

**TOWN OF FORESTPORT
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
Regarding changing Seasonal Roads to Minimum Maintenance Roads
FORESTPORT TOWN HALL
April 17, 2019 @ 6:15PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilwoman Kardash
Councilman Scouten
Councilman Scott
Councilman Rockhill
Supervisor Entwistle

MEMBERS ABSENT

William Riley, Town Attorney
Town Clerk, Tracy Northrop

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Entwistle at 6:15 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLIENGENCE:

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

LEGAL NOTICE:

Supervisor Entwistle read the legal notice.

COMMENTS:

Supervisor Entwistle started the meeting off by stating the majority of the Seasonal roads are actually minimum maintenance roads already. They should have been classified as such many years ago. Plowing and maintenance is not going to change.

A woman from the gallery asked what is changing. Supervisor Entwistle stated the legal definition of the road is changing. Some rural areas are experiencing people building camps on minimum maintenance and then they decide to make it a permanent residence. On these roads, it can be an enormous expense because once the home is a permanent residence, the Town has to plow and maintain them. The Town is looking at this long term, to possibly create a Local Law in the Site Review Law; which allows someone to build a camp on a minimum maintenance road, but making it clear they cannot use it as a primary residence. Currently, there are not any pending building permits on the roads in discussion.

Donna Stoner, from the gallery asked if they have identified the roads the Town is looking to reclassify? Supervisor Entwistle answered, there are 8 seasonal roads in the entire town. These roads include: Buck Lake Road, Cross Road, Irish Settlement Road, Stone Quarry Road, Lone Pine Drive, Cemetery Road, Round Lake Road and Smith road. Does the Town have zoning? Supervisor Entwistle stated they do not. Would certain homes be grandfathered in? Supervisor Entwistle stated it all depends on how it's interpreted.

Chad Burdick, from the gallery stated if you have a piece of property and it's subdivided, the value of the land diminishes because you can't use it year round. The property owners can't plow the roads either because the Town owns them. He also asked how can you turn down a road like Cemetery Road and take on something like Buckhorn? Supervisor Entwistle stated the town has been plowing and maintaining Buckhorn and Bear Creek Lodge a long time ni. The town is already bearing the costs. In Buckhorn, the homeowners are responsible for the stone and upgrades. The Town does not have a tax, but the Highway does. We have a responsibility to limit the taxes to the taxpayer. Forestport taxes are \$1.68/ 1,000. The purpose is to limit big jumps in the highway taxes.

Mr. Earl stated this Local Law would be restricting the building rights of owners on that road because of that change, has the Town completed an Environmental impact study? Supervisor Entwistle stated it has not been. Comptroller 82.235 states if there is a seasonal residence, the town has to change the designation and has to be open for emergency vehicles year- round. Attorney Riley, said that throughout this County and Lewis County there are a lot of seasonal homes on seasonal roads; whether it is right or wrong. Mr. Riley stated there is a procedure for the town to do what the town is researching to do.

A Gentleman from the Gallery stated he has a camp on a seasonal road and when he bought the property, the Town stated they would have to upgrade the road if they chose to make it a permanent residence. Supervisor Entwistle stated if you petition the Town to maintain the road year round, that may be true.

A woman from the gallery stated wouldn't the town get more money from a home being built? Supervisor Entwistle stated the amount the town would incur for one property would take a very long time for property taxes to offset the costs of bringing it up to specs and the property tax cap.

Supervisor Entwistle will be going around with Highway Superintendent William Gardner to see where the lines are.

A Woman from the Gallery stated the Town has done a phenomenal job with the road work on Cross Road. Supervisor Entwistle mentioned he has received many calls on the terrific job the Highway Department has been doing. She asked if the maintenance would change. Supervisor Entwistle stated the maintenance would remain the same.

A motion was made by Councilman Scott and seconded by Councilman Scouten to adjourn the meeting. Roll Call Vote:

Councilwoman Kardash-yes
Councilman Rockhill-yes
Councilman Scott-yes
Councilman Scouten-yes
Supervisor Entwistle-yes

Supervisor Entwistle added a Correction: The Public Hearing will be in recess and the Town will continue to receive written comments by email, mail, and or at a Public Hearing in the future.

There being no further business, the hearing was adjourned by Supervisor Entwistle at 6:41PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy M. Northrop
Forestport Town Clerk