

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2003
7:00 PM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A regular meeting of the St. Johnsbury Selectboard was held Monday, April 14, 2003, at 7:00 PM in the boardroom of the municipal building. Present were Reg Wakeham, Bryon Quatrini, Dale Urie, Elwin Cross, and Chairman Gib Handy. Present from the Town were Town Manager Mike Welch, Economic Development Coordinator Joel Schwartz, Zoning Administrator Priscilla Messier, and Recording Secretary Ida Rainville.

Also present were Bob Swartz of the Design Review Board, town residents Marlene Rock and Louis Lacroix, Kim Achilles from the Caledonian Record, the Channel 7 news crew, and students from LSC: Rachael Morrow, Heather Vieira, Zephryne Czelusta, Kersey Proctor, Rebecca McNeil, Andy Gordon, Kristin Farquharson, Amanda Fenoff, Richard Blake and Joe Barrett.

Liquor and Tobacco Licenses approved and signed:

Northeast Kingdom Holdings d/b/a/ Black Bear Tavern & Grill (L)

Judy's Kitchen d/b/a/ Anthony's Diner (L)

R.H. Hudson d/b/a/ The Dawg House (L)

St. Johnsbury House of Pizza (L)

CN Brown d/b/a/ The Big Apple (L/T)

Cindy's Pasta (L)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gib Handy, who led the assembly in the pledge of allegiance. Chairman Handy welcomed the students from Gail Montany's journalism class at Lyndon State College. On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Elwin Cross, the minutes of March 31 were approved as presented. The minutes of March 24 were approved with the following amendment: The name of the person who resigned from the Planning Commission is Rick Cameron, not Rich Lyons.

Ramsey Park Beautification

Mike Welch presented a plan designed by Andy and Clara Fisher to upgrade Ramsey Park (located at the corner of Pleasant and Concord Ave.) General agreement by the Board it would benefit the town. Bryon Quatrini suggested leaving the center area more open for play area.

Breezy Hill Road Discussion

Mr. Welch reported on the discussion held at the Breezy Hill site visit prior to the meeting. Bryon stated, and there was general agreement, that there would be no major changes to the contours of the road until if and when re-paving is done. The one thing that might be adjusted now, with property owner agreement, would be to shave off or cut down the bank next to the driveway on the Walker property to improve visibility. On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Elwin Cross, the Board unanimously voted to authorize Mike Welch and Highway Superintendent Larry Gadapee to work with the Walkers to try to lower the bank.

Planning Commission – Priscilla

Priscilla Messier presented the Board with copies of the final draft of Zoning Bylaws approved by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission requested that the Selectboard set a date for public hearing for approval of the final draft. Three points in the bylaws had been adjusted since the last draft was presented to the Selectboard:

1. Page 2 – keep commercial light industrial zone – total of 13 zones with the addition of conservation district.
2. Section 302B – Page 24 – river front setback. Currently set at 20 feet, would now be 50' with possibility of variance depending upon criteria for specific set backs – also covered by state law.
3. Page 41 – adopt the addition to the design control district, to cover all of Eastern Avenue and Railroad Street from Federal Street to Maple Street, including the right of way for the Railroad in Depot Square.

Bob Swartz of the Design Review Board distributed copies of the Board recommendations on dealing with commercial areas under design control, as opposed to residential Main Street.

On a motion by Reg Wakeham, seconded by Dale Urie, the Board voted unanimously to set the time and date for public hearing as June 11 at 7:00 PM. Louis Lacroix questioned some of the wording in the plan and pointed out that Ed Zuccaro had specified some things that the board could and could not do. He indicated that property owners on Eastern Avenue may still have questions. Priscilla reassured him and the Board that all reference to "Design Review District" had been changed to "Design Control District".

On another matter, Priscilla reported that the Planning Commission had approved the new restaurant "Elements" for the Mill Street location; however, the commission requested that the Board of Selectmen look into the possibility of eliminating parking on the east side of Mill Street, and reduce the speed limit on Mill Street to 20 MPH and on the section of Perkins Street into the Old Mill reduce to 10 MPH. The Commission's approval was not conditional on those changes, but submitted as suggestions. It was decided to table this until the next meeting when there has been time for Chief Devenger and others to investigate the location.

Tax Acquired Property

Mike Welch reported on a piece of property on North Avenue formerly owned by Wilfred McKenney, which has been the property of the town since tax sale in 1998. Nothing was done by the previous owner to claim the property, water and sewer bills are also past due, and there has become a buildup of solid waste around the property. Town attorney Ed Zuccaro is looking into the Town's options on disposing of the property and will report back to the Board at a later date.

Wells River/Newport Railroad – Joel Schwartz

Joel reported that he and Mr. Welch have contacted the State of Vermont since their purchase of the Wells River/Newport Railroad. The State now owns and controls the property along the river and the railroad yard, which consists of several acres of land. Mr. Schwartz pointed out that the Town would like to have some input as to the use of the property. It could be used as a major off load for petroleum products, lumber, salt, etc. The question is if any of these uses would significantly benefit St. Johnsbury. The current lease on the property runs out in June, 2003. Much depends upon who picks up the lease and how much of the property they wish to use. On a motion by Bryon Quatrini, seconded by Dale Urie, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Mike Welch and Joel Schwartz to contact and work with VT Agency of Transportation to come up with a solution that would benefit both Vermont and the Town of St. Johnsbury.

Highway Grant Applications

The Board of Selectmen unanimously approved the application for Highway Grants to continue the improvements on Maple Street and repair the bridge on North Danville Road (motion by Bryon Quatrini, Reg Wakeham) and the applications were signed by Board members present.

Manager's Report

Mr. Welch reported that, since the activity at the gravel pit on Duck Pond Road has previously been limited and not authorized any target practice, Deputy Sheriff Bruce Pratt has requested the use of the pit for Saturday, April 19, for target practice of hunter safety students. Mike Welch reported that he had contacted one of the previous complainants concerning target practice and he indicated he did not want any gunfire on the property. Reg Wakeham moved to allow the use of the pit for hunter safety course. Dale Urie moved to amend the motion to allow use this one time, if the Field and Stream area is not available. The motion passed unanimously as amended.

Chief Paul Devenger supplied the Board with information on other police departments of comparable size to St. Johnsbury, number of cruisers, etc., as compared to St. Johnsbury.

Mr. Welch presented a copy of his response the EPA regarding the Town's capacity to pay a fine for environmental violations resulting from an EPA inspection in September 2001. Mike has replied with a suggested fine of \$1.00 plus joint cooperation with the Town in a remediation project.

Information on the update of the bike path was available through a letter from SVE Associates. Mr. Welch also reminded the Board and listening audience that green up day is May 3 and St. Johnsbury will participate and have the regular barbecue for participants.

Other Business

Bryon Quatrini reported that the light pole on the corner of Railroad Street/Maple Street near Natural Provisions is leaning. CVPS wants to fix it, but needs cooperation with the Town. Also, Bryon wanted to know what the progress has been on the next delinquent tax sale. Mr. Welch said he would look into it and get back to the board.

Marlene Rock wanted to know what the status of the skate board park is. The general manager for Peter Glenn, Marcel Gingue, said he is in agreement, and will be contacting the property owner to make sure there are no objections to having the Skateboard Park in the same location. In the meantime, the same rules will be enforced against skateboarding on streets and sidewalks.

Voted to adjourn at 7:50 (Quatrini/Urie).

Respectfully submitted _____, Ida W. Rainville, Executive Secretary