

Donald Spalding

Association opposes pub deck

By STEPHEN PAUSE

The McKownville Improvement Association held its monthly meeting last week and presented residents with a number of issues important to the community.

A petition was passed around in opposition to the building of a deck at the Across the Street Pub at 1238 Western Ave. The deck would eliminate two parking spaces while adding seating for about 20 people. Several residents of Arcadia Street, which is closest to the pub, expressed their displeasure about the current parking situation, and felt that taking parking away would not help.

While a large number of the residents in attendance signed the pub petition, fewer residents seemed to embrace a petition in opposition to the new Shabbas House on Fuller Road. The association believed the 10,000 square-foot house of worship is too large and not in keeping with

the nature of the neighborhood. Another concern was what would happen to the site if the Shabbas House abandoned the site sometime down the line.

Supporters of the project defended it, saying that the house serves the Jewish community of the University at Albany, which isn't likely to disappear anytime soon, and despite the size of the proposed building, it is within the regulations of town zoning laws.

Another topic of discussion was the recently proposed nanotech complex, which would add 100,000 square feet of building space to the corner of Tercentennial Drive. Since the site is part of the state campus, there is little the public can do to prevent its construction, but residents still had worries.

Reeb said the association was not opposed to the building, but was concerned about what kind of impact the added traffic it would bring to Fuller Road.

County Legislator Frank

Commisso, D-Albany, was also at the meeting and expressed concerns about the impact on Fuller Road.

Also discussed was the state of Western Avenue, which has a number of vacant lots, from the long standing Taco Pronto to the Denny's. To help devise a solution to the problem, the town has established a zoning study committee whose goal is to find out how to make the property uses serve the purposes of the neighborhood as well as the purposes of the property owners.

There have been two committee meetings so far, with the next coming on Monday, where Reeb said chief building Inspector Don Cropsey and Roger Stone will come in and talk about problem sites and how they deal with them as building inspectors. In the future, the committee will meet with the economic development committee and then the planning and zoning boards.

"We will probably have the development of some new zoning classes, which will give businessmen a better idea of what businesses are better for certain types of land," Reeb said.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn on Western Avenue.