

MacNeil, Jami

From: Jon Luoma <jluoma@tidewater.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2020 10:17 PM
To: MacNeil, Jami
Cc: Reid, Jerry
Subject: DRAFT - NRPA permit, # L-28397-4E-A-N, located in Alna - Jeffry Spinney

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Dear Jami –

Recently revealed information about Jeff Spinney’s purported “Golden Ridge Sportman’s Club” makes it clear that the club does not actually exist. Mr. Spinney “founded” the Golden Ridge Sportsman’s Club specifically to get around DEP’s prohibition on granting ramp permits to a single landowner. The club appears to be a convenient fiction, invented and registered with the secretary of state, for that purpose. For DEP to grant an NRPA permit under these circumstances is neither fair nor right.

Mr. Spinney is the Club’s “founder,” but in all public meetings to date of the Alna Planning Board or Alna selectmen about the project, no other officer or member of the club has appeared or spoken, despite requests that other club members come to future meetings. Are there actually any officers or members? For how long have how many members been paying annual dues, if at all?

An article about this project in today’s March 12, 2020, *Lincoln County News*, quotes Mr. Spinney: “‘We are still working that stuff out as part of this whole thing,’ Spinney said of the membership the fees.” “‘A lot of details on *my* [emphasis added] private club (are) in flux, as we have never been that formal before now and are discovering our way,’ Spinney said.”

Mr. Spinney describes the club members as “a group of friends.” It does not appear he anticipates accepting other members of the public as members. If this is so, how is this proposed ‘club’ ramp and dock any different from a single private landowner receiving an NRPA permit, installing a dock and ramp, and allowing a few friends to use it – in other words, a single landowner permit, which DEP would not allow?

I heard Mr. Spinney say, at the December Alna Planning Board meeting, that he would bear all costs of this project himself. Taken together, the many questions surrounding the nature, or even the existence, of this club make the granting of an NRPA permit by Maine’s DEP highly questionable. If the DEP approves issuing a permit for this project, without looking further into whether the Golden Ridge Sportsman’s Club is in reality a legitimate club, it will be encouraging other individual landowners seeking permits for individual, private ramps and docks, to use this same ‘club’ subterfuge.

I strongly urge you not to grant this permit unless and until clear evidence is provided that the Golden Ridge Sportsman Club is something more than a smokescreen towards an individual, private ramp and dock. This would include actual adopted bylaws (not drafts), minutes showing when these bylaws were approved, a list of officers, minutes showing the date of their election, terms of office and responsibilities, and documents showing how many members currently belong to the purported club and who has paid dues. If the club is legitimate, Mr. Spinney should be able to provide these documents within a few days.

If, as the evidence available to date shows, this club is a fiction and Mr. Spinney cannot provide these documents, DEP should not grant the permit.

Jon Luoma

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