

Public Hearing of November 8, 2018  
Town Hall Conference Room B, 7 Summer Street

Selectboard: Trini Brassard, Larry Satcowitz, Matt Fordham, Michael Hildenbrand

Municipal Staff: Adolfo Bailon (Town Manager), Shannon Hance (Administrative Assistant), Bill Morgan (Highway Superintendent), Keven Taylor (East Randolph Fire Chief)

Public Attendees: Sally Penrod, Brenda Squire, Diana Daugherty, Jim Seigel, T.J. Riley, Kermit LaBounty, Maria Piasecki, Donald Jackson, Peter Flint, Bunny Flint, Tim Angell, Janet Angell, Chris Sargent, Jennifer Colby, Tamara Morgan, Meryl Kelley, Taryn Stratton, Donald Small, George Holt, Cathy Bacon, Charles Bacon, Susan McNeill, C.J. Stumpf, Penny Wyle, Bruce Wyle, Joel Whitney, Roger Glosky, Matt Angell, Nick D'Agostino, Jim Moulton, Gerald Vargo, Jon Russ, Jim Carrien, Will Veve, Victor Veve, Aaron Cieri, Robin Goodall, Robert McNeill, Sam Hooper

Media: David Eric from Orca Media, Dave Crosby from the Herald of Randolph

## Public Hearing

Ms. Brassard began the public hearing at 5:32 pm.

Ms. Brassard opened the discussion by asking the public for comment in regards to the seventeen roads listed on the Notice of Public Hearing.

Ms. Brassard asked about Rainbow Drive.

Tanya Stratton, a resident of Rainbow Drive, asked what the classification of this road will be, Class 3 or 4. Ms. Brassard reminded her that the Selectboard is still in the process of review, and that this hearing is for the public to express their opinions in regards to this matter.

At this time, the public had several general comments, questions and concerns regarding the way in which they were notified of the safety issues, the results of the site visits, which roads are being reviewed and how that was determined, the specific safety concerns expressed by the snow-plow drivers and the validity of the determined safety issues.

Mr. Bailon responded by saying the town is investigating claims made by town employees about safety issues on these seventeen roads.

Ms. Brassard responded by saying that the current list of roads are being considered based on the biggest safety concerns expressed by town employees. Ms. Brassard continued by saying that most of these roads did not have safe turn-around areas for the snow plows. Ms. Brassard said that the Board is obligated to look into any such claims made by town employees.

Mr. Fordham talked specifically to a turn-around issue on Hillside Lane, and reminded the public that they are currently gathering information, looking into ways of handling the safety issues other than reclassification/discontinuance, and have not made any final decisions.

C.J. Stumpf asked if the public can have access to the claim reports that were made by the town employees.

A resident of Thetford Drive and other members of the public expressed concern that the town was specifically looking at one home roads.

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Mr. Fordham said that some of the roads contain more than one home.

C.J. Stumpf and Ms. Brassard talked about an unresolved list of roads that were brought to the attention of the former Town Manager that were claimed to be unsafe by town employees.

A resident of Thetford Drive and other members of the public continued to ask questions and express concerns in regards to the validity of the determined safety concerns.

Ms. Brassard and a resident of Thetford Drive talked about the right-of-way that the town has on these roads.

Ms. Brassard reminded the public that there is still a 30-60 day period of review before any final decisions will be made.

Ms. Stratton continued her comments about Rainbow Drive by expressing that she is not prepared to maintain the road and to fix the safety issues.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Donny Smith Drive.

Donny Smith commented on Donny Smith Road. He does not think that this road is unsafe because the safety issues were previously dealt with by the town.

Greg Bisson, owner of a local milk supply business, is concerned that Mr. Smith will not have the proper equipment to plow Donny Smith Road, and proposed that the town look into available state funding to fix the Class 3 Roads.

Ms. Brassard said that those state-funding grants are specifically for storm water drainage maintenance.

Mr. Bisson concluded by saying that he speaks on behalf of the farmers.

Mr. Smith concluded by saying that he does not have any complaints about the work of the town's road crew. Mr. Bisson made the same comment.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Ferris and Managers Drive. There was no public comment.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Hillside Lane.

Charles Bacon (Chip), a long-time resident of Randolph and a resident on Hillside Lane, read from a letter he had written to the Selectboard. Mr. Bacon cares for the community and owns a business in town. Mr. Bacon referred to the state statutes defining the different classes of roads, and talked about the responsibilities of the Selectboard in the reclassification/discontinuance process. Mr. Bacon does not recall any safety issues in the 25 years that he has lived on Hillside Lane and states that Hillside Lane is in fact, quite safe. Mr. Bacon requests that the incident reports from town employees related to specific accidents on these roads be added to the public record. Mr. Bacon states that the employee concerns should have been addressed differently by the town, and that he is willing to work with the town to fix the safety issues. Mr. Bacon is concerned about the financial impacts of the decision to reclassify his road, asks that the Board stops this process; and that instead, works towards creating safer turn-around areas.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Tedford Drive.

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Susan McNeil, a resident of Tedford Drive, asked for the Board to consider the option of creating an easement for the town to access the turn-around area at the end of their road. Ms. Brassard responded and a conversation was had about what type of truck the town uses to plow Tedford Drive. Ms. McNeil's understanding is that the unavailable turn-around is the only safety concern on this road.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Moxley Drive.

Peter Flint, a resident of Moxley Drive, said that he would prefer that the Board chooses to "throw up" the road instead of changing it to a Class 4 Road. Mr. Flint expressed concern about how he and his neighbors' will be able to work together to pay for the plowing. Ms. Brassard responded. Mr. Flint stated that he would also allow for an easement to the town to have access to a turn-around area. Ms. Brassard commented on the fact that there are a variety of safety concerns on Moxley Drive due to recent construction.

A resident of Tedford Drive commented at this time.

Bunny Flint, a resident of Moxley Drive, expressed her appreciation of the site visits, and that the safety concerns were brought up. Ms. Flint said she would prefer that the town continues to maintain her road.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Osgood Drive, Blaisdell Drive and Bossie Road. There was no public comment.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Blue Goose Drive.

T.J. Riley, a resident of Blue Goose Drive, stated that he had recently met with Bill Morgan, Highway Superintendent. Together they decided to bring up a load of material to level off the road. Mr. Riley stated that he would be willing to work with the town to offer any easements if necessary. Mr. Riley thinks that the town does a great job maintaining his road.

Bruce Wyle, a resident of Silloway Road, has abutting land to Blue Goose Drive. Mr. Wyle expressed concern about the fire departments not having access to the fire hydrant on Blue Goose Drive in the winters. This hydrant feeds seven houses in the area. Mr. Wyle spoke to the fact that the certified letter he received from the town did not clarify what the safety concerns are in regards to Blue Goose Drive.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Palmer Road.

Mark Kelley, a resident of Palmer Road, commented on the fact that the safety issue on his road has to do with the turn-around area. Mr. Kelley expressed concern about the burden of road reclassification/discontinuance on the farmers. Mr. Kelley stated that it is the civic duty of the town to plow roads that access farms.

Mr. Riley, a property owner on Palmer Road, stated that Palmer Road is the only access road to his property, and that the state just put millions of dollars into a new bridge on Palmer Road. Mr. Riley commented that he would be happy to throw his property into the mix to create a turn-around easement. Mr. Riley appreciates that the Board is addressing safety concerns on these roads.

Mr. Kelley commented on the fact that he had recently expanded the turn-around area on Palmer Road; and therefore, the issue may be that the town does not have access to the turn-around area. Ms. Brassard commented that there are still obstructions in the turn-around area.

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C.J. Stumpf commented on Palmer Road, which is a right-of-way to her property. Ms. Stumpf commented on the fact that she has driven trucks and trailers on Palmer Road, and that since Mr. Kelley's expansion of the turn-around area, she has found that there is more space to turn-around with her larger vehicles.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Leonard Road.

Joel Whitney, a resident of Leonard Road, stated that he had spoken recently with the Town Manager. Mr. Whitney expressed concern over the fact that the fire department uses a culvert on this road to get water. Mr. Whitney asked what the reclassification/discontinuance process will be following the hearing. Ms. Brassard responded that the Board has 30 to 60 days to gather information and to make a decision. Mr. Whitney commented on the fact that the Class 4 Roads would still be maintained by the town, but just not plowed. Mr. Bailon said yes. Mr. Whitney asked how the residents will be notified of the final decisions. Ms. Brassard said that there will be another public hearing.

Some members of the public expressed concern about having to plow their roads in the middle of the winter following a decision of reclassification/discontinuance.

Mr. Whitney concluded by saying that he would appreciate if the Board kept Leonard Road as a Class 3 Road.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Jackson Road.

Jim Seigel, a resident of Jackson Road, asked if there were other safety concerns on this road besides the turn-around area at the top of the road. Mr. Fordham commented on three different areas of concern. Mr. Seigel commented on the fact that logging trucks have been able to turn-around safely at the top of the road. Mr. Seigel stated that he has never felt that this road was unsafe when he plowed on his own. Mr. Seigel commented on the fact that the community needs to continue to work together to take care of each other, specifically in regards to paying taxes. Mr. Seigel is concerned that residents on these roads will not be able to afford to plow them. Mr. Seigel commented on the fact that it is the town's responsibility to keep the roads safe, build the community and to maintain the roads. Mr. Seigel expressed concern over the possibility of reclassification/discontinuance.

Gerald Vargo, a resident of Braintree, sands, plows and maintains the Braintree side of Jackson Road. Mr. Vargo asked if the goal of the Board is to reclassify these roads, or to deal with the safety issues. Ms. Brassard commented on the State of Vermont Standards for Class 3 Roads, which have been adopted by the town. Ms. Brassard stated that most of these roads are not up to standard, and that the town does not have the financial capacity to bring these roads up to standard. Mr. Vargo asked what the Board wanted to hear from the public. Ms. Brassard said that she wants to hear the public's view on the listed roads, and what they think it would take to deal with the safety issues. Mr. Fordham commented on the fact that five of the eight roads that he visited could be fixed without reclassification. Mr. Vargo questioned the costs, and the process of bringing these roads up to safety standards as opposed to reclassification.

Some members of the public, Ms. Brassard and Mr. Hildenbrand discussed the state standards of Class 3 Roads and the possible costs associated with bringing the roads up to state standards.

Mr. Vargo asked for timing and criteria of the decision-making process. Ms. Brassard responded by saying that the Board has been engaging with the individual residents during the site visits.

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A member of the public owning property off of Jackson Road expressed concern that he could not make it to the site visit, and that the Board has already made the decision to reclassify. This property owner asked for clarification of the final decision making process. Mr. Hildenbrand reviewed what was discussed at the site visit, and encouraged the public to have a conversation with the Board members within the next 30 to 60 days.

Mr. Bailon responded to a concern made by a member of the public. Mr. Bailon encourages residents of these roads to come and speak with him individually during the wait period of 30 to 60 days.

Diana Daugherty, a resident of Jackson Road, expressed concerned over the road reclassification/discontinuance certified letter. Ms. Daugherty asked if it is the town's responsibility to fix the water issues on the road. Mr. Fordham responded by saying that this area of the road was washed out by water coming from the resident's properties; and is therefore, not the town's responsibility. Ms. Daugherty does not understand why there is a safety concern; she expressed concern over the resale value of her home following a reclassification, and asked if the town could make the road safe. Ms. Daugherty commented on the fact that she patronizes businesses in the community. Ms. Daugherty is willing to provide the town with an easement so that the plow trucks can safety turn-around. Ms. Daugherty suggested that the town retrain the snow-plow drivers.

Mr. Fordham talked about the difference in the ground clearance of a plow versus a logging truck.

A member of the public expressed concern about the possible inadequacy of the recently purchased town snow plows.

Mr. Vargo asked how best to communicate and/or negotiate with the Board prior to making the final decision. Ms. Brassard responded.

Mr. Vargo requested a specific list of safety concerns, and how these concerns can be approached.

Ms. McNeil asked for further clarification of the decision-making process. Mr. Bailon responded by stating that the public should contact him directly, and that he will then reach out to the Board members prior to the final public hearing. Ms. Brassard said that the Board needs proposals from the public prior to making a final decision.

Mr. Fordham asked about the amount of space needed for a turn-around area. Mr. Hildenbrand responded. A discussion ensued about this topic. Mr. Fordham stated that each road was assessed based on which plow truck is used. Some members of the public and the Board continued to have a discussion about the efficiency and size of the snow plow trucks used by the town.

A member of the public asked why they were not informed of these safety concerns earlier in the season.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Tilton Road.

Two members of the public made comments and asked questions in regards to the safety issues on Tilton Road, and to the state standards of Class 3 Roads. Ms. Brassard responded.

Jennifer Colby, a farm owner on Tilton Road, expressed concern as a business owner and resident. Ms. Colby stated that the road reclassification will not fit into their business plan. Ms. Colby stated that they will not be able to afford their own maintenance. Ms. Colby stated the town has done an amazing job of maintaining their road. Ms. Colby stated that Casella's trucks have been able to navigate their road

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safely. Ms. Colby expressed concern about the reclassification/discontinuance process being a financial issue, as opposed to a safety issue, for the town.

Chris Sargent, a second resident on this farm, expressed his appreciation for the work of the Selectboard and the town road crew. Mr. Sargent asked what the specific safety concerns are. Mr. Fordham responded. Mr. Sargent states that he has pictures of Casella's trucks safely parked in the turn-around area. Mr. Sargent talked about trucks going off of the road, but in areas not deemed life-threatening. Mr. Sargent would be happy to work with the town on these safety issues. Mr. Sargent asked for further clarification of what the safety concerns are and what the standards are.

Ms. Brassard asked for public comment on Clay Wight Road.

Kermit LaBounty, a resident of Randolph, visited Palmer, Blue Goose and Clay Wight Roads. Mr. LaBounty is concerned about the fact that the hydrant on Clay Wight Road is the only source of water for the fire department, in this area. Mr. LaBounty does not approve of closing or reclassifying any of the listed roads. Mr. LaBounty suggests improving the turn-around areas, and for the snow plow crew to use their trucks differently. Mr. LaBounty, as a former town employee, was historically able to plow these roads without any issues. Mr. LaBounty expressed concern that the town will be taking away the ability of ambulances and fire trucks to safely access these residents. Mr. LaBounty agrees that road reclassification and/or discontinuance will lower property values.

Keven Taylor, Chief of the East Randolph Fire Department, spoke about Clay Wright Road. Mr. Taylor said that the hydrant on this road supplies 16 residents. Mr. Taylor stated that this is not even enough of a water supply. Mr. Taylor commented that the fire department maintains this hydrant, and that the safety of these residents during a fire depends on the ERFD having quick access to this hydrant.

Matt Angell, partial resident of Clay Wight Road, spoke as a business owner on this road. Mr. Angell also does maintenance on this road. Mr. Angell expressed concern that reclassification and/or discontinuance of this road would put him out of business. Mr. Angell recently spoke with the Highway Superintendent, and hopes to work together with the town to fix the safety issues.

Tim Angell, farm-owner on Clay Wight Road, spoke about the history of the road. Mr. Angell expressed concern that the residents of these roads will not receive adequate fire protection following a reclassification/discontinuance. Mr. Angell does not think that these services should be taken away from the tax-paying landowners of this town.

Ms. Brassard asked for the public to comment on Town Road # 70.

Brenda Squire, a resident on Town Road 70, spoke on behalf of her Mother. Ms. Squire spoke with her neighbor who gave his verbal permission for the town to turn-around on his property. Ms. Squire is not clear on what the safety issues are on this road. Ms. Squire wants to work something out with the town. Ms. Squire expressed concern about the emergency services not having access to her Mother. Mr. Fordham commented on the specific issue of the narrow culvert at the bottom of the road. Ms. Squire said that the culvert was supposed to be fixed by the town, but never was. Ms. Squire said that the plowing has been inconsistent, but wants to find a solution, and is concerned about the elderly that live on these roads.

Ms. Stumpf asked about Braley Road, which was not on the list. Ms. Stumpf expressed appreciation for the maintenance of the road by the town. Ms. Stumpf asked if people live on a road, is it not the town's responsibility to keep it safe. Ms. Stumpf expressed concern over the future impact of road

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reclassification/discontinuance on town properties. Ms. Stumpf expressed concern about the cascading safety issues that would result in the event of this decision. Ms. Stumpf requests that these safety issues are considered by the Board.

Ms. Brassard asked if there were any further public comments on the list of roads. Ms. Brassard asked that any future concerns and/or comment be brought to Mr. Bailon, the Town Manager.

Mr. Bailon shared his cell phone number with the public.

The public asked about the decision-making process. Ms. Brassard responded, and reviewed the possible decisions.

Mr. LaBountry asked if the hearing will remain open. Ms. Brassard said no, it will be closed tonight.

A member of the public asked when the reclassifications and/or discontinuances would go into effect following a decision. Ms. Brassard said that this will be determined at the final public hearing.

Members of the public asked the Board to receive notification of when the final decision will be made.

Ms. Stumpf and Ms. Brassard continued a discussion about the decision-making process.

Ms. Brassard concluded the public hearing at 7:45pm. At this time, most of the public attendees left.

*Prepared by Shannon Hance, Town Administrative Assistant*

Note: This agenda may be modified 24 hours prior to meeting. At the discretion of the Chair, the Board may deviate from the order of subjects above. The Town of Randolph provides equal access to its programs and services. To request a specific accommodation, contact the Town at 802-728-5433 or 800-253-0191 \*TTY) or email [AdminAssist@randolphvt.org](mailto:AdminAssist@randolphvt.org). The Town offices are wheelchair accessible.