

QUESTION: How much will taxpayers be paying for the project?

ANSWER: Three years ago, the town committed to spending no more than \$250,000 of bond monies on the sculpture project. Remaining funds are being raised privately by the Lennie Pierro Memorial Arts Foundation and its Tony Smith Sculpture Project, both registered as 501(c)(3) charitable organizations.

QUESTION: Why am I hearing that taxpayers will be responsible for \$500,000 or more? *article in Star Ledger 2003*

ANSWER: A handful of project opponents have purposefully continued to manipulate taxpayers with the prospect of footing a \$500,000+ tax bill. These erroneous figures are being used to rile any and all taxpayers who are frustrated with Beifus, the supermarket, high property taxes, the town government, the pool, potholes, the library ceiling and any other complaint, into registering their displeasure by opposing the sculpture project — regardless of the project's considerable merits.

Moreover, the maintenance costs for the redesigned site are projected to be less than the current site; the Village's insurance company estimates there will be zero impact on the town's premium; and the Pierro Foundation is raising the seed money to be put into a trust for future maintenance and conservation of the sculpture.

QUESTION: What if something happens to TAU after it is installed?

ANSWER: For years, there have been numerous outdoor sculptures throughout the Village that have not been damaged. The TAU in front of Hunter College has stood at the corner of 68th Street and Lexington Avenue in New York City at a major subway entrance (for more than 20 years.) It has never been vandalized by graffiti or gang "tagging."

The shameful and malicious claims posted online that TAU will inevitably be vandalized and "tagged" are an outrage. Project opponents including Dan Shelffo, Joel Dranove and Michael Goldberg insist that TAU will be vandalized with zero evidence to support their claims. Mr. Shelffo has gone so far as to digitally manipulate an image of TAU, replete with colorful gang graffiti, and post it on his www.nj.com weblog for all the world to see.

QUESTION: Is the sculpture really a gift?

ANSWER: *it can never be sold!*
In March 2005, the Village accepted the Tony Smith Estate's gift to the rights to fabricate TAU. The market value of TAU is approximately \$500-\$600,000. The cost of fabrication to the town is \$85,000. That adds up to a minimum gift of \$415,000. Our foundation's seriousness of purpose, hard work and professional expertise are what convinced the Tony Smith Estate to give South Orange this gift.

QUESTION: Why are we paying for public art while there are other pressing concerns? *name one!*

ANSWER: Enhancing and cementing South Orange's reputation as an arts destination is equally worthy of public support as fixing potholes. There are many examples in New Jersey alone which show that when the arts are a focus, success follows — bringing new businesses, home buyers and visitors.

QUESTION: Why hasn't the project been publicized until now?

ANSWER: For the past four years, the Pierro Foundation has used a variety of avenues to inform the public about the sculpture project. We've presented our plans to a wide range of civic groups, gone into a dozen neighborhoods throughout South Orange, gave lectures at the library and the Adult School, and have had multiple newspaper articles in the New York Times, the Star-Ledger and the News-Record. A sampling of letters to the editor are attached.

Tax costs were NEVER mentioned!!!

For information about the Tony Smith Sculpture Project,
please contact Project Director Cheryl Arnedt at tonysmithproject@verizonmail.com

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Why is the sculpture committee unwilling to contribute ALL of the costs for this project??