

• August 23, 2007

Present:Board of Selectmen:Richard Sears, Nicholas Solley, Mark Lyon

Guests:

Fire Marshal:Donald Etherington

State Fire & Life Safety Supervisor:Ralph C. Miller

Old Litchfield Road Residents:

Gary and Margaret Freeland
Jim and Connie Mitchell
Dan and Kathy Leab
Helga Hershey

Old River Road Residents:

Ronald M. Franco & Keith F. Kollar

Board of Finance:Jim Brinton

Press:Ann Compton, VOICES

Minutes:Richard Sears made a motion to approve the minutes of August 9, 2007 as submitted.Motion seconded by Nicholas Solley and unanimously passed.

Amendment to Posted Agenda:Richard Sears made a motion to add the following to the posted agenda:

1. Extend Invitation to Bid - Boat Ramp Renovations.
2. Extend Invitation to Bid - Town Garage Concrete Floor.
3. Extend Invitation to Bid - Church St., New Preston Fire Cistern

Mark Lyon seconded the motion.Motion unanimously passed.

Old Litchfield Road:Residents expressed their concerns about the increased amount of traffic, truck traffic and excessive speed on Old Litchfield Road, between the intersections of Wykeham Road and State Route 109.

Speed:As a means of reducing speed, residents suggested STOP signs be located at each end of this section of roadway (at the corners of Wykeham Road/Old Litchfield and at Route 109/Old Litchfield, in addition to more policing, possible speed bumps and one-way traffic during certain hours. reported he had spoken with State D.O.T. engineers on numerous occasions and they had visited the sight.A sign has been placed on Route 109 (Blackville Road from the Depot) indicating that traffic from the left (109 from Morris) does not stop.Another suggestion that has been implemented was the painting of a dotted line on the curve off Wykeham, as well as reshaping that intersection.

Traffic:Increased traffic, including trucks using this section of road as a through route, was also a

concern. Jim Mitchell presented stats taken during "rush hour" traffic that show the traffic doubles from 40-50 cars/hour to 90-100/hour. He also suggested if a STOP sign were installed on Route 109, cars would not continue onto this road (thinking it was a continuation of 109) and have to turn around. He noted the State uses traffic accident reports when changes are requested and there does not seem to be a history of accidents at this location. He also noted the State considers this section of Old Litchfield Road a "connector" road between Routes 109 and 47; therefore, trucks would be apt to use it. He will appeal to the State for a STOP sign and a "No Thru Trucks" sign at 109. Nick was unsure if another STOP sign would be of benefit on Wykeham Road, but agreed there is the need to control speed. The residents were asked to consider the growth in Northwest CT, which has added to the number of vehicles traveling at faster speeds on many town roads.

NEW BUSINESS:

Fire Marshal: State Fire and Life Safety Supervisor Ralph Miller and Washington Fire Marshal Donald Etherington outlined the responsibilities and educational requirements for the position of Fire Marshal. 130 hours of initial training are required for certification, with an additional 90 hours over the following three years.

Fire Marshal responsibilities include determining the cause and origin of fires, hazardous materials and explosives, inspecting new and existing buildings annually, including schools, churches, offices, etc., public safety communication, and prioritizing potential problems and their liability to the Town. The most stringent areas of review are places of assembly, health care and education, for prevention, fires, hazmat spills, propane, blasting, CBYD permits and coordination with the police. The State has provided assistance with large projects, such as The Mayflower, the Montessori School and the newly-constructed Teddy House at The Guntery.

Mr. Miller compared Washington's Fire Marshal compensation to that of neighboring Salisbury, noting their similar characteristics. provides a municipal package, including a salary of \$41-42,000, plus benefits and a vehicle for a 30 hour work week. Woodbury provides a stipend of \$50,000 (full-time position) with a vehicle, plus an additional \$18,000 for the Fire Chief with additional duties. Miller noted greater responsibilities are being put on fire marshals in the areas of State and Emergency Management. It is now a professional position and much more demanding than in the past. The same OSHA regulations are required for career or volunteer departments. Don sensed the job of Fire Marshal should be considered a half-time job in order to adequately review all projects. Additional provisions should be made for a vehicle stipend or town vehicle, plus code books for \$800-\$1,000. noted it is not easy to recruit qualified people and these things will be considered in next year's budget. The Selectmen extended their appreciation to both Ralph and Don for this education.

Old River Road: Ronald Franco and Keith Kollar, residents of Old River Road, discussed the condition of this road, over which they must travel to their property. Highway Discontinuance Committee has been asked to investigate this abandoned roadway. A proposed discontinuance must be referred to the Planning Commission for comments, as well as approved at a town meeting. Dick noted the general tendency has been to present a road at a town meeting if it does not serve the public and is used only to access private property; however, public access for non-vehicle use, walking, horseback riding, etc will generally be retained by the Town as a greenway. Dick entered correspondence of July 22nd from Atty. Rob Fisher and August 7th from Ron Franco into the minutes.

Mr. Franco noted it was made very clear that this roadway was not their property at the time of the initial purchase. A contractor was hired and told that Town approval was to be sought for any changes to property. i.e. clearing, building, etc. The owners were very cognizant of the narrowness of the driveway to their property, which they had widened to insure that emergency vehicles could gain access. Their

attorney had suggested they seek the bottom part of the roadway to better define it as a private driveway and not as a town road.

Messrs. Franco and Kollar also noted they had a wall built as they were concerned that a could go off the side of the hill. Due to heavy rains and the clearing of trees, they attempted to establish a stable topography with haybales, etc. They have since hired an engineer and put in catchbasins to help disperse the water to the best of their ability and are aware of the runoff. the spring, they noticed water running off at the foot of the driveway. About 50 ft. of town roadway was undermined and washed out. They are currently concerned that a log could fall onto River Road and requested the Town make repairs to shore up this area of the old roadway as soon as possible because of this immediate danger. They would consider taking over the road if it were in somewhat better condition.

First Selectman Sears read the report from Highway Director Kevin Smith, noting it is the Town's job to keep the road safe. Repairs will be made within the next two-three weeks and a bituminous curb will be installed on the Shepaug side of the roadway. Undermined sections will be shored up. Mr. Smith felt additional deterioration had been caused by the landscaping done on the private property above the roadway. The walls have always been there. The property owners did not disagree.

It was agreed further clearing to create any additional water flow will stop. The owners requested assistance with edging and shoring up the wallway. If the road is turned over to the resident as a private driveway, they would become responsible for plowing and future maintenance. approved as a private driveway, it was the consensus that the Town would allow a slight broadening of approximately three feet at the bottom of the driveway to accommodate easier access for emergency vehicles. Conversation will continue on this proposal.

Senior Housing Survey: Wayne Hileman, Chairman of the Housing Commission, reported the Adult Housing Survey Report is complete. He noted this Report is available on-line. He provided an short overview of the report with findings, conclusions and recommendations. This will be presented formally to the Board of Selectmen and the Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Findings: 114 written comments were provided on 285 responses, which the committee felt were illuminating and heartfelt.

1. There was broad overall support for **more Senior Housing options** - 3:1.

- Rental apartments 3:1
- Owned townhouses or condos 2:1
- Congregate leasing 3:1

2. There was strong support for **affordable senior housing options** -

- A majority felt half of the senior housing should be affordable.

3. Significant demonstration was made for more Senior Housing options **in the near future**. Most telling statistic - SOON!

Conclusions:

1. The Committee believes **direct public funding is not necessary** for Senior Housing in Washington. In this particular case, the issue is not about money but rather about choices. Currently, Seniors don't have

any! There is an impending need. 85% of those who completed the survey were over 50 years of age, of which 90% are homeowners. Most have the means, ability, desire and need to downsize. The Riverwoods Apartment waiting list is very long.

2. The Town needs to re-examine the current Land Use Regulations and Plan of Conservation and Development for Senior housing. The current regulations do not allow for any senior housing. The only way you can build is through the Affordable Housing Appeals Act. The problem with the 8-30G Statute is that the Town would relinquish control. We need a more active approach and a way to manage this so that we can do what we want. If we don't, others will be deciding for us.

Recommendations:

The Board of Selectmen and Planning and Zoning Commissions:

1. Should create a plan for Senior housing in or near the village center and revise the Land Use regulations.
2. The Plan of Conservation & Development calls for more Senior Housing and there is no mechanism in place to achieve that.
3. Some land use regulations seem to hinder develop of village centers.
4. The Housing Commission believes **unanimously** that Senior Housing is best located in or near the center of the Depot and the only way we can encourage this is to allow it to exist. We need a Planning and Zoning Plan that has rules to build or renovate. It is now **counter**-productive. We should show developers that we are not to have this in certain places and encourage them as to where we want it to be.

His final comment was from a couple who has lived in Washington for some time. "Because of the lack of Senior Housing, we will be unable to remain here and will miss Washington."

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society: Richard Sears made a motion to pass a Resolution that the Town of Washington support the causes of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Nicholas Solley seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed.

Vacancy on IW - alternate. to fill vacancy.

Beautification Project: Dick reported he is working with the Washington Supply Company, who have taken the initiative for a beautification project located at their building as it faces Routes 47/109. The State D.O.T. will check safety sightlines for setbacks and it will not hinder traffic. There are no zoning issues or approvals required.

Invitation to Bid: Richard Sears made a motion to extend the following invitations to bid:

1. To install concrete floor on new town garage building.
2. To install a fire cistern for Church Street in New Preston.
3. To rebuild boat ramp area in New Preston.

Mark Lyon seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed. Bids will be due on September 6th at 4 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow

Selectman's Assistant