

Dalton voters – we need your help to take back our town!

- The town's selectboard runs the town just for Forest Lake. Not for the whole town.
- We're working on taking back the selectboard. This takes time. We need two new selectpeople, so the "real Dalton" may not get the selectboard back until 2024.
- We'll win. The Forest Lakers will lose. They know they're on borrowed time. They know they're on the way out. So right now **they're quietly stacking the other town boards – the planning board and the conservation commission – with their extremists**.
- Yes, **EXTREMISTS!!!** **JON SWAN** was just appointed to the conservation commission. **ADAM FINKEL** is now up for the planning board. Can you imagine??? Do you think you **stand any chance of being treated fairly** by a board with these extremists on it?
- ***This is so wrong***. With lunatics like Swan, when you go to town boards you're facing cameras shoved in your face, nasty insults and photos and videos of you all over the internet. How much worse will it get with these fanatics in positions of power?
- Once these individuals are on the boards, it's almost impossible to remove them. By state law they can stay for 3 full years! And the current selectboard can keep appointing more and more of these extremists. ***These stacked, slanted boards will poison our town's future for several years unless we say no right now!***
- **WE'RE ASKING DALTON VOTERS TO COME TOGETHER, RIGHT NOW, TO PUT A STOP TO THIS. PLEASE SIGN THESE TWO PETITIONS!**
- Here's what the petitions do:
 - They set up a town-wide vote at the March town meeting
 - We'll vote for a temporary suspension of the planning board and conservation commission
 - This will **stop the selectboard from stacking these two boards** with extremists like Swan, Finkel and others
 - It will **stop these boards from going off the rails with things like the unfair and unworkable permanent zoning proposal. And vendettas** against a single landowner and a single project, all just to serve Forest Lake
- This is a temporary step but an urgent one.
- We're working to take back the selectboard in March 2024. That's only 15 months away.
- Once the "real Dalton" has the selectboard majority again, we'll bring the planning board and conservation commission back. With **new members who will work for all of us**. For the whole town.

Q: Ok, I know Swan is a nasty jerk, but what can he and the conservation commission really do to make my life miserable? Or the planning board and their extremists. Not much, right?

A: No, they can do a lot to make you miserable. They can continue to obstruct large commercial or industrial development or other “tax positive” projects that would help build our town’s tax base and lower our property tax bills. They can obstruct you when you come to them for a subdivision, a wetlands permit for your project or for logging on your land, or for other projects. But here’s the real scary thing. These boards have the power under state law to get an administrative permission to go onto your property, without your permission, to gather information! They can say they are doing an “inventory” of natural resources or housing or whatever. And there’s nothing you can do. How would you like Swan trudging around your land digging holes and taking pictures? And do you like the idea of Swan, as a town official, rifling through all the town records that have to do with you and may have some link to these boards? [Have copies of the laws with you.]

Q: Will these votes about the planning board and the conservation commission be on the town ballot, or do we have to wait around for the in-person town meeting?

A: The planning board vote will be on the official town ballot. So you can vote anytime during polling hours, just like when you vote for town officers. As of now it looks like the vote on the conservation commission may be at the town meeting, but we’re working on getting it done by secret ballot and at the start of the meeting so voters don’t need to stay around.

Q: So what you’re saying is we’ll have a short period – about a year – when Dalton won’t have an active planning board or conservation commission. I thought we had to have these boards in place?

A: Nope, there is absolutely no requirement for a town to have either a planning board or a conservation commission. Here in Coos there are several towns that don’t have one or the other or don’t have both (Pittsburg, Clarksville). This is not at all unusual. And remember, even though these boards are being formally put out of business for now to stop these abuses, this is temporary. This is really just a temporary “pause” until we can get the right people onto these boards to serve the whole town.

[Add other Q&As?]

Q&A for discussion with Dalton voters on petitions

Q: What are all these “RSAs” in the petitions? Sounds like lots of laws! Can’t we just say what we want to do?

A: These are the laws that say exactly what steps have to be taken to make this work. They say the exact words we have to use, so we follow them! But there’s nothing hidden. Here are copies of the laws [have them printed out]. They just say what the steps are and what words to use.

Q: What will happen to the conservation fund? Doesn’t the conservation commission have a lot of money in this fund?

A: At the town meeting we plan to have a vote on taking this money and using it to reduce property taxes. Then we’ll start the fund all over again when the CC is reappointed in March 2024.

Q: You say the planning board has gone “off the rails”. I don’t follow them closely. What have they done?

A: Well, you remember the ridiculous permanent zoning proposal the town voted down overwhelmingly this past summer? The whole thing was just an attack on a single property owner and a single project, but to dress it up they made it impossible for Dalton families to use their properties in ordinary ways. The board misled us as to what was in permanent zoning. They kept it secret and didn’t give citizens time to comment. And they’re doing the same thing all over again, with the master plan. Secret drafts, no discussion of citizen input, talking down to us and saying we need to be “educated”, and making pretty much everything they do another attack on one property and one project. The planning board works for the Forest Lakers, not for all of Dalton.

Q: You say the conservation commission has gone “off the rails”. I don’t follow them closely. What have they done?

A: Pretty much nothing to do with conservation! Look at their website. It’s chock-a-block full of letters and complaints, all directed at a single landowner and a single project. For goodness sake, this is a Dalton board and they’re writing letters trying to block a driveway in Bethlehem. They’re supposed to be working for the whole town to identify and help preserve valuable natural resources. But they’ve turned into just another arm of the Forest Lake faction.

Q: I don’t understand how the selectboard can appoint extremists to the PB and CC and these people stay on well after there’s a new majority on the selectboard. Can’t the new selectboard just fire them and replace them?

A: Sadly no. State law lets you fire board members for only very limited reasons and only after a lengthy process. The bottom line is once these extremists are on the boards, they can effectively stay on for a full three years. We hope to re-take the majority on the selectboard in March 2024. But nothing would stop the current selectboard from getting resignations of planning board and conservation commission members and then appointing lots of extremists into these spots. And the extremists could stay until 2027!