

Thorne Building Community Center in Millbrook clears final legal hurdle

A vote by the Village of Millbrook Board of Trustees has removed the last major legal impediment to conversion of the landmark Thorne Building into a community center serving the Village and all of central Dutchess County.

The move completes a process that began in March 2019, when the Board of Trustees voted – pending resolution of two provisions – to transfer ownership of the historic edifice to the non-profit Thorne Building Community Center (TBCC). The first provision was elimination of a “reversion clause” that would have prevented transfer of title to the non-profit; in January of this year, the Supreme Court of Dutchess County issued a judgment to that effect.

In October, the Village Board held a hearing about the second contingency item, which concerned the location of the building in a residential zone. Following the hearing, which included input from the Dutchess County Planning Department, the Board voted unanimously in favor of a resolution to create the Thorne Building Overlay District (TBOD). The resolution states that “... the purpose of this law is to create a framework that integrates the land and

buildings in the TBOD into the community and allows these to be used as a community center, for the general benefit of Millbrook. The proper use of this property will assist the business community in Millbrook, offer arts, sciences and educational opportunities, attract people into Millbrook to enjoy this asset, and enhance the overall quality of life in Millbrook.”

Oakleigh Thorne, chairman of the Board of the TBCC, welcomed news of the vote.

“The creation of the zoning overlay district allows us to continue our excellent progress in making the Thorne Building Community Center a reality,” he said, adding that a proposal for renovation of the building’s exterior recently has been sent out for bid to contractors.

In another indication of the quickening pace of work on the Thorne Building Community Center, the nonprofit organization’s website has been newly revamped and expanded to provide additional information, and now includes a timeline of the project’s progress.

To learn more about the Thorne Building Community Center, visit thornebuilding.org.