

Town of Royalton
Selectboard Meeting Minutes DRAFT
8/23/2022 6:30 PM
Virtual / In-person Meeting

Royalton Selectboard: John Dumville, Jerry Barcelow, David Barker, Tim Murphy, Chris Noble

Town Staff & Committee Members: Victoria Paquin (Town Administrator), Rita Hull (Treasurer), Loretta Stalnaker (Police Chief), Brad Salzmann (Emergency Management Director),

Public: Jo Levasseur, Ian MacKenzie, Patrick Dakin, Pamela Sorrentino, Michelle Sama, Jim Northrup, Stuart Levasseur, Peter Anderson, Brad Sick, Hoyt Bingham, Sue Cain, Mike Hogan, Stephen Cartier,

Meeting called to order @ 6:30 PM

Approve the Agenda: Jerry moved to approve the agenda as submitted, John seconded, and the motion carried.

Public Comments: Pam Sorrentino expressed concerns to the board that the construction of a new residence off Elephant Ln, could lead to further deterioration of the road due to trucking and could complicate traffic. Michelle Sama expressed concern about the protection of a vernal pool on the property and noted that there may be water draining issues for terrace residents.

ATV Ordinance Review: Ian MacKenzie presented a letter to the board which included a list of roads being proposed for allowance of ATV traffic. Discussion included topics such as specific road segments, available private trails, and creating a formalized process for road approvals such that future boards may be able to have guidance on the issue. The board noted that they needed time to consider the roads being proposed. Jerry moved to table the discussion to the next meeting. John seconded and the motion carried.

Act 250 process review: Patrick Dakin of the planning commission was present to discuss the act 250 process with the board and concerned citizens. The pending application for the Aubuchon's parcel proposes roughly an additional 10,000 sqft of retail space. There are concerns that the tenant will be Dollar General and that such a business is not desired in the Town of Royalton. The district board held a hearing on the matter, which was recessed, but no further information has been received to date. Ultimately, it is the district act 250 board which will determine whether the additional space can be constructed. The regional planning commission filed that the current proposal does not comply with ACT 250's 9L requirement, which is related to strip development. The Royalton Planning Commission will be drafting a letter for the district committee at their September 6th meeting. David moved that the Selectboard shall send a letter to the district board alongside the planning commission. Jerry seconded and the motion carried.

Town Administrator:

Victoria noted that the annual meeting of VLCT PACIF is upcoming, and the Town requires a representative. Bushrod has offered to attend as the town rep. Dived moved to appoint Bushrod as the town's representative to the annual meeting. John seconded and the motion carried.

Jerry moved to affirm that David Barker had the authority to sign the closing documents for the purchase of the transfer station. Chris seconded and the motion carried.

Victoria noted that the rescue squad has requested \$25,000 in ARPA funding to begin engineering the new building. They have made the same request of the towns of Tunbridge and Sharon. The town of Royalton received \$858,216.63 in ARPA funding. \$500,000 was allocated to the Royalton Fire District #1 for the purpose of improving the water treatment facility. Other projects intended include repairs and improvements to the Royalton Academy Building, estimated around \$200,000, and installation of water / sewer meters for around \$50,000. Also proposed were the costs to switch police dispatching providers, which are now eligible for a different grant. We have roughly \$100,000 in funding that does not have a project proposed. The need for rescue to have a new building was discussed along with the reasonability of the \$75,000 engineering cost estimate.

Jerry moved to approve giving \$25,000 to the rescue squad for the purpose of conducting engineering on a new building. John seconded. Discussion was had regarding requiring the rescue squad to work with the fire department to include their future needs in the building plan. The motion carried with 4 in favor and 1 opposed.

Royalton Radio is holding an event on the Town Green on September 18th and has requested permission to serve alcohol. Jerry moved to approve the alcohol permit. John seconded and the motion carried with Tim recused.

Victoria notes that the board had submitted two petitions to the Board of Transportation. One to close the southerly railroad crossing on Stearns Rd. and one to enhance the northern railroad crossing with Stearns Rd to include lights and bars. The hearing will be held on October 6th, and the Town should submit a statement of position to the board by September 6th. John moved that Victoria may write the statement of position to the board. Jerry seconded and the motion carried.

Town Green Dumping Issue: Tim noted that a free pile had appeared on the corner of the town green at Railroad and Park St. It was noted that this was not desirable. Jerry has asked our waste removal service to collect the items. Victoria was asked to write a letter to the nearby property owner.

Approve Warrants: The warrants were reviewed and approved as presented.

Approve Minutes August 9: John moved to approve the minutes. Chris seconded and the motion carried.

Other Business: Brad Salzman noted that we should consider utilizing ARPA funding to secure backup power for the town office building.

John notes that Jim Proctor did a wonderful job clearing the sidewalk on Railroad St. The board extends their thanks.

Tim thanks Chief Stalnaker for the statistics she provided. It was noted that we have received complaints of speeding on Royalton Hill and Johnson Hill rd. The chief will work on increasing patrols in that area. The new part time hire will be going through the police academy in September.

Jim Northrup asked permission to install a garden bed by the maple tree at the town office. The board noted that we need to coordinate with the other maintenance personnel. Jim will speak with the individuals involved.

Adjourned: 8:03 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Paquin
Royalton Town Administrator

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT: LETTER FROM CASCADNAC VALLEY WHEELERS

August 23, 2022

To the members of the Town of Royalton Selectboard:

First and foremost, thank you for your time and efforts that have resulted from the potential shared town public highway use for ATV's. We appreciate all the courtesy and hope to always have good lines of communication with the Town, Selectboard members, our neighbors, and entire community.

We feel the process went well overall and gave a chance for our community to say and hear various concerns from many points of view. As a club, we hear the same discussions happening all over the State and see local governments generally responding similar to Royalton. Based on the current VASA trail maps of the entire State, there appears to be 59 municipalities that have some allowance of shared town highway use on at least a portion of class IV and class III town highways, which is about 24% of Vermont's combined total of 251 towns, villages, cities, and gores. As a club and part of VASA, we have learned a lot from the successes and learning situations with what other municipalities are doing. While providing responses to each community member concern would be difficult, I wish to keep this letter quick with our club's final request for shared town public highway use for ATV's.

While we believe most criteria referenced in community member concerns can be controlled with the proposed ordinance and the help of law enforcement (Royalton LE, and Windsor County Sheriffs at VASA's cost), there are two points we as a club want to urge the Selectboard to consider increasing public safety and protect our public town highways. One, reduce speed limits as necessary across the town. Speeding has been repeatedly discussed as a concern where some residents don't feel safe walking on their public town highways or posted speed limits exceed safe travel. While the maximum speed limit for ATVs is in the draft ordinance as 20 MPH and less than current limits, lessening other regular use speed limits may have some merits for all residents. Two, consider adopting an ordinance regarding Class IV highway usage including: post roads prohibiting wheeled traffic between December 15 and April 15th (for snowmobiling season) if not longer at the discretion of the Selectboard, and limit logging operations from using public town highways to skid or forward logs (or include them in a case-by-case allowance to permit and bond the use to ensure the Class IV public town highways are returned to satisfactory conditions). Certainly, exceptions may be included for landowners trying to access their remote lands but again should be addressed in case-by-case allowances.

We feel the ATV Committee was able to deliver an ordinance with good regulatory and operational content, and understand the critical remaining part of the proposed ordinance are the locations of proposed shared use on the public town highways. As a committee, there was much discussion regarding balance of how much shared use and where the shared use shall occur. There was also much discussion of our potential private trails to shorten the amount of shared town highway we needed for a viable riding network with the long-term goal of connecting to other neighboring towns. We as a club brought a list of common town highways to the final ATV Committee meeting in hopes of having a discussion about the shared use of those public town highways, one by one if needed. However, as it became clear that no consensus was to occur with the ATV Committee, the whole list was turned over to the Selectboard. In the interest of keeping the proposal abbreviated to what currently makes sense to us as a club, proposed roads as follows make a loop on the south to west area of town and access the backside of South Royalton Village with two separate roads in the north central area that run along multiple private properties that have given permission for private trails as part of this shared public highway trial.

Current list of roads for proposed shared use of public town highway with ATV:

- i i. Otto Merrill Road from Back River Road to Oxbow Road
- ii ii. Back River Road from Otto Merrill Road to Johnson Hill Road
- iii iii. Oxbow Road from 2062 Oxbow Road to Pleasant St.
- iv iv. Pleasant St. from Oxbow Road/South St. to Rainbow St.
- v v. Rainbow St. from Pleasant St. to 108 Rainbow St.
- vi vi. Seawall Brook Road from Royalton Hill Road to North Road
- vii vii. Rousseau Road (East) from North Road to Davis Road
- viii viii. Davis Road from Johnson Hill Road to Royalton Turnpike
- ix ix. Royalton Turnpike from Davis Road (North Intersection) to Sewall Brook Road
- x x. Gee Hill Road from Route 14 to Rix Road
- xi xi. Happy Hollow Road from Deer Haven Lane to Rix Road

*Explicitly does not include North Road, Back River Road beyond Johnson Hill Road headed north, any portions of Royalton Village, South Royalton Village around the Green, or any shared use of a State Highway, and other sections not named for quick reference.

As stated before, as a club we will need to make an application to VTrans to have a crossing at Route 14/Gee Hill Intersection where the snowmobile club has a current crossing permitted by VTrans.

As a club, we would like to defer review of private trail locations with the Selectboard and Town at this time. We have had landowners receive criticism for their allowed use by their neighbors and would like to keep this discussion with the Selectboard specific to public town highways at this time. Please understand we have obtained written or verbal permission of 14 separate private properties solely in the areas of roads requested in the above provided list.

Again, we wish to thank you for your time and careful considerations with this potential ordinance.

Sincerely,

Ian MacKenzie

President, Cascadnac Valley Wheelers