

Lake District Property Maintenance - Chapter #46B

It was told at the October 2001 meeting that the town was interested in a property maintenance law and was aware of lake problems and the existing local laws did not deal with clutter like junked appliances. Rich Elias as a planning board chairman told the Town Board to put in a request for the law in writing first. Councilman Stan Klein questioned who would enforce the law and at what cost.

The issue of property maintenance was brought up by Linda Holz when she presented pictures of the biggest offenders in her tract. The consensus of the board was that it elevated concerns of health and safety issues. It was agreed for Lorraine to write a letter to the owners listing the concerns of the SLA and give them an opportunity to come to a SLA meeting to comment. Two other properties were in poor shape in Old Orchard Beach and it was approved for Lorraine to write a generic letter to the county Department of Health noting the concerns (soiled diapers, dump zone, and standing water).

Letters were sent to property owners with the SLA concerns over property maintenance. These letters were also sent to the Public Health Department and Board of Health. The letters stated the problem and asked the home owner to be aware of it and stated the concerns of the SLA. They were asked to clean up and maintain their property and the SLA offered to help in the process.

A report from the Property Maintenance committee included an introduction by Joan Fix of Jan Vrooman who assisted on the committee. The committee had met 3 times. Linda Holz and Joan Fix attended a Town Board meeting to discuss the properties in question, particularly 3 razed by fire. The Board was receptive and wanted SLA to work with Zoning Administrator Gary Thompson. The town board explained that the county building department inspected properties for safe/unsafe conditions. Gary would initiate the communication of the issue but was not responsible for any further action. The board did not act on Bill's recommendation that the committee disband and reform as the Property Monitoring Committee. The board felt "monitoring" would send a signal that the SLA would want to police properties. The goal would be to work with neighbors first, then have the committee go to Gary Thompson.

Linda Holz reported at the September 2003 meeting that the foundation left on South Hillcrest was removed and the grass was cut on two properties where improvements were occurring. The Village of Castile was a leading example because of its successes getting Main Street cleaned up. The work of the committee was appreciated. A domino effect was underway, as one cleaned up, others followed. The town was then encouraged to act.

Linda Holz reported that she met with Gary Thompson in February and his plan was to focus on junk cars on the properties first. He would be doing a visual assessment of the properties that the SLA had brought to his attention along with several other properties that he received complaints about; he would ask Joe Gozelski to assist him. They would start as soon as the snow melted and would be able to go down the private roads. It was also raised at the meeting that abandoned boats were also an issue that would be brought to Mr. Thompson's attention.

At the June 12, 2004 meeting a Property Maintenance report was given. The Committee shared that Linda Holz met with Gary Thompson, Zoning Officer for the town of Castile, as he was addressing 50 envelopes to mail violation notices under the Junk Vehicle Law. There were 60 violations in all; some residents had more than 1 violation. The letter also stated that the next notices he was working on would address violations regarding storage of junk, trash, garbage, etc.

At the September 2004 meeting of the SLA board it was announced that Gary Thompson had resigned as the Castile Zoning Officer. This could hurt the cleanup around the lake. The Town of Castile hired a new Zoning Officer Rodney Bowles.

Linda Holz reported that she had met with the new Castile Zoning Officer Rodney Bowles. He stated that he had toured the Lake District for about 4 hours noting numerous violations of the town's Junk Law. He placed a quarter-page

ad in the Perry Shopper with details of the Town Junk Law stating that the law would be enforced. He also notified County Code Enforcement Officer Don Roberts of several properties with unsafe structures.

Castile Zoning Officer Dave Swede publicly thanked Linda Holz for giving him a comprehensive list of possible violations, complete with addresses and tax numbers. He had made a long list of potential violations and was trying to reconstruct the files on them.

Linda Holz reported on the Old Orchard Beach property maintenance progress that was being made, and noted that more trailers were removed. Kathy Musclow reported that the Walker Road Roller Rink was taken down to create 25 campsites. The garage was taken down going into the beach area. This was a positive clean up. There was a notice in Perry Shopper about the trash pick-up violations, discarded appliances, abandoned vehicles, etc.

In March of 2001 the village of Perry planned to enact a parking ban on Camp Road. In August of the previous year Patty Becker bought the corner lot where parking and pedestrian traffic were safety concerns. A long-time Institute practice was the root cause. Each summer, people were prohibited from driving all the way to the lake because the Institute closed Lakeview Avenue. Lakeview was closed because traffic from the drive-in would take a ride by the water. This was considered a safety hazard for residents. The road was accessible from another direction but remained a dead-end during the summer. After the Institute closed Lakeview, cars used Euclid (Camp Road between Euclid and Lakeview) for parking. That narrowed it further and put children at risk. Becker's yard became a parking lot, and drivers hit her tree, mailbox, and a fire hydrant because they didn't have enough room to maneuver. The dead-end sign would warn drivers there was no outlet and a parking ban would stop the congestion near the lake. The Perry Village board directed its attorney to draft a local law.