

Selectmen's Meeting

July 28, 2009

All Selectmen Present

Meeting started at 7:00 P.M.

Signed manifests, signed a request to \$1000.00 from NHPDIP to Woodsville Bank Water Department, signed a building permit for Richard Rodin. The Selectmen also signed a Land Use Change Tax Form for Rocky Bunnell and permission for the Monroe Bumper Humpers Snow Mobile Club to use Hunt Mountain Road for the coming winter.

Public Hearing

7:30 P.M.

This meeting is to discuss opening up a portion of Plains Road and a portion of Coppermine Road to 4-wheelers

All Selectmen Present along with Mark Ober from New Hampshire Fish and Game

Bruce Frazer opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming; he stated that this was an informal meeting to get public input on a petition to the Selectmen to open up a portion of Plains and a portion of Coppermine Road to 4-Wheelers. This is an informal hearing and everyone can speak. We would like to discuss this only, it is for 4-wheelers not snowmobiles and unregistered trail bikes. This is to discuss opening the Plains Road from Gibson's farm to the top of Hunt Mountain and the Coppermine Road from Plains Road to the Water Tank Road.

Jericho Ward asked about the trails on the north end such as Canaan Road, the trail near the Mill's home and also one near his home, he was told that we are here to discuss the petition only. A petition was given to the Selectmen to open a portion of Plains Road and a portion of Coppermine Road.

Vicki Giella asked about the laws for 4-wheelers. Gerry suggested that Mark Ober from NH Fish and Game answer that question. Mark stated that at this time it is not legal to ride 4-Wheelers on any town road. A 4-wheeler needs to be registered if it is ridden on any property that is not your own. Fourteen and older can ride a 4-wheeler alone as long as they have a valid driver's license or have completed the OHRV course and received a certificate. If you are on private property you need written permission from the land owner with you. If any portion of town roads are opened to 4-wheelers there would be a 10 mph speed limit. If you are speeding you would be ticketed the same as if you were driving a motor vehicle. You can also be arrested for DWI on a 4-wheeler and you would lose your right to drive any vehicle if found guilty. Any laws that apply to motor vehicles apply to 4-wheelers also.

Merle Jones asked what the liability to the town would be. Bruce told him that we had checked with both Kevin Bruno and the Local Government Center and they said there was no liability, it would be the same as driving a car on town roads. Merle asked if the ATV owners needed insurance. He was told it is not necessary in the State of New Hampshire to insure any vehicles.

PJ Blanchard stated that the reason this petition came to the Selectmen is that a few people hunt up Hunt Mountain Road, out the Johnson Trail and out by the Water Tower and would like to be able to continue doing this. People are going to have to police themselves to be able to do this. We need to follow the rules and be wise about what we do. If we don't follow the rules the Selectmen can take this away if they let it happen to begin with.

Jennifer Hall asked if the Selectmen had talked to any other towns that do this. Bruce said he talked to the Administrative Assistant in Pittsburg who said that the Police Chief was not fond of the idea. He is working with the ATV Club and Landowners to come up with routes that will keep them off the public roads. Gerry said this town is different as many landowners do not want 4-wheelers on their property.

Dick Blanchard introduced himself as a landowner and president of Monroe Snowmobile Club. He said that this would be local access only, people are not going to trailer in their wheelers for a one mile road, local people have done this for 50 years now we need to have permission so we don't get fined.

Gerry said the petitioners were told if the Selectmen agreed to do this it would be on a trial basis. We want to see how this is going to go, if people are buzzing up and down the road and abusing this it would be stopped.

Rocky Bunnell said that basically what people are asking for is things to go back to what we had before. People want to just go about their lives as they have in the past. The top of Hunt Mountain is a dead end so we won't get a lot of people coming into town to ride it will be the locals.

Don Thomas said for most of us who live on Plains Road we have had some 4-wheeler traffic but it has not created a problem. It could become more difficult if we open it up as we have cow's walking from Burrill's Farm up the Coppermine Road and back every day, we also have a lot of people that walk on the Plains Road, and just the normal activity around the cemetery. We don't want to open the door to have very many 4-wheelers on the Plain Road.

Julie Hall asked how long will the trial period be for. The Selectmen did not have an answer to this question. They have not discussed it yet.

Cindy Frazer asked about being on land without written permission, if there are complaints about this will it stop the 4-wheelers using public roads. The Selectmen said they would look at it on a case by case basis.

Merle Jones asked about access from Harley View Drive and Hammond Development. He said the Paul Bedell and Bruce Frazer have control over that. Bruce said that this is a concern of his. Merle said that Bruce has not had any problems in the past, Bruce said that is not true but he has handled them.

Vicki Geilli has a concern as a driver having young children (age 14) driving these on public roads. Rocky Bunnell said a lot of our 14 year olds are from Farm Family's and are very responsible. Gerry Laflamme said we could have situations with children on skateboards and bikes also.

Mary Choate asked if they would be riding on the edge of the road or in the middle of the road. Gerry stated that it would be in the driving lane with traffic. It would be the same as following a tractor you can pass it if it is safe to do so. Bob Wormer said they will have to yield to cars.

Don Thomas said he would encourage the Selectmen to do this on a trial basis.

PJ Blanchard thanked the Selectmen for taking the time to have the meeting and considering this.

Larry Cate feels that if the Selectmen open this portion of roads than all town roads should be open to 4-wheelers. Jericho Ward feels the same.

Gerry Laflamme wanted to let people know that the new well is up and running, the water is being blended so we shouldn't have problems with nitrates in the water anymore.

Special Hearing ended at 8:45PM

Selectmen discussed the Special Hearing, no decision was made.

The Selectmen discussed the Harvest Day in October. Gerry said he has some pallets that he will donate for the bonfire. Gerry also said he thinks he will be able to get donations for fireworks.

The Selectmen are going to a meeting in Franconia on Wednesday evening. The meeting is being put on by North Country Council and it is about Workforce Housing.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.