

Three new businesses gain permits

by Mary Grow

VASSALBORO—Vassalboro Planning Board members approved all permit applications on their April 6 agenda, including allowing three new businesses in town.

The meeting began with acceptance of public comments on revised maps of new resource protection districts.

In response to comments at the board's March meeting, Codes Enforcement Officer Paul Mitnik compared tax maps of land along the Kennebec River with United States Geological Survey quadrangle maps that show elevations. He found nine properties that appear to have slopes less than 20 percent and rezoned them as limited residential, allowing future house construction.

The main comments at the April 6 meeting were from two people who own lots beside rezoned lots. They said their slopes appear no steeper than their neighbors'.

Mitnik assured Howard Wilson that he can continue to farm his riverside land and use his existing building.

On a related issue, Frank Gatchell asked about cutting timber on resource protection land around wetlands. Mitnik said harvesting is allowed, with limits.

Another question came from Holly Weidner, on behalf of the town's trails committee. Mitnik said proposed ordinance changes would make it clear that public trails for water access will be permitted. He said state and local regulations already let a landowner clear a private trail no more than six feet wide to his or her water frontage.

The planning board intends to present several questions to voters at the June 7 town meeting. Mitnik said if voters reject resource protection zoning, state environmental officials will zone

for the town. If they reject a revised floodplain management ordinance, residents will not be able to get flood insurance.

Turning to permits, board members unanimously approved:

- Tim Higgins's application to build a new house in the Webber Pond shoreland zone off Webber Pond Road;

- Chuck Cabaniss's application to open a firearms instructions and training business at his home at 546 Webber Pond Road;

- Terry Huffman's application to open a motorcycle, ATV and snowmobile clothing and accessories shop at his home at 1611 Riverside Drive;

- Leah Cook's after-the-fact application to run Crown O' Maine Organic Cooperative's food distribution center from part of the former woolen mill in North Vassalboro;

- Randy Bean's application to transfer ownerships of Bean's Commercial Grease at 2232 Riverside Drive to Clean Fuels of Maine LLC.

The only debate was over Cabaniss's business. Neighbors Dana Albert and Philip Innes were worried about noise from outdoor shooting practice.

Cabaniss said he and his family shoot on the property anyway. He does not expect to have more than a dozen people in a class, and outdoor shooting will be limited.

After the board approved the permit, Chairman Virginia Brackett advised Albert to talk with Mitnik if there is excessive noise.

The final item on the board's agenda was continued discussion of whether Paul Morneau's March 2005 permit for Mystic Ridge subdivision on South Stanley Hill Road could be extended past the five-year limit. Morneau told board members he intends to apply for a new permit, so the issue was not discussed.

Board completes 2010 municipal appointments

by Mary Grow

PALERMO—Palermo selectmen finished making 2010 municipal appointments at their April 8 meeting.

Christian music for local hunger relief in Unity

Faith Community Church and Unity College's Campus Crusade for Christ presents Josiah's Creed in a Contemporary Christian music concert for local hunger relief efforts on Saturday, April 24, at 7 p.m., at the Unity College Centre for the Performing Arts.

All proceeds will benefit the Volunteer Regional Food Pantry, and the Open Door, which serves hot meals the last week of each month in Unity. Tickets are \$5.00 and/or a bag of non-perishable food items. For more information contact 948-7469 or www.unity-maine.org.

Area soldiers promoted

Major General John W. Libby, the adjutant general of the Maine National Guard, announced the promotion in March to the rank specified for the following Maine Army National Guard soldiers:

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Dale Cullivan, of Palermo, 133d Forward Support Company.

Spc. Jeffery Bishop, of Freedom, Company C, 1/126th Aviation Regiment.

Staff Sgt. Jason Crawford, of Jefferson, 1136th Transportation Company.

Pfc Chris Stevens, of Waterville, 152d Maintenance Company.

First Sgt. Duane Rancourt, of Fairfield, 11th Civil Support Team (WMD).

Pfc Mark Pierce, of Fairfield, 251st Engineer Company (Sapper).

Board members unanimously appointed:

- Elden Glidden as fire chief, Mark Curtis as first assistant chief and Michael York as second assistant chief, confirming fire department elections;

- Amy Fowler as an appeals board member, succeeding the late Richard Bourassa;

- Ellen Stevens-Budzko as the budget committee member representing Western Ridge; and

- Elden Glidden as civil emergency preparedness director.

The board was also unanimous in approving applying for a tax anticipation note of up to \$300,000. The money will be borrowed if needed to cover town bills before 2010 taxes start coming in.

In other business, engineer Elliott Thayer presented a revised plan he developed with Codes Enforcement Officer Darryl McKenney and Selectman Harry Dean Potter for remedying the shoreland and wetland violations on Laure and Real Robidoux's Sheepsfoot Lake property.

The change that required action was relocating a resource protection zone around a wetland. The three men agreed that it was wrongly depicted on the previous map - it should be farther north.

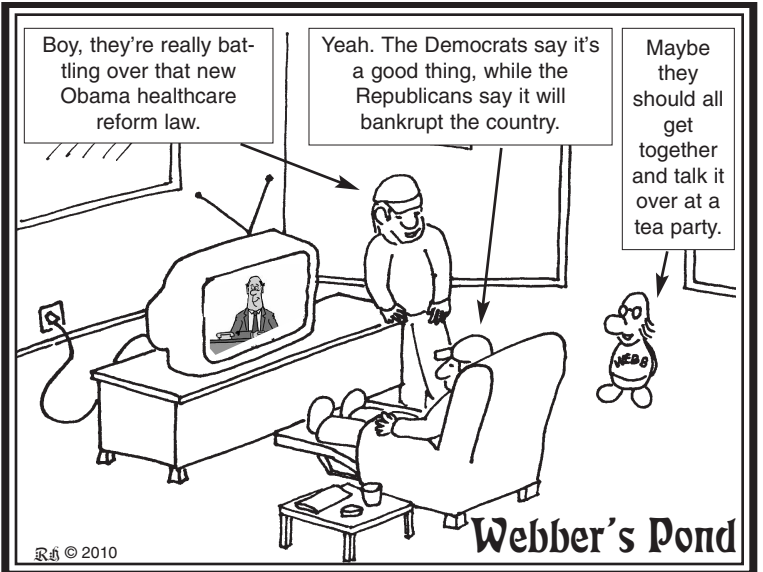
The correction leaves room for a future house near the lake. Thayer said the Robidouxes have no plan to build there, but a future owner might want to.

He also said that in the opinion of Richard Baker, state shoreland zoning coordinator in the Department of Environmental Protection, selectmen could approve the map change, without asking for a town meeting vote.

Board members did so. Thayer said his next step is preparing applications for the three state permits the Robidouxes need.

Selectmen expect McKenney to draft a consent agreement with the Robidouxes, including a monetary penalty, to settle their violations of town ordinances.

The next regular Palermo selectmen's meeting will be Thursday evening, April 22.



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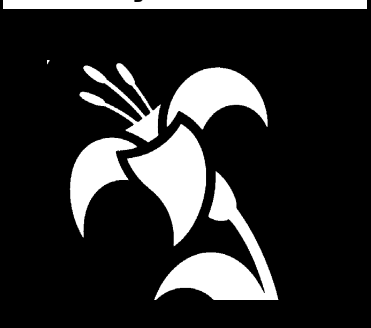
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