

Letters

Are we waiver-ing?

Most are well aware that zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations are primarily in place to both protect the property owners and ensure public safety.

The proposed Furtado major subdivision application currently under review by the Planning Commission requests several waivers that if granted send some very mixed messages to future developers.

One such waiver allows the use of a newly-created private street, or "glorified driveway," with a street name as a means to invent lot frontages that are not otherwise available on a public street. Where the use of private streets may be reasonable when applied to rural subdivisions, it becomes a "highly questionable" practice when it involves subdivision planning within our urban water district. This "low cost" development tactic sets a dangerous precedent that may lead to uncontrollable future growth spurts that are not in the best interest of the town. At the Aug. 2 public hearing for this subdivision, it was difficult for certain planning board members and others to refrain from using the term "driveway" when describing the proposed private street.

We found it interesting that some on the Planning

Commission feel that certain zoning laws, such as minimum street radii are viewed as frivolous obstacles that can be traded off as bargaining chips to limit the size of a proposed major subdivision. Here are we not sending a clear message to future developers that they too can get what they want by simply threatening a larger development? The fact is that the proposed subdivision application is for two home sites and not four, the maximum that could be allowed, and that if the maximum was applied for, it would be very difficult or next to impossible for the planning board to grant waivers that essentially replace a conforming public roadway and dead end cul-de-sac with a non-conforming street or "driveway." Here it is clear that granting waivers to limit the scope of the development is the wrong argument being presented by the Planning Commission.

Instead, we as abutting property owners are called upon to prove our case before the planning board versus the applicant proving hardships that clearly do not exist. The subdivision waivers currently under consideration will relax and in some cases completely override street design regulations even though the development

sites have adequate land area to fully comply with existing zoning and subdivision regulations. Whereas granting these requested waivers may be of great financial benefit to the applicant, it can and does create new hardships on abutter property, and more importantly, creates unnecessary substandard roads that may not be in the interest of public safety.

The planning board should be presenting these road-design waivers to the fire department and zoning board in advance as a means to clearly identify the full impact they will have if granted.

Roger and Maryjane
Lavallee
Luther Street

Garden club's good work!

I would like to send a thank-you to the Quononoquott Garden Club members for the exceptional job they are doing. The wooden barrel planters, overflowing with greenery and striking flowers, are spectacular.

Jamestown is fortunate to have such a kind-hearted organization.

Ginny Perry
Jamestown



Jamestown School Principal Kathy Almanzor was the featured reader at last week's Pajama Storytime at the library.
Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

Support Senate bill S.2686

It was reported recently that Cox Communications will be increasing its prices for the second time this year and for the third time in two years. Surely Rhode Islanders have had enough increases in the cost of living in recent times, whether it be from increased property taxes or rising gas prices.

Fortunately, there is something our senators can do about this. The U.S. Senate is considering a bill, S.2686 or "The Communications, Consumers' Choice, and Broadband Deployment Act of 2006," that would streamline the cable television franchising process.

The main reason that Cox can consistently increase its prices is because it is the only major provider in the

state. While it is true that Verizon is attempting to enter the market, this process, under the current franchising system, could take up to a year. Under the proposed system, the Public Utilities Commission would only have three months to come to terms with a provider.

We need this bill to be passed this year, so that we can promote cable competition, cable choice, and lower prices for cable television service in Rhode Island.

Libby Boghossian,
Jamestown

Write to us

LETTERS: Send your letters to: Editor, The Jamestown Press, 42 Naragansett Ave., Jamestown RI 02835. Our fax number is (401) 423-1661.

Our e-mail address is news@jamestownpress.com. Please include your name, address, and a daytime telephone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.

All letters must be limited to 700 words or less.

The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 25, 50, 75, and 100 years ago from the Newport Daily News comes from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 7, 1906:

Steamer Beaver Tail made a special trip last evening to accommodate an automobile party.

From the Newport Daily News, August 8, 1906:

Steamer Conanicut carried a large number of people on her late trip last evening to view the illumination of the battleships. The searchlight on the flag on cruiser Denver near the breakwater seemed to attract the crowds and she was applauded by the passengers each time the boat passed her.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1906:

At 6 o'clock last evening the fleet of battleships which have been anchored off the east harbor since the first of last week, hoisted anchor and proceeded to sea, and the maneuvering of the ships as they swung into line was watched by crowds on shore. Although hundreds of the sailors have been ashore during the fleet's stay, not one complaint has been heard as to their conduct, while the officers have expressed their appreciation of their entertainment at the hotels and in the cottages.

From the Newport Daily News, August 10, 1906:

Beavertail has been visited the past three days by more than the usual number of automobile and carriage parties, the attraction being the New York Yacht Club fleet as it passed the point in entering and leaving Newport harbor.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 8, 1931:

During the electric storm which passed over the island at 5:45 last evening box 35 sounded, calling the appa-



tus to the home of George Howland on East Shore road, where the lightning struck the radio wires and did considerable damage to the woodwork and the walls in the room where the radio was located.

Lights were out in all sections of the island for one and a half hours, and a delay was caused on the 6:30 ferry owing to the lack of electricity when docking the boats.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 6, 1956:

A driver stepped off the Jamestown ferry for a cooling swim yesterday afternoon while the boat plodded toward Newport carrying his car.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1956:

The state today became owner of the 280-year-old Jamestown Ferry system. Title passed to the Jamestown Ferry Authority from the Town of Jamestown at a bill of sale signing last night.

The Saralu II, a 30-foot sport fishing boat, was launched yesterday at the Wharton Shipyard in Jamestown.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 7, 1981:

The School Committee awarded a contract Thursday night to a Newport firm to build an audio visual and storage room in the Jamestown School cafeteria.

From the Newport Daily News, August 11, 1981:

The proposed new Jamestown Bridge could cause a 152

percent traffic increase in the next 20 years. . . . The study (by Wilbur Smith and Associates) says that a new bridge would not cause an immediate population increase, but urges state and local planners to be ready to help local communities if and when these growth pressures occur.

The Jamestown Ambulance Association is making its first appeal for funds in over four years. Cmdr. Robert L. Broadhead said many financial emergencies have risen with the all-volunteer association that require extra money.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, August 8, 1991:

Members of the Town Council will discuss their concerns over the new cross-island road with high-ranking officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Friday at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall.

The Town Council may consider picking up a tab for an archeological survey needed to build a new senior center, but not before the seniors themselves "explore all the various avenues for funding."

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, August 8, 1996:

The Golf Course Study Committee is scheduled to make its recommendations on what should be done with the town-owned golf course at the Town Council meeting Tuesday, Aug. 13. Although a complete report is not yet available, minutes of its meetings indicate that the committee will suggest that the town continue to lease the nine-hole course.

The second annual Jamestown Island Paddle, a kayak race around most of Conanicut Island to raise money for the Jamestown Senior Center, will be held Saturday, Aug. 17, beginning at the town beach at East Ferry.