

Mansfield, Connecticut Public Hearing March 22, 2010
Public comment by David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Rd.,
Storrs, CT 06268, 860-429-0763
Topic: Proposed Open Space Acquisition - Ossen/McCoy

Those of you who recall my opposition, on two occasions last year, to the purchase of the Moss Sanctuary, know that I am by no means a kneejerk supporter of open space acquisitions. Too often, such acquisitions included disjointed lots that are neither trailheads nor links to other open space. But I do support the purchase of the Ossen/McCoy property on Birchwood Heights Rd. It is, after all, 0.9 acres of land along a paved town road. It would afford the opportunity for a trail linking it to Monticello Rd. via properties where an easement agreement already exists. And it is available for only \$500.

I do have a suggestion regarding the placement of a trail on this lot if it is purchased by the town. Consider placing it along the eastern property line that abuts 41 Birchwood Heights Rd. I do not know whether any part of the 0.9 acre property is dry enough for construction of a house. But it is my understanding that the eastern half of the property is the wetter half. Indeed, the map provided on page 24 in the packet for tonight's Council meeting identifies an existing drainage easement along that property line.

By judicious placement of the trail and its associated easement, the town would not preclude the possibility that the lot might be suitable for sale, with the trail easement intact of course, at a substantial profit when economic times improve. As long as the trail easement does not go near an area where a house could possibly be built, then the potential marketability of the lot will not be compromised.



David Freudmann

Mansfield, Connecticut Town Council Meeting March 22, 2010
Public comment by David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Rd.,
Storrs, CT 06268, 860-429-0763
Topic: An Ordinance Regarding Off-Street Parking on
Residential Rental Property

My house is in a neighborhood closer to the University of Connecticut than any other in Mansfield. Indeed, I have seen nine houses in the Eastwood/Westwood/Hillside Circle neighborhood change from owner-occupied to rentals over the past ten years. Yet, I strongly oppose the proposed ordinance.

This ordinance targets a particular group of residents - tenants - with lifestyle restrictions. It would limit their ability to entertain guests at will. It is shameful that you would even countenance that such a thing even be put on your agenda. I know that Director of Planning Gregory Padick assures us that it is done in Poughkeepsie and is allowed by the courts. So what? Being legal doesn't make it right.

This ordinance places yet another burden on landlords - the many good ones as well as the few bad ones. By requiring Parking Space Site Plans (drawn to scale), application fees, etc., you would be adding another bureaucratic obstacle to a property owner's ability to derive the fruits of his investment.

This ordinance will succeed in harassing people and will please some angry residents who have witnessed the deterioration of their neighborhoods and want to see someone punished. But it will do nothing to reverse the immutable demographic trends and economic laws at play here: A large and growing university attracting a transient population seeking housing. Aging housing stock which becomes more economically viable as rental property for an entrepreneur than as a home for owners to live in. You'll never change that.

This ordinance will increase the size and cost of government. The \$35 application fee and the occasional \$90 fine will be nothing compared to the additional costs of staffing and office overhead needed for administration and enforcement.

In conclusion, if a motion is introduced to send this ordinance to a public hearing, I urge you to vote no. Such an onerous, elitist and discriminatory ordinance does not deserve a public hearing.



David Freudmann

Sharry L. Goldman

187 Browns Road, Storrs, Connecticut 06268

March 22, 2010

To the Mansfield Town Council:

On June 8, 2009 the director of Human Services reported to the Town Council on a volunteer driver program. Such a program has been the stated goal of the senior population for many years, and that goal is well documented. The Human Services director's presentation, a 23 page document and oral report, stressed obstacles he perceived including liability and cost.

Since I am aware that many other towns have successful volunteer driver programs, I began researching them to try to determine why it is that they have programs and we don't. I interviewed human service directors and transportation professionals, both active and retired from other towns and the region.

I. ROLLING STOCK- investigation of the provision rolling stock for volunteer driver programs in this town and others.

A. Mansfield's seniors had a town van dedicated to their use as of the last time the Human Services Advisory Committee met on in 2007.

(What happened to van....and what happened to Advisory committee?)

B. Mansfield seniors currently have one car assigned to them.

Previous staff claim that more than one car was assigned to seniors in the past. (How is the present car used, and if there were multiple cars at one time, how were they used? How was the van used?)

C. Other towns have funded vans for volunteer driver programs by applying for a DOT 53.10 grant for rolling stock.

The deadline this year is March 26. Was the senior van (that is no longer assigned to seniors) bought on a DOT grant? If it was bought on the grant, is it eligible to be assigned elsewhere? Who made the decision to remove the Sr. van from the seniors? If we choose to have a program and have a van, we need to keep the March 2011 deadline in mind so we don't miss yet another funding cycle. If we apply for a van, who would write the application?

II. OPERATING EXPENSES - Mansfield currently gets \$32,000 in funding for annual operating expenses for senior transportation.

- A. Providers in other towns note that Mansfield is granted more money but offers fewer services. (Who makes the decisions as to how the money is spent? Who reviews the decisions?)
- B. LIABILITY. Liability was not listed as an issue in any town or region I surveyed. There are several models used, and none of them found liability an issue. Towns with the most robust programs use town vehicles covered by town insurance. The value of the insurance, along with repairs to the vehicles and the value of the volunteer drivers' time is used as the match required by the granting agency.
- C. STAFFING. Coventry has a part time coordinator who is paid for 10-12 hours a week. Her salary is covered by the operating grant.
- D. TRANSPORTATION CHOICES. Some professionals I surveyed indicated that they believe that Mansfield is using their grant money for very expensive services from outside providers which results in the grant, even though larger than many other towns get, providing less service due to cost.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Last week, the Director of Human Services offered the Mansfield Senior Association the opportunity to run a volunteer driver program alone, or in concert with the Director of Human Service. While it's understandable that Mansfield Seniors are very eager to finally have a program, I think that their Association has a complete portfolio without this added task.

I believe that the Mansfield Town Council would be well advised to refer the questions listed above for independent review. I have worked in Mansfield on transportation matters for over 30 years by collaborating with the Transportation Advisory Committee and town staff. It has been a productive and effective relationship. I believe we would be well-served if they could evaluate current practices and make recommendations for improvements. I am confident that with the help of the TAC, Mansfield seniors can have an interim volunteer driving program in place very quickly, and a robust and effective program in place within a year or less. I would be happy to help the TAC in any way they see fit.

Memo

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager *Matt*
CC: Town Employees
Date: March 22, 2010
Re: Town Manager's Report

Below please find a report regarding various items of interest to the Town Council, staff and the community:

Budget and Finance

- *FY 20010/11 Budget* – At tonight's meeting I will present the Proposed FY 2010/11 Budget. The Town Council will review the proposed budget during the latter part of March and throughout the month of April. Interested residents are encouraged to see the Town's [website](#) for budget related information.

Council Requests for Information/Council Business

- *CCM Municipal Action Day* – Mayor Paterson and I will be attending this event tomorrow. Please see [item number 13](#) in your 3/22/10 Council packet for more information.
- *Labor Negotiations* – Please see [item number 11](#) in your 3/22/10 Council packet for a letter from Town Attorney O'Brien regarding strategy or negotiations in respect to collective bargaining.

Departmental/Division News

- *Human Services*
 - *Social worker recruitment* – The Town Council is invited to a reception to welcome Ms. Barbara Lavoie as our new Social Worker at the Mansfield Senior Center. The reception will be held at the Senior Center on Tuesday, March 30 at 10:00.
 - *Volunteer recognition program* – The Mansfield Senior Center Association has invited the Town Council to attend its volunteer appreciation day at the center, to be held at noon on Wednesday, April 21, 2010.
 - *Volunteer transportation program* - At its March 10th meeting, the Executive Committee of the Senior Center Association endorsed an option for a volunteer transportation program. The program would be co-sponsored by both the association and the Town, and would be coordinated by senior volunteers who would recruit volunteer drivers, maintain a database and schedule rides. Town staff would assist with all functions including ensuring annual driver training, vehicle inspection, and program promotion. Marilyn Gerling, Lida Bilokur (Association Volunteer) and Kevin Grunwald are working on developing the program and will present a more detailed proposal to the Executive Committee at its April 2010 meeting. We will keep the Council apprised of the progress of this initiative.
 - *WRTD transportation update* - Beginning on Monday, March 15, the Windham Region Transit District will operate a weekly bus trip from several senior residences in Mansfield to the Mansfield Public Library, Big Y, the Eastbrook Mall, the Willimantic Food Co-op and Walmart. The van will pick up riders at the Glen Ridge Retirement Community at 1:00 PM, and will then proceed to Juniper Hill and the Mansfield Senior Center to pick up additional passengers. The return trip will leave Walmart at approximately 2:45pm and should reach the library by 3:15pm. This trip is an expansion of a popular route that was discontinued last year when the funding was temporarily suspended. It is supported by a municipal grant from the State of CT Department of Transportation to the Town of Mansfield to expand transportation options for seniors and residents

with disabilities. This grant is also used to fund rides to medical appointments that are located outside of the 10-town Dial-A-Ride region. There is no cost for this trip, but donations to the Town of Mansfield are appreciated to subsidize the cost of this service. Individuals who are interested in this trip should contact Dial-A-Ride at 860-456-1462. Additional information regarding transportation for seniors and residents with disabilities can also be obtained by contacting either the Town of Mansfield Human Service Department at 860-429-3315, or the Mansfield Senior Center at 860-429-0262.

- *Mansfield Resident Trooper's Office* – On March 11, 2010, the Statewide Narcotic Task Force - East Field-Office assisted by the Mansfield Resident Troopers Office & State Police, Troop C-Tolland executed a narcotic related search warrant at 1901 Storrs Road, Mansfield, CT. This search warrant resulted in the discovery of a large scale marijuana cultivation operation and a hallucinogen psilocin mushroom lab at the residence. Investigators seized approximately 30 marijuana plants at various stages of cultivation, an amount of marijuana, hundreds of hallucinogenic mushroom spores, an amount of hallucinogenic mushrooms, numerous chemical components and materials utilized in the cultivation process of marijuana and hallucinogenic mushrooms. Four individuals were arrested for various narcotics related charges.
- *Planning and Zoning*
 - On March 13th, a number of Mansfield residents and staff members participated in a state wide Municipal Summit on Climate Action sponsored by The Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change with support from the Emily Tremain Foundation and the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Sustainability Committee member and State Department of Environmental Protection staff member, Lynn Stoddard, served as a primary event organizer and as a speaker. Cynthia van Zelm, Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership and Gregory Padick, Mansfield Director of Planning conducted a workshop on Smart Growth Initiatives in Mansfield: Storrs Center Case Study. Other Mansfield participants included Sustainability Committee and Energy Education Team members Virginia Walton, Leigh Duffy, Coleen Spurlock and Dan Britton and Board of Education member Chris Kueffner. Information regarding state and municipal efforts to address climate change can be found at: <http://ctclimatechange.com/>
 - On March 18th, The Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies honored four Mansfield residents. Kay Holt and Betty Gardner of the Planning and Zoning Commission received Length of Service Awards and Gregory Padick, Director of Planning and Curt Hirsch, Zoning Agent, received Lifetime Achievement awards.

Major Projects and Initiatives

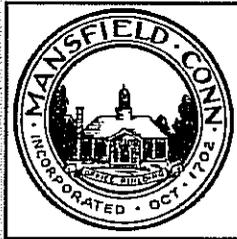
- *Probate Court Consolidation* – Last week my colleagues in Coventry, Tolland and Willington and I, along with Probate Judges Cheryl Brown and Claire Twerdy, met with Probate Court Administrator Paul Knierim to review various issues regarding the planned probate court consolidation. We did arrive at a name for the court – the “Mansfield/Tolland Probate Court” – but did not come to any decision regarding the location. Both the current Mansfield and Tolland Court locations have their weaknesses. The CEO's will prepare a communication to our respective Board of Selectmen and Town Councils to review the four potential options for the location of the consolidated court, and to solicit your input.
- *School Building Project* – On March 15, 2010 the Mansfield School Building Committee conducted a public information session on our Proposed New Community PreK-4 Elementary School and Mansfield Middle School Project. Several Council members were able to attend this session. The report was not well-received by the members of the public who were in attendance. This week, the building committee will debrief the public information session to determine whether there are additional issues that need to be researched; the Mansfield Board of Education has commenced its review of the report. Also, the League of Women Voters and the Mansfield Advocates for Children will sponsor a moderated forum on this topic, to be held at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 in the Council Chambers here at the Beck Building.

Upcoming Meetings*

- Traffic Authority, March 23, 2010, 10:30 AM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Cemetery Committee, March 24, 2010, 3:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- School Building Committee, March 24, 2010, 5:30 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Sustainability Committee, March 24, 2010, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Regulatory Review Committee, March 30, 2010, 2:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Four Corners Sewer and Water Advisory Committee, March 30, 2010, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors, April 1, 2010, 4:00 PM, Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office
- Ethics Board, April 1, 2010, 4:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Planning and Zoning Commission, April 5, 2010, 2010, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Beautification Committee, April 5, 2010, 7:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Communications Advisory Committee, April 5, 2010, 7:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Committee on Committees, April 6, 2010, 7:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Agriculture Committee, April 6, 2010, 7:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Mansfield Advocates for Children, April 7, 2010, 5:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Emergency Management Advisory Committee, April 8, 2010, 9:30 AM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Mansfield Community Campus Partnership, April 8, 2010, 4:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Historic District Commission, April 12, 2010, 8:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council, April 12, 2010, 7:30 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Meetings on the Budget:
 - Town Council Budget Workshop, March 25, 2010, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
 - Town Council Budget Workshop, March 31, 2010, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
 - Public Information Session on Manager's Budget, April 1, 2010, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
 - Town Council Budget Workshop, April 5, 2010, 6:30 PM, Buchanan Auditorium, Mansfield Public Library
 - Town Council Budget Workshop, April 8, 2010, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
 - Public Hearing on the Budget, April 12, 2010, 7:30 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

**Meeting dates/times are subject to change. Please view the Town Calendar or contact the Town Clerk's Office at 429-3302 for a complete and up-to-date listing of committee meetings.*

Town of Mansfield FY 2010/11 Proposed Budget



Matthew Hart, Town Manager
Cherie Trahan, Director of Finance
Paula Jeffers, Controller/Treasurer
Maria Capriola, Assistant to Town
Manager

March 22, 2010

Economic Outlook

- National economic crisis continues
 - Banking, real estate, insurance industries, etc.
 - State and local revenues continue to decline
 - Challenging time for residents and taxpayers
 - Challenging time to prepare budget
 - Demand for services v. declining revenue

FY '11 Budget Overview

- General Fund

Town and MBOE	\$33,613,055
Region 19 Contribution	<u>\$ 9,924,230</u>
<i>General Fund Total</i>	\$43,537,285

- Capital Fund \$19,074,420¹

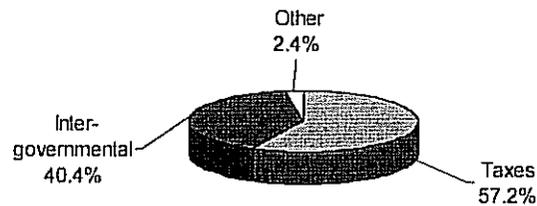
- Capital & Nonrecurring Fund \$ 900,045²

¹Includes nearly \$17.6 million in state and federal grants for Storrs Center projects.

²Includes a \$365,045 transfer to the Capital Fund.

FY '11 General Fund Revenues: \$43,537,285¹

FY '11 General Fund Revenues



¹ Includes funding for Region 19.

² Intergovernmental includes PILOT and other state and federal funds.

³ Other includes fees, licenses and other funds.

FY '11 Revenue Outlook

- Grand List increases by 4.64% to \$969,090,991
 - Real estate increases by 5.12%
 - Personal property decreases by 1.78%
 - Motor vehicle increases by 1.96%
 - \$160,139 generated in new revenue from Grand List growth

FY '11 Revenue Outlook

- Non-tax revenue projected to decrease by \$830,730 or 4.3%
- Decrease in statutory formula grants¹
 - Education grants relatively flat
 - PILOT funds \$7,224,400 – decrease of \$830,955 or 10.3%
 - Pequot/Mohegan – increase of \$187,336 or 95.9%

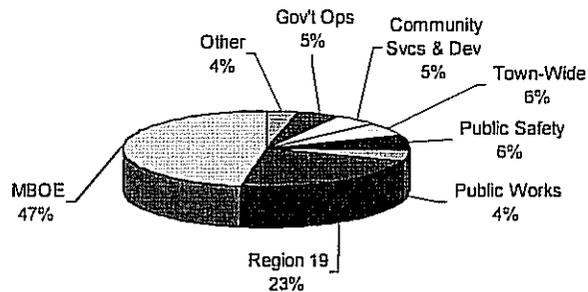
¹Using Feb 2010 OPM Estimates.

Budget Preparation and Analysis

- Approach to Budget
 - Maintain core services and programs despite declining revenues
 - Control and reduce expenditures where feasible without compromising core services
 - Advance key Council goals and objectives
 - Allocate additional General Fund monies for capital projects

FY '11 General Fund Expenditures: \$43,537,285¹

FY '11 General Fund Expenditures



¹Includes Town's expenditures for Region 19.

²Town-wide includes insurance and employee benefits.

³Government Operations includes energy costs for the Town.

FY '11 General Fund Expenditures

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>FY 2009/2010</u>	<u>FY 2010/2011</u>	<u>\$ Amt. Dec/Inc</u>	<u>% Dec/Inc</u>
Town	\$12,839,750	\$13,024,895	\$185,145	1.4%
MBOE	\$20,595,570	\$20,588,160	-\$7,410	-0%
Region 19	\$9,924,817	\$9,924,230	-\$587	-0%
General Fund Total	\$43,360,137	\$43,537,285	\$177,148	0.4%

FY '11 Expenditure Trends

- General Government
 - \$122,000 increase in the Town's contribution to the Municipal Employee Retirement System
 - State mandated increase
 - \$260,000 increase to the Debt Service Fund
 - \$200,000 increase from the General Fund for capital projects
 - In absence of three cost drivers, general government expenditures decreased by \$46,855 or -0.4%

FY '11 Expenditure Trends

- MBOE
 - \$402,240 increase (3.0%) in MBOE salary costs
 - \$186,130 decrease (-5.37%) in MBOE employee benefit costs
 - \$60,000 decrease in special education outplacement costs
 - \$60,000 decrease in energy costs
 - \$103,520 net decrease in all other operating costs

FY '11 Capital and Nonrecurring Fund: \$900,045

- Capital and Nonrecurring Fund
 - \$900,045 total budget including:
 - \$365,045 transfer to capital fund
 - \$150,000 transfer to debt service fund
 - \$150,000 transfer to management services fund
 - \$80,000 for final debt payment for fire truck
 - \$70,000 transfer to compensated absences fund
 - \$50,000 for parks and recreation activities
 - \$35,000 for property tax revaluation fund

**FY '11 Capital Fund Revenues:
\$19,074,420**

FY 2011 Capital Budget Revenues		
State & Federal Grants	\$17,582,100	92.2%
Bonds	\$896,020	4.7%
CNR transfer in	\$365,045	1.9%
LOCIP Grant	\$182,255	1.0%
Other	\$49,000	0.3%
TOTAL	\$19,074,420	100%

**FY '11 Capital Fund Expenditures:
\$19,074,420**

FY 2011 Capital Budget Expenditures		
Community Development	\$16,575,000	86.9%
Public Works	\$1,968,120	10.3%
Facilities Maintenance	\$238,000	1.2%
General Government	\$132,000	0.7%
Community Services	\$98,300	0.5%
Public Safety	\$63,000	0.3%
TOTAL	\$19,074,420	100.0%

Impact on the Taxpayer

- Under proposed budget, mill rate decreases from 25.71 to 25.62 mills
- New growth in grand list not sufficient to cover loss of non-tax revenue
- Non-tax revenue decrease equivalent to 0.86 mills
- Despite a declining mill rate, if assessment has increased most taxpayers will see tax increase

Impact on the Taxpayer (Con't)

Sample Tax Impact – No Revaluation:

Grand List increase would have been 0.67%

Estimated Mill Rate would have been 26.63

Increase of 0.92 Mills or 3.6%

2004 Valuation - Median Home	\$168,350
Taxes at current mill rate - 25.71	\$ 4,328
Taxes at estimated mill rate - 26.63	<u>\$ 4,483</u>
Tax Increase	\$ 155

Impact on the Taxpayer (Con't)

Sample Tax Impact – With Revaluation:

Average Real Estate Increase 5.12%

2004 Valuation - Median Home	\$168,350
2009 Valuation – Median Home	\$176,970
Current Taxes – Mill Rate 25.71	\$ 4,328
New Taxes – Mill Rate 25.62	<u>\$ 4,534</u>
Tax Increase	\$ 206
Percentage Increase	4.76%

Key Budget Dates

Town Council Budget Review	March 20-April 15, 2010	Varies
Public Information Session	April 1, 2010	7:00pm
Public Hearing	April 12, 2010	7:30pm
Council Adoption of Budget	April 19, 2010	7:30pm
Public Information Session	April 21, 2010	7:00pm
Region 19 Budget Referendum	May 4, 2010	6am-8pm
Annual Town Meeting	May 11, 2010	7:00pm

Dates & Times Subject to Revision

Check www.mansfieldct.org for locations & other meeting information

March 22, 2010

To: Town Council

From: Betty Wassmundt

I see you are returning to the Parking Code. I spoke with Carl Schaefer a couple of weeks ago about some town issues and he said that I, maybe we, never like anything that you do. I'm going to suggest something that I (likely, we) would applaud you all for. You don't have to do this Parking Code immediately; there's a blight ordinance that can be relied upon, if necessary. Before you do anything more at all about this Parking Code, Review the Housing Code that was established a couple of years ago. Council has mentioned on several occasions that there should be a review of all new codes and procedures but it doesn't ever get done. I suggest that you review the Housing Code **with public participation allowed**. I suggest that you invite two or three landlords, and no more, to participate with you in a review of the Housing Code. I would suggest: Jake Friedman and Chris Keuffner. I haven't spoken with these men but I think they would do this and they are very reasonable people. I would do this without town management's participation; you've heard from management. Give the public an opportunity to discuss with Council. A discussion will give you much more information than will these one sided Public Hearings. You can limit the time assigned. Put the Parking Code on hold and do this. Please try it.

Next, budget season is here. I had my 2002 income tax information out the other day and I see that my property tax in '02 (just for my residence – no changes have been made to it) was \$3748. This would be for the list as of October '01. My tax bill for '09, which is on the list as of October '08, was \$5574. That's a 49% increase in my tax bill in 7 years. What has this town provided to me or any other tax payer within the last 7 years to warrant a 49% increase in taxes? I want to refer you to the CPI for that period. This can be found at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/> Table 24, Historical Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers. According to this chart, the CPI for that period, '01 through '08, shows a 21.5% increase. Mansfield's tax increase is more than double the CPI for the same period. I think you need to tell us why before thinking of increasing our taxes any more. WHY? This same chart shows a **negative** CPI of .4% for the year 2009. Let's see a decrease in our property tax. How can you justify a 49% increase in 7 years?