

A Public Hearing to discuss sale of land was held Thursday, March 9, 2000 at 6:30 p.m. at the Brighton Town Hall, Paul Smiths, NY with the following:

PRESENT: Deputy Supervisor Roger Smith
Council Members: Linda Dobson
John Quenell
Wilhelmina Sheridan

ABSENT: Supervisor Debra Meyer

OTHERS PRESENT: Elaine Sater-Town Clerk, Arlene Hogan-Tax Collector, Don Oliver-Superintendent of Highways, Tom & Pat Willis-Historians, Doug Tichenor-Assessor

RESIDENTS: There were 14 residents present.

GUESTS: Les Eggleton, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

Hearing was Called to Order by Deputy Supervisor Roger Smith at 6:34 p.m. for the Purpose of discussing sale of the Adrien Girouard property to New York State

The Town of Brighton Board has received letters in support of Adrien Girouard selling a piece of property in Gabriels to the State of New York. Willie Sheridan summarized the purpose for the meeting. Certain residents want the Town to write a letter in support of selling this property to the State of New York. Before the Town will do this the board is interested in knowing what other residents think about this sale. Les Eggleton was asked to come to the meeting to answer any questions about the State's process on land sales.

The Floor was opened for discussion and this is a summary of the discussion:

According to Mr. Eggleton this piece of land is a connector for a snowmobile trail, the land would be used for recreation and a legal hiking trail up to Blue Mountain would be maintained. The land would probably be added to the Debar Mountain Wild Forest if NYS bought it. The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) designates the land use not the DEC. DEC has received a letter from the Adirondack Mountain Club in favor of the State purchasing the land.

DEC purchases small pieces of land if the owner approaches the State. DEC does not approach landowners. Funding is available for 1 or 2 small purchases a year. There are about 12 to 14 small projects on the list in a priority order. To move this piece of land up the list, individuals from the area can write letters to DEC and request it move up. The Town Board's approval and a letter showing support by the Town in favor of the State purchasing the land would strengthen the request to move the project up the list. Letters from individual board members would also hold weight. If DEC receives several letters not in favor of the purchase than the project won't be pursued.

DEC would clean up the main snowmobile trail and the hiking trail. The downed trees would only be cleared from the trails maintained by DEC. Residents were concerned about the fire hazard caused by the downed trees. A permit could be issued to homeowners to clean up downed trees near homes. Trees that are a hazard to houses can be dealt with separately. There is an "Adopt a Natural Resource" Program for people to help clean up areas not maintained by DEC.

Taxes are paid on this type of land by the State. The land would be appraised by the State (Saranac Lake Office). Doug Tichenor, Assessor, stated he usually uses the State's appraisal for their land since they tend to appraise higher due to the higher value they place on the land.

John Quenell asked if any of the residents present objected to the sale of the land to New York State. No one objected.

Letters sent to Legislature in support of funding for the project would help DEC obtain the funds.

Pat Willis asked if a poll could be taken to get more information from the residents to help the Board support this purchase and send a letter. The Board's policy has been not to send support letters for private property issues.

Pat Willis thanked the Board for holding the Public Hearing. The Board thanked Les Eggleton for coming and answering the questions.

Motion to close the Hearing was made by Roger Smith at 7:10 p.m., second by John Quenell; Aye 4, Absent 1 (Meyer)

Respectfully Submitted,

Elaine W. Sater
Brighton Town Clerk