

# SUMMARY OF ROAD VIEWING

Site visit TH#44 Wheeler Drive December 8, 2018

Call to order: 11am

Present: Helyn Strom-Henriksen, Joseph Berard and Norman Wilber, Ted Hopkins, Richard Vanguilder, Dan Peck, Zennie Peck

Two of the Selectboard members along with the DPW Superintendent, Norman Wilber viewed the section of TH#44 approximately .11 hundredths of a mile.

They discussed the road width and turn around area as well as the road usage to try to determine if it is within the best interest of the Town to change or discontinue the classification of this road.

Adjourned: 11:20 am

Submitted by Norman Wilber, DPW Superintendent

## Wheeler Drive Hearing December 8, 2018

Call to Order at 11:30 am

Present: Helyn Strom-Henriksen, Joseph Berard, Norman Wilber, Karen Boisvert, Richard Vanguilder, Dan Peck, Zennie Peck, Ted Hopkins

Selectboard Chair Helyn Strom- Henriksen gave a brief history of why we are present here today. The State of Vermont sent a letter to the Town stating that Howe Pond Road was not up to State Standards and to either bring it up to the standards or reclassify. The Selectboard asked DPW Superintendent Norman Wilber if there were any other roads that he felt should be reclassified or discontinued at this time to do them all at once. A site visit was performed at 11 am on December 8, 2018.

Dan Peck:

Mr. Peck was concerned about his water service to the house freezing up if the road was to be declassified. He also stated that the road is used for ATV's and forestry personnel. He also stated that there are several springs on his property.

Norman Wilber:

Norman stated that the road is very narrow, 11' and 12' in some places. Ted Hopkins feels that it is the towns responsibility to widen the road. Norman feels it is not justifiable spending the money to widen a road that services only one residence. Joseph also agrees from the towns viewpoint it is not cost effective for just one residence. Mr. Peck feels that after Hurricane Irene the road was not fixed properly. Mr. Peck asked if he would be the one responsible for maintenance if the road was declassified. He was told yes he would be responsible for maintenance and plowing.

Zennie Peck:

Mrs. Peck stated that the Pecks had never restricted anyone from the property. She asked about other Class III roads and was told she could find that information at the Town Office. She voiced concern over deliveries of Oil and Propane. She was told that she would need to hire someone to plow if the road did get declassified leaving the property open for deliveries.

Ted Hopkins:

Mr. Hopkins feels the term "Driveway" is erroneous. He feels that by declassifying roads the town is alienating people. He referred to Wiley Mountain Road as an example of trying to expand the roads .He feels that the declassification of Wheeler Drive violates the Town Plan

and does not meet the "Public good & Necessity" stipulations. Helyn used her own road as an example of the town declassifying part of a road system in the past. Mr. Hopkins asked if a cost analysis were done and if there was a rational on paper. Norman told him that he has a rough idea of what the town receives from the state for maintaining the road as a Class III road vs what it cost the town but not a full blown analysis. Mr. Hopkins presented the board with a packet laying out concerns for a three roads under discussion. Specific to Wheeler Drive he states " Thoughts on Wheeler Drive: The Selectboard should be aware the highway crew has used Wheeler Drive as access to divert high water and clean basins to hinder large accumulations of runoff water on the Catholic Church and Tobits lawn in turns begins the flooding along Tunnel Street."

Karen Boisvert read a letter sent by the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation.



State of Vermont  
Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation  
Lands Administration and Recreation Division  
1 National Life Drive, Davis 2  
Montpelier, VT 05620-3801  
<http://fpr.vermont.gov>

*Agency of Natural Resources*

December 5, 2018

Town of Readsboro Selectboard  
c/o Amber Holland, Town Clerk  
Town Office  
P.O. Box 187  
Readsboro, VT 05350

**RE: Proposed discontinuance of portions of Town Highway #44 (Wheeler Drive)**

Dear Board Members,

On November 19, 2018, the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR) received the petition to reclassify portions of Town Highway #44 (Wheeler Drive) in the Town of Readsboro. Per 19 V.S.A. §775, municipalities must notify the Commissioner of FPR when a petition to discontinue a highway is filed. It is the policy of FPR to encourage municipalities to keep highways as public rights-of-way for emergency, recreational, forestry, agricultural, and other purposes. These roads provide numerous benefits, including:

- Access to year-round and part-time residence and camps;
- Access to agricultural fields, forests, and sugaring operations;
- Access to state-owned parcels for recreational opportunities, for hunting and fishing, forest management and other forest products;
- Recreational access for activities like hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, horseback riding, and ATV and 4-wheel use

FPR's Lands Administration staff and District staff in our Rutland office have reviewed the petition and are not opposed to the proposed road discontinuance. FPR staff will not be participating in the public hearing and site visit occurring on December 8, 2018. We respectfully ask that this letter be recorded as part of the official proceedings on this matter. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

  
Rebecca Washburn  
Director, Lands Administration and Recreation Division



The Selectboard asked the Peck's out of courtesy what their preference would be if they did choose to discontinue their road. Would they prefer to have their road reclassified as a Class IV or to declassify it and give back to the land owners. They were not sure at the time of their preference.

Motion to close hearing at 12:10 by Helyn Strom-Henriksen, seconded by Joseph Berard. So voted.