• Visitors should be stopping to spend money in each community, not merely “driving through”; this is Home to us, not a Byway
• The roads in the area (i.e. - Wilmington Notch) are not very safe for tour buses
• Encouraging many more visitors to the area will likely lead to more second home owners, which is already a problem as it drives up the housing prices in the area; property taxes also raise accordingly to the point where families are nearly priced out of their areas
• A moratorium on new roads should be created
• Could the CMP be adopted into local law to maintain local control? (concern that once it is drafted with local participation that it can be changed without input later on)
• Concern with view sheds and control over what property looks like from the roadway
• What strings are attached to funding sources (i.e. - ISTEA)? Suggested that ISTEA funding not be utilized for corridor projects
• Attractions should be concentrated (i.e. - a “theme park” concept) so that visitors go to more centralized, planned locations
• Concern that participation by those who are skeptical of this process will be a license for whatever may follow; this seems to be a concern of the Towns which have opposed the effort so far as well
Natural, Cultural, Recreational and Historic Resources” Group

1. “Olympic Trail” suggests . . .
   - Olympian efforts “Remarkable”
   - Feel Gateway in place to wilderness
   - Think 1980 and 2012, 1932; Wilmington cut trails in anticipation of 1932
   - Cutting through communities, tends to help us pause and slow down
   - Huge
   - Think Olympic Trail – connecting with nature
   - Mountains, snow, trail, actual events, great food, great fishing.

(From individual participant): Difference between the term Byway and the term Corridor – along with legal definition and history of regulatory aspects/consequences of APA

2. Story – Tie in (feel) part of the events
   - Town Supervisor (Jeanne Ashworth) was Olympian
   - Identify with Olympians
   - AuSable Forks – think logging, paper mills
   - Industrial history – ever-changing
   - Events then compared to experience today, rich history
   - John Brown came through Wilmington
   - Feeling local pride
   - View is available – the AuSable River and Whiteface Mountain
   - Beauty of 4 seasons
   - Location – accommodations and venues in Wilmington are readily accessible
   - Longevity of local stories – powerful

(From individual participant): Untold story of anti-APA movement – 30 years of untold/hidden history. Northway rallies is example – common cause – anti-APA
3. Natural, Historic, Recreational and Cultural

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<th>RECREATIONAL</th>
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<td>Leaf peeping</td>
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<td>Hiking</td>
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<td>Biking (mountain)</td>
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<td>Birding</td>
<td>Jay – Music (JEMS)</td>
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<td>Snow Shoeing</td>
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<td>for Wilmington’s early settlers</td>
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<td>Toll House - Whiteface Hwy</td>
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4. Projects

- Parking and visitor transport to sites
- Connected bike path
- Guides to communities – hiking, history, communities
- Indoor water park
- Trail head interpretive signs
- Hiking maps
- Nature talks – presenters
- Convention center
- Uniform speed limits
- Power lines underground at recreational area
- Lake Everest needs attention – siltation issues
- Kiosks
- “One Good Park” (Wilmington Playground/park area on Springfield Road)

(From individual participant): The honest telling of the above anti-APA movement; the truth – it’s all about money; a museum for telling the story from a local perspective.
5. Benefits
   - Promotion and appreciation of small business operations
   - Promotion leading to revenue and job creation
   - Healthier economy
   - Better roads for motorized and non-motorized vehicles
   - Improved aesthetics
   - Pedestrian – friendly access/walkways
   - Significant connection with nature for visitors
   - Provide for multifaceted experience
"Tourism and Marketing" Group

When you hear the name "Olympic Trail" what is the first thing you think of? What other ideas or thoughts come to mind when you think of the area?

- Olympics
- Stonework in Wilmington notch
- Trail systems
- Where can I kayak, mountain bike off of Whiteface, hiking trail, skiing downhill and cross country, snow mobiling
- Access snow mobiling to Taylor Pond
- Keeseville – Gateway to the Olympics – North for Quebec
- Nature – hiking trails, skiing, skating, winter sports, sledding, golf

What are some of the local stories/legends etc. that you enjoy about the area? What do you think 'ties' the communities together? What makes the area uniquely special?

- Stonework along the trails
- Bridges along the corridor – marketing tool, Steven Englhardt (AARCH)
- Santa’s Workshop – 1st theme park/AuSable Chasm
- AuSable River
- Mountain biking
- Jay rapids
- Wildlife – flora and fauna
- Atmosphere Center on Whiteface
- Memorial Highway construction
- Iron ores and forges – Keeseville – industrial heritage

What is your favorite historic, recreational, natural or cultural attraction, or activity along Route 9N and Route 96? Why? When you think of it in the future (5-10 years) what do you see?

- Skiing up toll road (cross country)
- Fishing
- Canoeing – the AuSable River from the beach to the Flume
- Kayaking, biking
- Trout fishing
- Swimming in the flume
- "Living here"
- Arts
Identify fund sources and eligibility criteria for historic preservation projects (national register vs. local designation or no designation) (Medium to Long Term On-going Project)

Create Welcome Center(s) (Short to Medium Term Project)
Prepare business plans for the development and on-going operation of Welcome Centers – varying sizes and locations.
Identify 3 locations for Welcome Centers. (Jay, AuSable Forks, Keeseville, Exit 34)
Advocate to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to fund the Centers over the next 3 years.
Create a NFP to house the Welcome Center and manage the information.

Identify and distribute available informational tourist products that show what activities can be done in the Park to current Visitor Centers. Visitor Centers seems to be focused on food and lodging.
(Identify available tourist products on area activities – Medium Term Project)
(Distribute available tourist products on area activities – Long Term On-going Project)

Identify local history symbols that could become Logo’s used on products, signs, etc. Example: rail cars, etc. (Medium Term Project)

Create local “story” books for tourist products such as audio tapes to play while driving the corridor, written material, etc. These stories could be incorporated into a Web Site.
(Medium Term Project)

Develop and market “Taste of the Olympic Trail” Tour.
(Develop Tour – Short to Medium Term Project)
(Market Tour – Medium Term Project)

Identify location and establish an actual building for year round farmers market to see their goods to local restaurants, or other businesses, residents and tourists. Market to organic and local farms and crafters to encourage their participation. Market availability of goods to tourists, local businesses, etc.
(Identify location and establish building – Medium Term Project)
(Target Marketing – Medium Term Project – On-going)

Prepare and submit grant applications for barn restoration projects.
(Short Term Annual Project)

Create incentives for businesses to locate in existing, vacant properties, barns, etc. (Town of Chesterfield as possible model.) (Short Term On-going Project)
Undertake Market Study to identify gaps, needs, and opportunities along the corridor for all businesses in the area – not just tourism. Identify and implement strategies to address issues that result from the Market Study.
(Undertake Market Study – Short Term Project)
(Identify strategies to address issues – Medium Term Project)
(Implement strategies to address issues – Medium to Long Term On-going Project)

Create and maintain Themed Website about the Olympic Trail – see, learn, hear, etc.
(Short Term – On-going Project)
GOALS:

- Upgrade local infrastructure such as stonework, the Flume area
- To show how many great things there are to do in the area
- Introduce people to our history
- Increase funding opportunities for projects identified in the plan
- Introduce people to our cultural heritage
- Support local business – owner/occupied
- Assist all businesses to comply with signage regulations
- Increase safety of roads for multiple modes of transportation – particularly non-motorized
- Educate visitors and residents along the highway about the area
- Assess alternative modes of transportation
- Expand public transportation for tourists – Westport, Port Kent, to Lake Placid
- Increase local marketing tools
- Disperse tourists throughout/along the Byway to diffuse people and minimize impact on resources
- Decrease impact of roadway construction techniques – such as “Jersey barriers” – identify when work is to be accomplished such as stonework and have town support
- Infill existing buildings with new businesses
- Create cultural center in Jay
- Provide a “realistic” tourist experience – do not disappoint the tourist with all “Olympic” attractions
- Protect “local” nature of the area – assess or affect small business (not just tourism)
- Why use T-21 or federal $ to do what you want – “I am tied of anything we do we have to ask the government – they all come with terms – It takes away from the locals – worry about an artificial creation as an outcome.”
- Part of the experience of the area is not being bombarded with signs – “It is why we live here.”
- Increase non-motorized travel
- Increase “local” buying of goods and services from local small businesses
- Encourage all projects that are in the plan to use local goods and services (where possible) including hiring local people
- Increase partnership/working relationship with Bikeways
Folklore/Culture:
(telling local/regional stories)

- Skiing tradition – who trained the athletes? Judy Ford’s uncle taught Art Devlin to ski
- Ski jump on golf course in Lake Placid – moved to Mirror Lake as the toboggan ride
- North Country “parties” après-ski
- “Native American” story – lacking information
- Alligator wrestling in Wilmington – Seminole Indians in the 1950’s migrated from Florida and brought alligators with them
- Attractions – Mystery Spot, Santa’s Workshop, Land of Make Believe, AuSable Chasm

Theme

- Outdoor recreation/touring
- Historic – explore the wilderness – what they did when they came here
- Natural beauty and manmade beauty – trees, stonework
- Land patterns – reforested (secondary growth) and farming – “Nature’s Renaissance”

Additional Project Concerns

- Signage – How can signage laws be determined/interpreted?
- Perception of signs – neon vs. wooden (context sensitive?)
- Make “drunken” signs look better
- Less clutter
- Consolidate signs (directional)

Resources

- Reuse housing stock – housing rehabilitation
- Maximize trails – current
• Old Wilmington Road as new trail
• AuSable River
• Whiteface Mountain
• Whiteface Memorial Highway
• Local Events – Iron Man, festivals (Native American, Scottish Highland, Oktoberfest, etc.), concerts, tours (Jay Studio Tour)
• Attractions – High Falls Gorge, AuSable Chasm, Santa’s Workshop
• Wilmington Town Beach
• Jay Rapids
• Wilmington Bike trails – on and off mountain
• Palace Theater
• Keeseville Historic District
• ORDA as an organizational resource
• Olympic Facilities
• Lake Placid – Golf, John Brown’s Farm, hotels, motels, cultural center
• Jay Covered Bridge
• B & B’s
• Jay Craft Center

Objectives and Projects:

• 171-mile Bike Lane for the entire Byway! LT
• Bike-friendly highways ST
• Assist Toll House, Memorial Highway and Wilmington Notch with stonework by obtaining funds – add Memorial Highway as spur to the Olympic Trail ST
• Signage assistance to small businesses (directional and off-premise ban) ST
• Power lines underground LT
• Identify and understand signage regulations – state/federal/local as they apply to directional and off-premise ST
• Assess roads – safety needs along the corridor – to identify needs – such as a pedestrian bridge at the Flume or guardrails ST
• Develop and identify interpretation opportunities – natural, cultural, etc. – such as signs, brochures, etc. ST
• Train connection from Westport/Port Kent – buses – Amtrak Pkg. From L.P. – tour bus to stop along the Byway ST/MT
• Develop a Byway tour that goes through the byway – farms, history, walking tour, wildlife tours – nature tours, bridges, art galleries, river tour ST/MT
• Develop brochures, etc. Be sure to list local businesses – all types! – not just Tourism-related ST
• Highlight local athletes that have participated in the Olympics (Jay) – start database, historical research involved ST
• Develop/create folklore (story) for each community related to the Olympics – audio tours? MT
• Inventory and market buildings – work with local economic development entities to match entrepreneurs with buildings – focus on local experience – do not force the “Olympic” link ST/MT
• Identify and assess other tourist communities for models of transportation, parking, congestion, tourism tools, etc. ST – Early on
• Increase access to facilities to rent bikes, access to bike racks, renting canoes, kayaks – link to each other MT/ST
• Develop local business directory to encourage local buying! MT
• Identify Old Wilmington Road – Route 86 Mountain Bike – renew State DOT right-of-way through wilderness area – included in the area Unit Management Plan ST
• Inventory directional signs – can be consolidated, straightened, etc. ST
• Wilmington – Lake Everest water quality is poor – needs to be assessed and cleaned ST/MT
• Dam restoration ST/MT

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 13, 2002 – Village of Lake Placid Offices, Main Street, Lake Placid, NY 6:00 p.m.
Potential Olympic Trail Byway Projects – {these are not listed in priority order}

*Rail Trail between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake* – *(Medium Term Project)*
$ 800,000 in current funding for Phase I
Phase 1 – Start of Trail – Lake Placid to Ray Brook
Additional funding needed: $325,000 over 5 years as match
2004: Need *Trail Head Development at both ends* – Lake Placid and Ray Brook, Restroom Facilities (port-a-potty), parking, signage, information Kiosk *(Short Term Project)*

*Identify and develop useable off road trails throughout communities along the Olympic Trail corridor to increase mountain biking opportunities – such as the Jay to Lewis Road.* *(Identify useable off road trails – Short Term Project)*
*(Develop Mountain Bike Trails including access to trail heads and marketing funds – Medium to Long Term Project)*

*Develop appropriate technology related infrastructure* to encourage low impact technology type businesses to move into the Park – *(Develop Infrastructure – Short Term Project)*
*(Market area to technology related businesses – Long Term On-going)*

*Identify and address public transportation issues* in terms of moving people around the corridor, both residents and tourists.
*(Address issues with workable solutions – Medium Term Project)*

*Develop and distribute marketing products that encourage people to relocate to communities along the Olympic Trail,* not just purchase second homes and come up on weekends and holidays. *(Short Term Project)*

*Create and promote tours that keep tourist here for a week* – extend the experience and lessen the impact on natural resources. *(Short Term Project)*

*Upgrade infrastructure at the Flume in Wilmington* (parking, guard rails/posts, pedestrian, safety issues, etc.) *(Short Term Project)*

*Identify and have available up-to-date information on other activities that can be done along the corridor* to discuss with the media to lessen impact on popular ones such as the Jay Rapids, the Flume, etc. Spread tourists out along the corridor. *(Short Term Project)*

*Identify on-going stonework needs* along the corridor, determine costs, and identify potential funding sources. *(Short Term Project)*
What is one major project you would like to see in the Plan?

- Flume with interpretive signage
- Historic walking tour
- Pedestrian Bridge at the Flume with parking
- Historic stone walls
- Interpretive signage
- Wilmington Dam repaired
- Bike lane connecting Lake Placid with Wilmington
- Snowmobile trails
- Gondola connection to Lake Placid
- Mt. Whitney
- No traffic through the Notch!
- See it renamed to Corridor Marketing Plan
- Grant opportunities
- Extension of Catch and Release – alternative activities in area
- Increase in economy of the region – more jobs, more year-round opportunities
Community Meeting #2

Tourism/Marketing Group

- Byway goes from Keeseville to Sackets Harbor
- Everyone leaves Whiteface and turns right to Lake Placid – How can we get them to turn left and go to Wilmington instead?
- Tourist Directional
- Biking sign to Keeseville
- Food
- Parking fees – Day use areas
- Promote things that make people stop
- Inventory of resources – human – electronic – technology – allow for business development
- Match properties and business opportunities
- Cell towers are needed – fiber optics
- Lack of Cell Tower on Whiteface

Natural, Cultural, Historic Group

- History of the area
- A & P stores closed when the mill left and thus the flavor of the community changed
- Keeseville Veterans Park
- AuSable Chasm walking trail
- Off-road bike path
- Parking at trailheads

Project Concerns

- Refer to Law – “See Advisory Committee Section of the Law”
- Redesignation procedures in the plan
- Plan language
- Give Town the right to choose whether or not to participate
- Safety values for communities
- No guarantee that the Advisory Committee will not make changes, causing locals to lose control...
- Land Acquisition for off-road cycling.
- Possibility of apathy by community plan and plan is lost locally. This is advice to the advisory committee only.
Strings attached to projects/funding protection of scenic views at the expense of private property owners.
Federal funding T-21 is tied to preserving scenic views.
Exactly which property rights are at risk?
Maintain quality of life.
Tourism boards and agencies marketing internationally bringing in too many people. How do we get them to stop?
Know who is going to manage the plan.
Required by law – Nail down who and how to give towns the right to participate or not – Do this before CMP is final.
Stay in roadway only.
“Fear” process used to create new restrictions.
Draft – CMP but do not give it for final approval until redesignated.
Scenic byway promotion plan blasted

LEE MANCHESTER
News Staff Writer

Au SABLE FORKS — "Go away. Leave us alone."

That was the message a dozen residents and businesspeople gave to the Friends of the North Country Thursday, June 5, at a meeting held in the American Legion hall in Au Sable Forks.

Their comments came in regard to a plan developed by the Friends of the North Country, under contract with the Adirondack North Country Association, to promote tourism along the 48-mile stretch of routes 9N and 86 that runs between Keeseville and Lake Placid.

The Olympic Trail, as the scenic byway is called, actually extends 170 miles, all the way to Sacketts Harbor. A separate corridor management plan, as the byway promotion packages are called, has already been developed for the section west of Lake Placid.

Problems with the eastern segment's CMP first arose last August, when Friends of the North Country started visiting town boards to invite participation in the plan's development. Lake Placid and Wilmington greeted the project enthusiastically, but the municipalities east of Wilmington — Jay, Black Brook and Au Sable townships — did not.

Their concern: Development of the CMP might somehow open the property along the Olympic Trail to further regulation by either the Adirondack Park Agency or the state departments of Transportation or Environmental Conservation.

In rapid succession, the towns of Au Sable, Black Brook and Jay all passed resolutions that not only opposed any more work on the corridor management plan but also asked that the portions of the Olympic Trail falling within their municipalities be removed from the state's scenic byway system altogether.

Even so, the planning process went forward, producing the draft CMP that was reviewed June 5. Many of those attending the meeting had also been part of the Local Advisory Committee created by the Friends of the North Country to draft the plan. They had taken part, they said, to make sure the Friends of the North Country knew that they were opposed to the whole venture.

When they saw the draft last Thursday, which still included their communities, they exploded.

Friends of the North Country Executive Director Victoria Zinner Johnson and staffer Linda Depo pointed out that the plan acknowledged both the opposition of the eastern townships and their concerns about maintaining local control, but that didn't satisfy those standing.

"The towns of Black Brook, Au Sable and Jay have told you to keep us out of this," said welder Rick Nazak, of Clintonville. "What part of that don't you understand?"

"Why not just write us out of this plan?" asked Clintonville businesswoman Judy Ford.

Participants remarked that the Olympic Trail had been a state-designated scenic byway since 1984, yet it had gotten along without a CMP all those years. Would it do any harm, they asked, if the eastern townships were excluded from this CMP, so that it covered only Wilmington and Lake Placid?

The message finally got through.

"We "authored" this draft, but it's all supposed to be your words, as the LAC," said Johnson. "When I talk to (ANCA Executive Director) Terry (Martino) tomorrow, I am going to tell her that the LAC believes that this should be limited to North Elba and Wilmington. That's a clear, clear indication from this committee."

Martino said on Wednesday, June 11, that the CMP would still include the towns of Jay, Black Brook and Au Sable, but she said, "We will not be putting in all the information for those towns that we would like to, and what we have will be put into context with those communities' opposition to the plan."
Board to hold special meeting to discuss

By LAURIE BESANCENYE
Enterprise Staff Writer
LAKE PLACID — North Elba Town Council members said they would call a special meeting at the end of the month to decide whether to change the town's assessing department.

At their regular board meeting Tuesday, Supervisor Shirley Seney read a letter stating that she was ready to make her decision but out of respect for her colleagues she would wait to present her thoughts until the end of March.

"My colleagues felt they needed a little more time," Seney said.

At the beginning of the year, the town board said that by the end of the first quarter it would decide whether to change the town's three-person elected board of assessors to a single appointed assessor.

Both the town and the assessing department have been under public scrutiny since the chairman of the board of assessors, Kimball Daby, pleaded guilty in November to endangering the welfare of a child and admitted in court to placing his hands under a 16-year-old girl's shirt without invitation.

Council members have explained that they cannot, for legal reasons, remove Daby from his office because he is an elected position. They can, however, restructure the department or appoint one of the other two assessors as chairman of the board.

Councilman Sally Warner said she had gone to the county to inquire about other towns in Essex County and how many assessors they have. She said 11 have three assessors and seven have only one assessor.

She pointed out that North Elba, with 6,914 parcels of diversified land, has nearly twice as many parcels of land than any other town in the county. Schroon Lake, which has three assessors, and
(Continued on Page 12)

Board to hold meeting to discuss assessor position

(Continued from Page 1)

Ticonderoga, who has a sole assessor, have the next largest number of parcels.

Warner also had composed a list of pros and cons of three assessors and a single assessor, which she distributed to the other board members and Seney. She said that the issue should be voted on by voters as a referendum.

Councilman Jack Pavro said the board needed the next two weeks to finalize a decision.

"This is so important to the future of North Elba," said Councilman Jay Rand. "We need to do a more indepth study on a few issues."

One audience member, Thomas Mitchell, told the board he was disappointed with their level of taking responsibility and their professionalism.

"I believe the town has a liability with him in office," Mitchell said. "I believe you guys are perfectly capable of making the right decision."

Mitchell told the board he thought they should have given Daby a disability leave in November.

"We ought to have pride in this town and how we conduct ourselves," Mitchell said. "We stand up as a model of the Olympic spirit."

The only board member to respond to Mitchell was Rand, who told Mitchell that the board was not legally able to remove Daby from office.

A date for the special meeting to decide what to do about the assessors department was not announced.

Scenic byway decision put off

Howard Aubin of Au Sable Forks came before the board to tell the council that it should retain "home rule" in the scenic byway project rather than let the Adirondack North Country Association create a management plan.

Aubin said that North Elba should be opposed to giving away its rights to do its own zoning and planning. He said the Town of Black Brook drafted a resolution Tuesday to retain the right to do its own planning.

"Let's digest this and then decide what we want to do," Seney said.

Warner reminded board members that at the end of their afternoon workshop they were all in favor of the scenic byway project.

New business

In new business, both the shared service agreement with the village regarding the Mirror Lake walkway and the local law regulating billboard use on Mirror Lake were approved.

The town also will request that the county reduce the speed on Old Military Road between Bear Cub Road and the River Street extension intersection from 45 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. The request came from someone who had an accident there.
Bypassed

Jay rethinks Byways program

By BETHANY KOSMIDER, Contributing Writer

JAY — Jay is saying no to an Olympic Trail Scenic Byway route designation, at least for now.

Town Attorney Daniel Manning III drafted a resolution notifying the Adirondack North Country Association of the town’s decision to decline.

The Scenic Byways Program is a jointly funded state and federal initiative designed to bring motorists to roadways chosen for their historic or scenic properties.

Property-rights fears

Manning said that, because of the "irreparable effect" this approval might have on the people of the Town of Jay and the potential impact on their property rights, the town decided not to be included in the corridor.

The Town of Jay is asking that the federal and state governments rescind the designation of routes 86 and 9N as Olympic Trail and Scenic Byways until legal and administrative procedures are put in place to safeguard the property rights of the Town of Jay.

"Is it etched in stone?" Supervisor Thomas O'Neill asked Manning.

The attorney told O'Neill it was not.

Manning said his concern was the lack of information from the Adirondack North Country Association.

"Whenever we have asked for information about property owners' rights, rules and regulations, we are handed excuses or we never receive them," said Manning.
"The people should have all the information made available to them. They aren’t interested in adopting a resolution that has hidden clauses."

**Keene pleased with funds**

Keene Town Supervisor Thomas Both is happy with his town’s decision to accept the plan, though.

"Thanks to Scenic Byways, we have gotten grants that we would otherwise not have received," he said.

"Now we are sprucing up the town and putting this money to good use. Grant money has built a new town garage, with other projects slated for completion in the future."

**Fears APA involvement**

Jay Councilwoman Vickie Trombley, who recommended to the Town Council that it rescind the designation of the corridor within the township, pointed out her reasons for not associating with the Olympic Trails.

"The people who own land along the byway have never been asked whether or not they want to participate in the corridor-management plan," said Trombley.

"Many people do not understand that the corridor encompasses all the visible land surrounding the byway.

"The Adirondack Park Agency has the charge to regulate the resources of the park. Once you name these intrinsic resources of the Scenic Byway, these resources become part of the park and under the jurisdiction of the Adirondack Park Agency. Whether the town names them, or Adirondack North Country Association does, they are the managers for the Adirondack Park Agency."

But ANCA Executive Director Terry deFranco Martino said the people did have voice in whether they wanted the plan.

"We had public meetings so that people could attend and voice their opinions."

**Concerned about inventory**

Trombley said one part of a publication by ANCA, "Statement of Issues and Concerns," was troubling to her.

"Scenic views and traveling experiences have proven to be one of the most controversial resources for a byway to identify and
"steward," said Trombley.

"As I read the report, it said that the state of New York has recognized the scenic quality of the Adirondack Park to be protected by the APA.

"And it is recommended that the Byway Corridor Management Plan does not include an inventory, assessment or actions for the management or protection of the scenic resources within the Adirondack Park.

"It is apparent that this program is a means by which the agency can have numerous other scenic vistas identified to extend their jurisdiction. By excluding an inventory prior to the designation, it allows the APA and ANCA to attach an inventory with added restrictions after the fact."

Martino said the APA Act completed a map with scenic vistas on it.

"The APA cannot create stricter zoning without going back to the (state) legislature," the ANCA director said. "There would need to be another law passed to change that."

Trombley thinks the APA and ANCA need more scenic vistas in order to establish jurisdiction over current non-jurisdictional lots to regulate aesthetics.

"Until they can prove us wrong, we will not be participating in the plan," she said.

But APA spokeswoman Vicki Hristovski noted that the Byways Program is directed and coordinated by the State Department of Transportation, not her agency.

"The program focuses on economic development and tourism promotion and is not a regulatory process," she said.

"It is a valuable source of technical assistance and funding for Adirondack communities and communities throughout the state of New York."

**Plan benefits**

Martino contends that the Olympic Trails Scenic Byway plan is sound and economically smart.

"By creating a corridor plan, grant money will be available, and it will open wider avenues of what can be done to market business and tourism in small towns."
Jay isn't the only town to reconsider participation in the Scenic Byways plan.

North Elba had originally voted to join, but the Town Council is now reconsidering.
**Bypassed**

**Joy rethinks Byways program**

**BY BETHANY KOSMIDER**
Contributing Writer

**JOY —** Joy is saying no to an Olympic Trail Scenic Byway route designation, at least for now. Town Attorney Daniel Manning III drafted a resolution notifying the Adirondack North Country Association of the town’s decision to decline.

The Scenic Byways Program is a jointly funded state and federal initiative designed to bring motorists to roadways chosen for their historic or scenic properties.

**PROPERTY-RIGHTS FEARS**

Manning said that, because of the "irreparable" effect this approval might have on the people of the Town of Joy and the potential impact on their property rights, the town decided not to be included in the corridor.

The Town of Joy is asking that federal and state governments rescind the designation of routes 8 and 10 as Olympic Trail and Scenic Byways until legal and administrative procedures are put in place to safeguard the property rights of the Town of Joy.

"Is it etched in stone?" Supervisor Thomas O'Neill asked Manning.

The attorney told O'Neill it was not.

Manning said his concern was the lack of information from the Adirondack North Country Association.

"Whenever we have asked for information about property owners' rights, rules and regulations, we are handed excuses or we never receive them," said Manning.

"The people should have all the information made available to them. They aren't interested in adopting a resolution that has hidden clauses."

**KEEN PLEASING WITH FUNDS**

Keene Town Supervisor Thomas Both is happy with his town's decision to accept the plan, though.

"Thanks to Scenic Byways, we have gotten grants that we would otherwise not have received," he said.

"Now we are sprucing up the town and putting this money to good use. Grant money has built a new town garage, with other projects slated for completion in the future."

**FEARS APA INVOLVEMENT**

Jay Councilwoman Vickie Trombley, who recommended to the Town Council that it rescind the designation of the corridor within the township, pointed out her reasons for not associating with the Olympic Trails.

"The people who own land along the byway have never been asked whether or not they want to participate in the corridor-management plan," said Trombley.

"Many people do not understand that the corridor encompasses all the visible land surrounding the byway."

"The Adirondack Park Agency has the charge to regulate the resources of the park. Once you name these intrinsic resources of the Scenic Byway, these resources become part of the park and under the jurisdiction of the Adirondack Park Agency. Whether the town names them, or Adirondack North Country Association does, they are the managers for the Adirondack Park Agency."

But ANCA Executive Director Terry deFranco Martino said the people did have voice in whether they wanted the plan.

"We had public meetings so that people could attend and voice their opinions."

**CONCERNS ABOUT INVENTORY**

Trombley said one part of a publication by ANCA, "Statement of Issues and Concerns," was troubling to her.

"Scenic views and traveling experiences have proven to be one of the most controversial resources for a byway to identify and steward," said Trombley.

"As I read the report, it said that the state of New York has recognized the scenic quality of the Adirondack Park to be protected by the APA."

"And it is recommended that the Byway Corridor Management Plan does not include an inventory, assessment or actions for the management or protection of the scenic resources within the Adirondack Park."

"It is apparent that this program is a means by which the agency can create numerous other scenic vistas identified to extend their jurisdiction. By excluding an inventory prior to the designation, it allows the APA and ANCA to attach an inventory with added restrictions after the fact."

Martino said the APA Act completed a map with scenic vistas on it.

"The APA cannot create stricter zoning without going back to the (state) legislature," the ANCA director said. "There would need to be another law passed to change that."

Trombley thinks the APA and ANCA need more scenic vistas in order to establish jurisdiction over current non-jurisdictional lots to regulate aesthetics.

"Until they can prove us wrong, we will not be participating in the plan," she said.

But APA spokeswoman Vicki Hristovski noted that the Byways Program is directed and coordinated by the State Department of Transportation, not her agency.

"The program focuses on economic development and tourism promotion and is not a regulatory process," she said.

"It is a valuable source of technical assistance and funding for Adirondack communities and communities throughout the state of New York."

**PLAN BENEFITS**

Martino contends that the Olympic Trails Scenic Byway plan is sound and economically smart.

"By creating a corridor plan, grant money will be available, and it will open wider avenues of what can be done to market business and tourism in small towns."

"Joy isn't the only town to reconsider participation in the Scenic Byways plan. North Elba had originally voted to join, but the Town Council is now reconsidering."

"..."
Byways: Signage questions plague Byways project

Continued from Page 1

Ford was, according to her, all a misunderstanding on the state’s part. A footnote contained in the letter she received noted that “signs placed on an integral part of the activity they advertise are considered on-premise and do not require a permit.” Ford sent the DOT a copy of the deed to her property, showing that she had a deeded right-of-way to the land where she had placed her sign, which stands at the base of the drive leading up to her shop from Route 9N.

According to Tom Blatchford of the DOT’s Watertown office, that satisfied the state.

Since then, Ford and her husband Paul have taken the extra step of actually purchasing outright the strip of land connecting their home and shops with the surrounding land — just to be sure.

“I don’t mind regulations about the size of signs you can have, or their color, or what you can say on them,” Ford said in her home on Wednesday, “but don’t tell me that I can’t have one.”

Ford’s encounter with the DOT, combined with her experience fighting the Adirondack Park Agency as an Adirondack Solidarity leader, came together when the DOT started sending letters out again about off-premise business signs on designated Scenic Byways, including the portion of the Olympic Trail byway that runs along routes 9N and 86 between Keeseville and Lake Placid.

“We’ve sent out hundreds of such letters over the last couple of years,” Blatchford said, “trying to make people aware of what their legal obligations are.”

The timing of the DOT’s enforcement letter campaign coincided with the beginning of ANCA’s efforts to gather community input for the Olympic Trail tourism promotion plan. “The Scenic Byways program can do a lot of good for a lot of communities,” Blatchford added, “but it does contain some quite prohibitive sign rules.”

ANCA agrees, according to Executive Director Terry Martino.

It was ANCA’s effort to draw community leaders into the planning process to promote the Olympic Trail’s tourism potential — and the backlash from Adirondack Solidarity — that made Martino aware of what a problem the regulations really were for small businesses in the Adirondacks.

ANCA is currently working on a program, under contract with the DOT, to develop “wayfinding signage” for the Scenic Byway system. At the same time, the organization is asking for clarification from the state on a number of issues related to signage along roads throughout New York.

Correction:

An article on Judy Ford’s appearance before the North Elba Town Board that appeared in last week’s Lake Placid News contained some significant errors, for which a copy editor was at fault.

The article stated that ANCA had said “that signage orders like the one to Ford ... have had nothing to do with the byways designation. The orders result from regulations imposed by the state throughout the Adirondack Park.”

First, the DOT’s 1994 letter ordering Ford to remove her business sign from Route 9N specifically cited the road’s Scenic Byway designation as one reason why a permit could not be issued for the sign.

Second, ANCA has never said that the DOT’s order to Ford was not based on Scenic Byway signage regulations.

Third, the regulations leading to orders like the one Ford received in 1994 — and the hundreds that have been issued in the last couple of years — have nothing to do with rules specific to the Adirondack Park. Those regulations are applicable statewide.

We apologize to Judy Ford, ANCA, and our readers for the error.
Impact of scenic byways should be made clear

Last week, a Clintonville woman addressed the North Elba Town Board, requesting that it not support the inclusion of state Route 86 — the Olympic Trail — into the New York State Scenic Byways Program.

The woman was concerned because she said she'd been asked to remove a sign advertising her home-run business from the roadway. She was apparently told that only tourism-oriented signage was allowed along a scenic byway.

If such an incident is true, it seems strange the woman would have been asked to remove her sign. After all, it was advertising upholstery — no differently than any other business seeking patronage — and these signs are permitted along a byway.

The board said it would not retract its support of the Olympic Trail but assured the woman the incident would be investigated.

The scenic byways program is a positive initiative that should certainly move forward. The state, in conjunction with organizations that facilitate the designation of roads as scenic byways, has thus far done an outstanding job of assembling campaigns that have given tremendous momentum to the program. But perhaps the general public needs to be given more information about how the program works, who it affects and the impact it has or may potentially have.

Perhaps town and village boards could be more progressive in their approach to making their citizens aware of what's going on and be careful to ensure that those who live along a designated roadway are not adversely affected.

After all, the scenic byway program is meant to enhance tourism, and thereby enhance the lives of those who live on and around them.
Ford asks North Elba board to reconsider Scenic Byway support

LAURIE BESANCON
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

LAKE PLACID — A Clintonville business owner came before the North Elba Town Board on Tuesday to ask the board to rescind its support for the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway.

"My main concern is that it is being proposed as a local initiative and community-driven," said Judy Ford, who lives along the proposed byway in Clintonville. "I'm sorry to say it isn't."

Ford is the former executive director of Adirondack Solidarity Alliance, a property-rights group whose members have organized a campaign to oppose the Scenic Byway tourism promotion program. Group spokesmen have said that they are afraid the Adirondack Park Agency will use the program as an excuse for extending its zoning controls along the Olympic Trail scenic byway, which runs along routes 9N and 86 from Keeseville to Lake Placid.

Ford said she was asked to take down her signs that says "Ford's Upholstery" because only tourism signs are supposed to be on the byway. Ford said that if her sign were not displayed she wouldn't have a business and she wouldn't be living in the area. Upon some research, she found that most towns did not have a lot of information on the project before they signed on.

The Adirondack North Country Association, which is See BYWAYS, P. 8

Byways: Business owner disapproves

Continued from Page 1

coordinating the Scenic Byways program, says that signage orders like the one to Ford from the state Department of Transportation have had nothing to do with the byways designation. The orders result from regulations imposed by the state throughout the Adirondack Park.

Chesterfield, Jay, Black Brook and Au Sable townships have already asked to be removed from the byway. Ford asked North Elba to also reconsider their support of the byway. She suggested the town have impact studies and public hearings before they decide to go ahead with the project.

"How many people realize how this will affect their everyday life?" asked Jones. "This is a huge problem."

"I would like to de-designate until we look over this and see what we are getting into," said Supervisor Shirley Seney.

Town Councilmember Sally Warner said she still thought the byway was a great tourism enhancement plan and would like to see someone representing the contrary position on the other side of the room. She pointed out that Wilmington is in support of the byway.

"A responsible town government would ask to see a management plan," said Ford.

The board thanked Ford for coming to the meeting and promised to look into the issue further.

Ironman gets permission to use roads again

Lyle Harris of Ironman USA asked the board for road use permission on July 27 for the Ironman triathlon competition. He explained that in order to get a state Department of Transportation permit, he needed permission from the town, state police, village police and emergency medical services.

Warner said that many community members have complained about paint on the road in past years. Spectators often paint names and words of encouragement for the athletes on the road.

Harris pointed out that it was not graffiti or profanity on the pavement and said he would keep a better eye on the issue.

Councilman Jay Rand suggested that signage warning of fines for paint on the road be posted along the triathlon's route.

The board gave Ironman USA permission to use the route once again as long as they attempt to curtail paint on the road.

Board discusses dedication of '32 rink in memory of Shea

An official dedication ceremony for the '32 rink in memory of Jack Shea will take place. It's just a question of when.

The board discussed having an 18-inch by 18-inch bronze plaque, which will cost between $1,000 and $1,500, just outside the '32 rink. What the plaque will say hasn't been decided, but the decision will be made by Seney, Olympic Regional Development Authority President Ted Blazer and Denny Allen. The original idea was to hold the ceremony on St. Patrick's Day in honor of Shea's Irish heritage, but that may not be possible because of the time it takes to make a bronze plaque.

"We're just in the talking stages," said Seney, "but we're working on it."
N. Elba Town Board asked to reconsider support of Scenic Byway

By LAURIE BESANCENY
Enterprise Staff Writer

LAKE PLACID – An area business owner came before the North Elba Town Board on Tuesday to ask the board to rescind its support of the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway.

"My main concern is that it is being proposed as a local initiative and community driven," said Judy Ford, who lives along the proposed byway in Clintonville. "I'm sorry to say it isn't."

Ford said she was asked to take down her sign that says "Ford's Upholstery" because only tourism signs are supposed to be on the byway. Ford said that if her sign were not displayed she wouldn't have a business and she wouldn't be living in the area. Upon some research, she found that most towns did not have a lot of information on the project before they signed on.

"How many people realize how this will affect their everyday life?" asked Jones. "This is a huge problem."

"I would like to de-designate until we look over this and see what we are getting into," said Chesterfield, Jay, Black Brook and Clintonville have already asked to be removed from the byway. Ford asked North Elba to also reconsider their support of the byway. She suggested the town have impact studies and public hearings before they decide to go ahead with the project.

"A responsible town government would ask to see a management plan," said Ford. "I think they're coming to the meeting and promised to look into the issue further."

Town Supervisor Shirley Seney, Town Councilmember Sally Warner, said she still thought the byway was a great tourism enhancement plan and would like to see someone representing the contrary position on the other side of the room. She pointed out that Wilmington is in support of the byway.

Adirondack Daily Enterprise
2.12.03
Byway meeting brings out concerns

LEE MANCHESTER
Special to the Enterprise
WILMINGTON — Last night the public got its first crack at creating the much-debated tourism marketing plan for the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway.

About half of the 25 people who came to Wilmington’s Community Center were skeptics. They came mostly from Jay, Black Brook, Au Sable and Chesterfield townships, whose town boards had voted against the byway-planning project. Their goal was to ensure that the plan took their concerns into account.

The rest came from Wilmington township which, along with the village of Lake Placid, had enthusiastically endorsed the byway-marketing project.

The Olympic Trail is the name that was given — first by ANCA, the Adirondack North Country Association, in the 1960s, then by the state Legislature in 1984 to the road running from Keeseville to Sackets Harbor through Au Sable Forks, Jay, Wilmington and Lake Placid.

Recently at issue was the creation of a Corridor Management Plan for the Olympic Trail — more a marketing plan, actually, than a regulatory device — under the direction of ANCA and Friends of the North Country, a Keeseville-based non-profit organization.

Representatives of Friends went to town and village board meetings from Keeseville to Lake Placid to solicit support for the project from local governments.

Property-rights activists sometimes associated with the Adirondack Solidarity Alliance argued against the project, claiming that any plan identifying and capitalizing upon the scenic assets along the Olympic Trail only played into the hands of the Adirondack Park Agency. Once the CMP was finished, they said, the APA would extend even greater control over the scenic assets identified by the plan.

Last night, those concerns were not put aside. Instead, ANCA and the Friends structured the public meeting so that the problems some community members had with the byway plan could be incorporated into the plan itself.

After Wilmington Town Supervisor Jeanne Ashworth opened the meeting, the larger group was broken down into three smaller brainstorming groups, each to focus on a different aspect.

(Continued on Page 9)
Byway meeting brings out concerns

(Continued from Page 1) of the byway-marketing plan:

- Tourism and marketing;
- Natural, cultural, recreational and historic resources, and
- Project concerns.

Linda Depo, a Friends staffer, led the discussion on tourism.

"We're going to consider all the good, interesting things about this area," she told the community members at her table, "and we're going to look at them the way a tourist would look at them."

Ashworth and Sharon O'Brien, ANCA's byways coordinator, led the second group.

"The number one benefit of a program like this," said Ashworth, "is that it gives us a way to promote and show our appreciation for our small businesses. Along with that we can move toward a healthier economy, better roads and improved aesthetics."

Fred Balzac, owner of the Book and Blanket B&B in Jay, reported on the group discussing concerns about the Olympic Trail marketing plan.

"Think of us as the Darth Vader of the CMP," Balzac joked, laying out three areas of concern:

- The impact of increased auto tourism on the local quality of life;
- Questions and fears about property rights along the scenic byway, and
- The importance of local control over the marketing plan.

"We're concerned that by participating in this meeting, we might be seen as giving it our stamp of approval," Balzac said. "After it's finished, we'd like a comment period, maybe an opportunity to develop a minority report, before it's sent out."

O'Brien said that the CMP process could include those things at the tail end, if that's what the people attending meetings like the one held last night ask for.

ANCA and Friends of the North Country will hold two more public input sessions on the Olympic Trail Corridor Management Plan, each running from 6 to 8 p.m.:

- Monday, Nov. 4, in the Keeseville Civic Center, and
- Wednesday, Nov. 6, in the American Legion hall in Au Sable Forks.

At both of those meetings, a list of volunteers will be compiled for the citizens group that will actually write the CMP.

Once the plan is finished, it will go to the state Department of Transportation, which is responsible for developing the scenic byways program all across the state. The DOT can either accept the plan, as is, or send it back with requests for specific changes from the community to bring it in line with state byway rules.

"But if the DOT had wanted this to be their plan," O'Brien said, responding to some groans and grimaces from the audience, "they would have written it themselves and given it to us instead of the other way around."
Find out for yourself

Three important public hearings are scheduled during the next couple of weeks that deserve everyone's attention. They involve regional participation in the state Scenic Byways network, which the Press-Republican discussed at length in its Oct. 10 edition under the headline: "Gift or grab?"

That headline sums up discussion hereabouts on the program. The Adirondack North Country Association is coordinating Scenic Byways in this region, which includes roads from Keeseville to Watertown. ANCA touts the program as a way to preserve, enhance and publicize the elements of our highways and countryside that make them so valued. But detractors fear that the state and/or federal government might enlist towns in the program only to strip upon them new regulations that will eliminate local prerogatives — in short, that it's just a land grab.

To underscore how uncertain the liabilities and benefits of participation are, some towns are signing up eagerly, while others are voting unanimously to steer clear of the program.

Gloversville Town Supervisor Thomas Both said: "I can only say positive things about it. It's allowed us to do things we wouldn't have been able to do."

On the other hand, Chesterfield Supervisor Gerald Morrow said: "We've never had to be part of a corri-

dor to get grants. In the long run, it's going to be more restrictive against our residents."

ANCA vigorously denies that the government has designs on land or control and insists that Scenic Byways only seeks to help communities take advantage of their assets.

Still, four towns have voted against participation, which indicates they are suspicious of governments bearing purported gifts with strings attached. They are AuSable, Jay and Blagden Brook, along with Morrow and Chesterfield.

ANCA has vowed not to impose Scenic Byways where it isn't wanted. Nevertheless, it is undertaking management plans.

Town officials and residents need to familiarize themselves with Scenic Byways to determine whether it offers anything for them. The three hearings are Monday, Oct. 23, in the Wilmington Town Hall; Monday, Nov. 4, at the Keeseville Civic Center; Wednesday, Nov. 6, at the American Legion in AuSable Forks. All meetings begin at 6 p.m.

Scenic Byways could be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy glorious vistas to enhance the image of communities, broad exposure and value appreciation of our natural resources — or it could be a dangerous step to compromise the rights and local control.

Town officials and residents should be confident that they know which.
People have already said "no" to the Olympic Trail Corridor

To the Valley News:

The citizens and landowners along Route 9N in the towns of Ausable, Chesterfield, Jay, Black Brook and Wilmington should be outraged at plans to put private property under a federal zoning plan. We have to also include the folks whose property can never be seen from the highway. Friends of The North Country who are having a series of three meetings to tell how our backyard lands will be managed. They have been appointed by the Adirondack North Country Association to be managers of the now infamous Olympic Trail Scenic Byway. This trail goes all the way from Watertown to Keeseville. Friends have the Keeseville to Lake Placid section. The plan is to create a theme park all along this route for the visiting public. If you don't fit the picture, you have to go. Conservation easements, regulation, and condemnation and acquisition will be used to do this.

Whose permission does this non-profit have? Not from at least four towns on the affected roadway. All but Wilmington have voted unanimously to not be part of this scheme. The most outrageous is the fact that this is the final phase of the plan, as we are at the implementation and management process. We have been nominated and designated with no public input. The Friends of None have planned these meetings which are a sham or public participation, as they do this with their self-appointed and self-appointed committee which reports to them. Is this an irresponsible, unconstitutional, and illegal action not in our best interest? Are these groups in authority? The federal government who has hired them for bureaucrats in DC. Property rights advocates have long networked across the country and are willing to offer hard evidence of this kind of skullduggery. This kind of group should be brought to the bar, but now there is something to be done about these meetings.

Judy Ford Keeseville

Letters to the Valley News are welcome

The Valley News welcomes letters to the editor. Letters can be sent to its offices, 14 Hand Avenue, PO Box 338, Elizabethtown, 12932 or e-mailed to valleynews@denpubs.com. Letters should not exceed 200 words and must be signed and include a telephone number for verification.
ALERT

YOUR PRIVATE PROPERTY IS THREATENED

If you live in the Ausable Valley and/or own property, you are at risk!!!

The Olympic Trail Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan is being prepared by the non-profit group, The Friends of The North Country. This is a super regulatory FEDERAL management scheme which will put our lands in the Valley and our economy at grave risk.

There is a series of 3 meetings being held by "Friends" in 3 towns, starting with Town of Wilmington Offices, Mon, Oct. 28, 6 pm. They are trying to pass these off as public hearings. They are not public hearings, but a sham!!! This is final phase—the management process to lock up our lands. Locals residents have not been informed.

Most of the Town Boards in the Valley have already voted NO to this monstrosity. In spite of that, the FRIENDS CONTINUE TO PLAN THESE MEETINGS.

We have had enough TOP DOWN REGULATION. Let us support our town governments who did the right thing and attend these meetings and tell Friends we object to being managed by Washington, DC.

Meeting dates are:
Wilmington Town Hall, Mon., 10/28, 6 pm
Keevseville Civic Center, Mon., 11/4, 6 pm
AuSable Forks American Legion 11/6, 6 pm

AuSable Valley Residents Opposed to The Olympic Trail
CHEERS: to skeptics, right or wrong, of government. The founding fathers regarded government as an enormous potential danger to free people. They had seen that danger realized in governments throughout Europe. The bedrock of our republic, therefore, is its citizens' freedom — not the sanctity of the government that serves them. Local examples of these skeptics are longtime property-rights advocates Judy Ford and Howard Aubin of the AuSable area. They hear of purportedly benign, beneficent programs such as the Scenic Byways initiative, which proposes to give tourism money to communities along highways cited for their beauty, and intuitively ask, "What freedoms will they cost us?" — to the everlasting chagrin of the proponents of the programs, no doubt. Nevertheless, the question is a good one and one that by all means should be asked. If the government — federal or state — is going to hand out money to ballyhoo the assets of a region, isn't it logical that it is going to want that region to remain ballyhooable? What restrictions will it require for the region to remain so? What activities will be regulated against citizens who want to introduce something new? Are the skeptics always right and the government always wrong? Not by a longshot. But are the questions out of line? Clearly not. Somebody — besides the government — has to be looking out for the public's good.

JEERS: to all those...
Scenic Byways need not be a regulatory worry

There's no denying it: The route from Keeseville to Lake Placid through Jay township is a beautiful drive. It can be tricky, not only because of its curves, but because so many travelers slow down to gape at the lush scenery and the rising profile of Whiteface Mountain as they head west.

The issue for Jay township is, essentially, whether to promote the attractions of this beautiful drive.

Opinions on development of the Olympic Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan differ along the byway's course. Wilmington and Lake Placid, anxious for any opportunity to promote anything with the word “Olympic” attached to their names, have expressed support. The town of Chesterfield has not caught the fever. Later this month, the members of Jay's Town Board must decide whether to take an active role in developing the plan to take advantage of the Olympic Byway, which has been in existence since 1984.

Detractors of the development of such a plan are right to be vigilant against regulatory creep. Nearly all government agencies have a history of this, and the APA is certainly no exception. But it doesn't seem to be a real danger here. While participants in developing the CMP should examine the fine print, it would appear that the primary potential for expanded regulation has already been addressed: This byways management plan has expressly excluded the designation of “scenic resources,” the one thing that has drawn additional zoning regulations along other scenic byways.

We encourage the Jay Town Board to help promote the tourism potential of its communities and help shape the Olympic Byway Corridor Management Plan by participating in its development. If Jay's leaders refuse to get involved, they will leave the job of defining the existing scenic byway entirely to others who may not have Jay's best interests at heart.
Jay board hears debate on byway

LEE MANCHESTER
NEWS STAFF WRITER

UPPER JAY — The fight over planning for tourism along the Olympic Scenic Byway between Keeseville and Lake Placid went into a third round last Thursday night, Sept. 12, at Jay's monthly Town Board meeting.

Last month a staffer from Friends of the North Country, a nonprofit economic development organization that handles Jay's housing program, came to the Town Board meeting to drum up support for the process of developing a Corridor Management Plan for the Olympic Byway.

The plan was presented as a way for community groups to develop and promote tourism opportunities along routes 9N and 86, but some at the August board meeting feared such a plan might invite further regulation of the byway's scenic resources from the Adirondack Park Agency.

A public hearing held a couple of weeks after the board meeting met similar concerns. Those same concerns were raised at this month's board meeting, which took place in the new wing of the Wells Memorial Library in Upper Jay.

The board heard first from Terry Martino, executive director of Friends of the North Country Association, which bears overall responsibility for the Olympic Byway plan; Friends has been subcontracted to handle planning for just the easternmost portion of the route.

"I feel it important to come here and talk to you about what ANCA does and why we're even talking about these roads," Martino said.

See SCENIC BYWAY, P. 8
Continued from Page 1

automobile tourism routes since at least 1966, Martino said, as a way of stimulating the economies of the communities within the Adirondack Park. It was ANCA that initially called the route from Keeseville through Lake Placid and farther west the Olympic Trail. It was first listed in the New York Highway Law's roster of scenic drives by act of the Legislature in 1984.

"My worry about taking part in this," said Jay town attorney Dan Manning, "is that I just don't want any more regulation than we already have, and I don't want any strings."

Fred Balzac, operator of a bed and breakfast in Jay hamlet, thought that the way to make sure the Olympic Byway plan didn't adversely affect the town of Jay was to involve Jay township in the plan's development.

"I think we need to take part in this," Balzac said at the board meeting. "If we don't, the other communities who are involved -- Keeseville, Wilmington, Lake Placid -- will set the stage for this."

Wilmington and Lake Placid have already registered their support for the Olympic Byway tourism-planning process. Chesterfield township, which covers the Essex County side of the village of Keeseville, voted on Sept. 3 to neither "support (nor) endorse the Olympic Trail Corridor Management Plan."

According to Victoria Zinser Johnson, new executive director of Friends of the North Country, the other municipalities affected by the Olympic Byway CMP process are still "on the fence."

Chaslow had suggested earlier that towns and villages decide by Sept. 30 whether they wanted to take part in the plan, but Johnson said on Wednesday that Sept. 30 was "more of an internal deadline."

According to Jay Supervisor Tom O'Neill, the Jay Town Board plans to hold a special meeting on Thursday, Sept. 26, to decide whether to endorse the CMP process. O'Neill said he would not be attending that meeting because of a prior engagement.

Councilwoman Vickie Trombley said on Wednesday that she will vote "no" on the plan because she's not certain the APA won't use the Olympic Byway designation and management plan to extend its current regulatory control over tracts along routes 9N and 86.

Manning expressed similar concerns at last week's board meeting.

"I'm in favor of tourism," he said, "but I've lived here all my life and I've seen what's happened. Well-meaning people can get themselves into a whole lot of trouble if they don't ask the right questions up front."

In other business

• The Town Board voted to award bids on two jobs last Thursday night: Adirondack Concrete Foundations of Keeseville was the low bidder ($18,645) to do sidewalk repair work in Au Sable Forks. Other bids for the sidewalk work came from Northern Snow & Dirt of Peru ($25,000) and Moore's Flat Work & Foundations of Keeseville ($21,413). A Pennsylvania company, Anderson Equipment Co., was the only bidder to sell an Ingersoll-Rand air compressor to the Highway Department. The price: $9,490.

• Town attorney Dan Manning asked the Town Board's advice on whether to fight a challenge from the Hunt Lake Property Owners Association of their property tax assessment. It would probably cost the town between $1,500 and $2,200 to settle the matter out of court, Manning said, and about $5,000 to litigate -- but the assessment-reducing precedent could cost the township many thousands of dollars in the future. The board voted to actively fight the challenge.

• The service contract between the town of Jay and the Au Sable Forks Volunteer Ambulance Service was ready for signing, according to Manning, though the details of language requiring an annual audit of the ambulance accounts came as a surprise to ambulance board President Dale Nolan, who said that the ambulance had spent $13,967 on a lawyer to help with the negotiations. The Town Board voted unanimously to sign the contract, and Supervisor O'Neill praised the ambulance board for its part in the negotiations. "They are to be commended," said O'Neill.

• O'Neill announced that Jay township had been awarded a new grant. One for $46,856 came from the state Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's Land and Water Conservation Fund for construction of a public, handicapped-accessible playground in Jay hamlet. Two more grants came for the Upper Jay Water District, which is installing new mains and activating a new well. A grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development program brought in $1,032,600 for the project, while a letter of commitment from the state Environmental Facilities Corporation gave $1,165,254 from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund.

• Ambulance President Dale Nolan urged the Town Board to impose a total outdoor burn ban in Jay township "until we get some rain. It's not a matter of if we're going to have a big forest fire," Nolan said, "but when." The board passed a motion authorizing Supervisor O'Neill to impose such a ban if needed.

• The next regular meeting of the Jay Town Board will be held on Thursday, Oct. 10, at 7 p.m., in the Community Center in Au Sable Forks.
Scenic byway plan divides Jay's town councilors

Lee Manchester
News Staff Writer

Au Sable Forks — Jay's Town Board gave a mixed reception last Thursday night to a plan for developing tourism along the state highways linking Keeseville and Lake Placid.

About 20 years ago, the Adirondack North Country Association came up with a program to promote automobile tourism through the Adirondack Park. ANCA drew up a map of 11 North Country driving tours, called “Scenic Byways.”

Nearly a decade later, state Sen. Ron Stafford pushed through legislation that brought federal funding to New York’s scenic byways. Ten of ANCA’s 11 original blacktop tours, including the Olympic Trail through Au Sable Forks and Jay township, were given state status in the 1992 bill.

A grant recently gave ANCA, a nonprofit economic development organization based in Saranac Lake, the money to pay for development of a Corridor Management Plan for the Keeseville-Lake Placid link of the Olympic Trail. A CMP consists of an inventory of scenic byway’s tourism resources, along with a plan for marketing and protecting them.

And that’s where the trouble starts, according to some people.

Since its creation in 1999, the Adirondack Park Agency has become one of the most hated government bodies of all time among some of the park’s long-time, permanent residents. Their hatred has arisen mostly in response to the APA’s extensive zoning regulations, which keep the owners of private land inside the Blue Line from developing their property.

The agency’s proponents say that the real purpose of APA regulations is to preserve the Adirondacks as a “forever wild” sanctuary for visitor use by urban and city dwellers — at the expense of those who live here year ‘round.

The charter of the Adirondack Park Agency says that one of its basic responsibilities is “to protect the scenic resources of the ... park.”

By identifying the Olympic Trail’s scenic resources, opponents of the APA fear that a byway corridor management plan could give APA grounds for extending its authority in the Au Sable Forks area.

“It’s so important not to give the APA any more teeth than it already has,” said Howard Aubin, a sometimes spokesman for the Adirondack Solidarity Alliance property-rights group, on Thursday night.

“I’m just afraid of more restrictions,” said Jay Councilwoman Vickie Trombley (D-Au Sable Forks). “The APA already has enough restrictions in this area.”

“If that’s the way you feel,” said Janet Kennedy, byways program coordinator for ANCA, “then why don’t you participate in the process to make sure that what you wanted, I’m sure it would be done.”

“But the surest way to make sure you are okay with the plan is to take part in developing it.”

The town of Jay has until Sept. 30 to decide whether it wants to be involved in developing the Olympic Trail Corridor Management Plan.

The next regular meeting of the Jay Town Board will be held on Thursday, Sept. 12, at 7 p.m., at the Wells Memorial Library, Route 9N, in Upper Jay.
Scenic Byways program builds tourism, but...

LEE MANCHESTER
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Au SABLE FORKS – Since 1992, the roads connecting Keeseville and Sackets Harbor have collectively been called the Olympic Trail, one of the 11 Scenic Byways identified and developed by the Adirondack North Country Association, a non-profit economic development organization headquartered in Saranac Lake.

What is a Scenic Byway, you ask? It's any one of hundreds of roads across the United States that have been studied and developed by the communities through which they pass as places that visitors would enjoy.

State and federal funds are available for different stages of the development of Scenic Byways, from planning to improvement to promotion.

The latest stage in the development of the Olympic Trail as a Scenic Byway is the creation of something called a Corridor Management Plan for the portion of the byway running from Keeseville through Au Sable Forks, Jay and Wilmington to Lake Placid. Friends of the North Country, a nonprofit community development organization based in Keeseville, has been hired by ANCA to manage the development of the plan.

A public meeting was scheduled for this Thursday, Aug. 22, at 7 p.m., in the Community Center in Au Sable Forks to consider the pros and cons of the Scenic Byways program and the Olympic Trail Corridor Management Plan.

The Olympic Trail

The small rural communities along the eastern Olympic Trail are as rich in history and character as the winding roads between them are in wild natural beauty.

Keeseville – As with most of the other communities along the Olympic Trail, Keeseville was a thriving industrial town in the 19th century. The Au Sable River provided power, while the Adirondack hillsides were rich in iron ore and timber for charcoal and coke production. By the end of the 19th century, however, the Adirondack iron industry was dead. A furniture company took over Keeseville’s largest iron-related industrial building in 1925, but the firm closed shop in 1969. Keeseville has been the subject of one of the most intensive large-scale surveys of historic architecture in the North Country, resulting in the placement of 140 of the village’s 19th and early 20th century homes, commercial buildings, factories, churches, schools and bridges on the National Register of Historic Places. Just below Keeseville the Au Sable River is Au Sable Chasm, with its stunning waterfall pouring through a gorge cut in the native rock of Adirondack foothills. A few miles below the chasm, the Au Sable flows into Lake Champlain.

Clintonville – Too Clintonville is little more than a ghost town, its most significant business being a huge vet cemetery below the main route...
through the village. It may be hard to believe, but in 1835 Clintonville was not only the greatest iron-making center of the Au Sable Valley — then a wide-open iron-producing district — it was also one of the most populous settlements in all of northern New York, with more than 100 dwellings, a tavern, eight stores and two churches. By 1900, however, with the iron industry dead, the town was nearly abandoned.

*Au Sable Forks — In 1870, the J & J Rogers Company's iron-making operation, based in Au Sable Forks, employed between 4,000 and 5,000 men. After the iron industry went bust, the company switched its focus from iron to pulp in 1893, then paper in 1904, which gave it — and Au Sable Forks — another 70 years of industrial life. Today, its mill in ruins on the north bank of the Au Sable River, the Forks still evokes powerful memories of its vibrant past.

*Jay — When the iron industry started its decline in the 1870s, so did Jay. Today, it is a quiet, beautiful hamlet. Its chief attractions now are its famous covered bridge, temporarily sidelined for renovation, and its central village green, where militiamen mustered for the Battle of Plattsburgh in the War of 1812. The hamlet also features several beautiful, historic homes and churches. Ward Lumber, a modest hardware store chain and lumber milling operation, is headquartered here.

*Wilminton — In the 19th century, Wilmington was home to several light industries, but as tourism opened up in the High Peaks region toward the end of the century, Wilmington's economy began shifting. Today, the hamlet is known for a multitude of attractions: world-class fly fishing on the Au Sable River, the 1980 Olympic downhill ski site at Whiteface Mountain, the only highway running to the top of an Adirondack High Peak, and Santa's Workshop, reputedly the oldest theme park in the world.

*Lake Placid — The portion of the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway being focused upon by the current Corridor Management Plan project ends in Lake Placid, the Olympic Village itself.

**Corridor planning**

The designation of a road as a Scenic Byway in itself may attract a few visitors to an area — but not much. The real work of developing and marketing a Scenic Byway's resources comes from the local groups that create a byway's Corridor Management Plan.

A state Department of Transportation pamphlet describes the following elements of any byway's CMP:

* A vision and goals statement, or, in common English, a picture of how the byway will be seen and experienced by visitors, and the methods that will turn that picture into reality.

* Public participation. "For the byway to succeed, local residents, business owners and officials must understand and support the designation," says the DOT pamphlet. Friends of the North Country is now trying to draw people into the planning process for the Olympic Trail byway, sending program assistant Jennifer Chasalow to visit the village and town boards of communities along the designated route and asking for their help.

* Stewardship is one element of the Scenic Byways program that will be given particular attention along the Olympic Trail because of the sensitivity of some residents to any chance of added land-use regulation on top of the Adirondack Park Agency's rules.

* Tourism development, along with direct grants, is the primary benefit of the Scenic Byways program. For communities located in the Adirondack Park, where development of other industries is restricted, development of tourism is crucial to the growth of local economies. As part of the Corridor Management Plan, the local coordinating group puts together an inventory of the area's tourism resources, including accommodations and services available to tourists. The group also tries to identify additional businesses and services not currently present that would be necessary or useful for tourism development.

* Marketing and promotion of the area's tourism facilities is central to the byways development program. While Lake Placid and Wilmington have already benefited from the marketing money generated by Essex County's lodging tax, other communities along the Olympic Trail have not

Continued on Page 25
Meeting to plan Scenic Byway in Olympic Region tonight

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g access to the marketing sources that the Scenic Byways Program could offer. According to DOT pamphlet, byways marketing strategies can include vertising campaigns, production of visitor maps and guides, creation of bus-tour itineraries, and the installation of sign systems to guide tourists along the route.

Resource interpretation material that describes the historic and scenic aspects visitors will encounter along a Scenic Byway, critical for a byway’s success. A Corridor Management Plan process should also identify locations for information centers and rest areas along the way.

Financial resources. The Corridor Management planning process will put together a picture of how much money a development and marketing program will cost. How much will be available in state and federal budget, and where additional money can be found.

Support and implementation. A group of citizens, businesses, and local government organizations joining to put a Corridor Management Plan together probably won’t become a permanent management group. Someone, some organization, needs to be identified to manage the Scenic Byway program once it’s up and operating.

The benefits

In addition to tourism development, the most obvious benefit of the Scenic Byways program is the cash that comes along with it: about $148 million in federal money and more in state grants to be spent over a six-year period that ends next year.

Keene township has greatly benefited from its participation in the Colonial Trail Scenic Byway project. In 1999, the town was awarded about $1 million for improvements along Route 73 and a tourism development and marketing plan.

The next year, Keene was awarded another $520,000 for its participation in the Scenic Byways program. The money for improvements to Marcy Field, along Route 73, has made it possible for the Keene township government to replace and relocate its aging eyesore of a Highway Department garage, located nearby.

Similar funding is available for the communities along the Olympic Trail byway — but only after a Corridor Management Plan is developed.

The risk

The development of the tourism resources along the Olympic Trail would undoubtedly bring a substantial economic return to the entire area.

But a few local residents wonder whether the creation of a development and management program for the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway could cut even further into their rights to do as they wish with their own property if it stands along that byway.

A flier put out by ANCA on the Corridor Management Plan process tries to reduce such concerns.

"The CMP is not a regulatory document," the ANCA flier says. "The purpose of the creation of a CMP is to document what is there now, present a realistic vision of what the community members would want the future to look like, and to foster local commitment to work toward that future."

And that is true, so far as it goes, according to one opponent of the Scenic Byways program.

"They're right," says Howard Aubin, a small lumber mill operator and a sometimes spokesmen for the Adirondack Solidarity Alliance, a landowners' rights group. "The Scenic Byways designation adds no regulation whatsoever. But it designates resources that become subjects of APA regulation."

Aubin says that the APA's charter gives it responsibility "to protect the scenic resources of the Adirondack Park." He is concerned that if the Corridor Management Plan for the Olympic Trail Scenic Byway starts identifying the scenic resources travelers will find along the route, the APA might use those resource designations as the basis for imposing further restrictions on use by the people who own the private land upon which they stand.

"Regulation piggy-backing — that's what I'm worried about," he said.

In trying to assuage concerns like those expressed by Aubin, Chasalow has referred to a May 30 letter from APA official Steve Ermann to ANCA Executive Director Terry Martin addressing the connection between APA regulations and Scenic Byways designation.

"The predicates of our agency's permit jurisdiction are clearly defined in the statutes we administer," Ermann wrote, "and do not reference scenic highway or byway designation as the basis for requiring any permits from the agency."

Aubin's concerns do, however, have some basis in fact, according to an ANCA document on byway planning. In at least one instance, the APA has used the Scenic Byways designation in the early stages of developing a ruling "mitigating the adverse impact on the aesthetic character of the roadway contained in a land use permit."

According to Chasalow, ANCA and Friends of the North Country have restricted the scope of the Olympic Trail CMP to make sure that what Aubin fears cannot materialize.

"That's why we are tying scenic resources land," Chasalow said, "private landowner who participate, they'll be and, if they don't w included, we'll leave it."

The ANCA document describes issues and concerns in the planning process and limitations described Chasalow.

"All natural, cultural, historical, and scenic resources that are identified as 'intrinsic' to the byways should be those that are wholly within public ownership," Chasalow said. "Resources within non-profit or private ownership may be included, and involvement of the landowner, including possible land use and developers, needed."

More information about Scenic Byways prog Olympic Trail and the is regulating land use" in the paragraph on Aug. 22, at 7 p.m.
Plattsburgh — The New York Scenic Byways program wants drivers to leave the interstate states and experience the small towns they normally whip by.

Seventeen state roads have been designated as Scenic Byways because of their natural, historical, cultural and recreational value.

Advocates say the program will bring tourism dollars in, but some residents fear they may lose control of their land to a program they can’t get out of.

Grants Available

The Federal Highway Administration pays for the program through a grant system.

"They recognized the roads do more than just move goods and services around," said Adirondack North Country Association Byways Project Coordinator Janet Kennedy.

Her private, non-profit group manages and promotes the program for the state Department of Transportation.

"It can only be positive things about it," said Keene Town Supervisor Thomas Bode.

"It’s allowed us to do things we wouldn’t have been able to do."

Those include spending up the oldest home in town and fixing up Marcy Field, the small airport just outside town.

"You come up with a plan to do whatever you want," he said.

The State Department of Transportation watches to make sure the grant money is spent right and advised when improvements to a state road are made.

And, of course, the Adirondack Park Agency has a say when things are done outside the hamlet, but that’s normal, Bode said.

Kennedy emphasized that the byways program is controlled at the local level.

"There is no bagage that comes along with byways," she said.

Control Concerns

The Town of Chesterfield, however, has said no to the program.

"We’ve never had to be part of a corridor to get grants," Town Supervisor Gerald Morrow said.

"In the long run, it’s going to be more restrictive against our residents." Chesterfield residents: Judy Ford, owner of Curtains, Curtains 3, opposed to the byways program.

Please see SCENIC Page A3 →
"I'm against it because there's so little information until it's implemented."

Ford and the property-rights group Solidarity Alliance have objected to the cataloguing of scenic views -- which extend as far as the eye can see along the byways -- as resources of the program.

They believe that action may open the door to regulation of private property.

In addressing those concerns, Kennedy said that only views and scenic property that encompass state land will be listed as byway resources. Private land could be listed if the owner wished.

Ford wants to see that in writing and insists that, as it stands now, all views and property could wind up being listed.

She has attended several town meetings in the area to speak out against the byways program.

Non-profit groups such as ANCA don't have to have open meetings and are exempt from the Freedom of Information Act, another of Ford's concerns.

"Almost initiatives that are really happening usually happen because of non-profit groups," Kennedy counters. "The government may help funding, but they don't really do things."

**Jay Votes Thursday**

Jay Councillor Vickie Trembley said the Town Council has had meetings with ANCA to discuss whether to participate in the byways program.

"I think a lot of things are still up in the air," she said. "This is a large decision."

Trembley isn't saying how she will vote when the council meets this Thursday, but she feels there isn't a lot of information out there for councillors to base their decision on.

"I'm a person who likes everything in black and white," Trembley said.

The AuSable Town Council has heard from private citizens who are opposed to the byways program and from Kennedy's group.

"The council hasn't made a decision yet," said Town Supervisor Sandra Senecal.

"We have concerns about local people who have businesses along the byway.

"I think (the council) felt there wasn't enough information to make a decision."

But Senecal believes the issue will be revisited.

"Once you get into a situation like this, you have to worry about what happens down the road," she said.

**Sees Benefits**

Kennedy hopes towns will participate in the planning process even if they don't agree with the final plan.

"I think Wilmington can only benefit," Wilmington Town Supervisor Jeanne Ashworth said. "I don't see it as a land management plan."

"I see it as an enhancement opportunity to what we already have here."

She wants the same thing for Wilmington that Krene has.

With funds from the program, she hopes to build a five-mile-long bike path in the town.

"That's only the beginning," she said.

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