total replacement of the second floor railing.
  - The option of letting the property continue to fall into decline is not acceptable to the owners.
  
- 3. There is a higher and better use for the site that is in keeping with the goals of the Master Plan.**
  - The owners spent months researching the Master Plan and current zoning to find a redevelopment solution that was best for the community.
  - The site is within the BG district which allows for 5 stories of mixed-use development which is much better suited to downtown Amherst than a 2-story motel.
  - The site is in a perfect location to jump start redevelopment in the north end of downtown Amherst.
  
- 4. Owners approached Archipelago because they are locals bringing in local investment.**
  - The Carriage Shops trustees went to Dave Williams and Kyle Wilson because they have demonstrated a commitment to quality projects having local beneficiaries.
  - This is a case of investment dollars staying within the community.
  - Archipelago Investments is investing in Amherst for the long haul.
  
- 5. Archipelago submitted plans that reflect current zoning and it is unfair to change the rules in the middle of the game.**
  - The developer has extended significant financial commitments to this project based on current, allowed uses.
  - Eleventh hour revisions to secure community benefits at a cost borne only by the private developers is unfair and could be considered a "taking".

## **Biographical Information for the Trustees of the Amherst Carriage Shops**

The Amherst Carriage Shops is made up of 50 condominium units owned by 7 different legal enterprises/individuals. There are 3 trustees who represent that group. A brief summary of their long-term commitment to this community is provided below.

### ***Bob and Jean Ritchie***

- Founded Amherst law firm in 1974, leaving 23 years later for the Attorney General's office.
- Degrees in Law (JD) and philosophy (Masters)
- Chamber member for many years, and president in the 1970's
- Purchased current home in Amherst in 1976 on Bay Road
- Initial (voluntary) member of the Amherst BID
- Supporter/contributor (library, Survival Center)
- Have 3 children who attended Amherst schools

### **Larry and Jacquelyn Severance**

- Owners of the Loose Goose Cafe
- Business owners in Amherst for over 13 years
- Management Degrees in Hospitality / Restaurant / Culinary Management
- Chamber Members since 2002
- Property Owners in Amherst since 2009
- Trustee for the Amherst Carriage Shops since 2010
- Member of the Amherst BID
- Active supporters and contributors to local schools as well as many organizations such as The Survival Center, Craig's Doors, Big Brother Big Sister.
- Daughter attends Amherst Schools, currently at the High School

### **Gerald and Lois Gates**

- Moved to Hadley in 1958 from Vermont
- Served as Chair of the Hadley Economic Development Commission
- Attended University of Vermont with a degree in Agricultural Economics
- Built over 100 homes in Hadley including Windfield Estates, a subsidized housing development
- Developed over 10 major projects in Amherst including Greenleaves, Salem Place, the Carriage Shops, Amity Place and others
- Is currently the President of Craig's Doors operating Craig's Place homeless shelter and manages the Amherst BID cleaning crew from Craig's workforce
- Have 4 children and 12 grandchildren