

“Every man takes the limits of his own field

The Lincoln

The Only Weekly Newspaper Locally
Serving Lincoln

VOLUME 145 NUMBER 11

Website: www.lcnme.com

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Sheepscot River project draws concern in Alna, Newcastle

By Jessica Clifford

A proposal by the chair of the Alna Planning Board for a ramp and floats on the Sheepscot River, for use by a recreational club, is drawing opposition from Alna and Newcastle residents.

Jeff Spinney is proposing the project for his 120-acre property at 126 Golden Ridge Road.

According to Spinney, the project requires permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and the town of Alna.

Spinney presented a new application to the Alna Planning Board on Tuesday, March 10, although the board has discussed the project off and on since last fall.

The Army Corps has already granted its permit for the project. According to the permit, the project consists of a few parts.

The project involves the placement of granular and precast concrete or crushed stone to resurface an existing boat ramp, which measures 36 feet by 12 feet.

The other part of the project is the installation of an aluminum 40-by-4 ramp from the shore to a “T-shaped set” of one 7-by-5 float and one 24-by-8 float, according to the permit.

“The ramp and floats are seasonal and will be fully removed and stored on the upland in the winter,” the permit states.

Spinney has applied to the DEP for a Natural Resources Protection Act permit for coastal wetland alteration.

DEP spokesman David Madore said there is a draft permit. The public-comment period for the draft ended Feb. 28.

See SHEEPSCOT page 12

LincolnHealth prepares for likely spread of coronavirus

By Evan Houk

Although no cases of the coronavirus have been confirmed yet in Maine, LincolnHealth is preparing for what health officials see as a likely spread in the state

will spread; we just have to be prepared when it does,” Dr. Timothy Fox, chief medical officer at LincolnHealth, said in a phone interview Tuesday, March 10.

Fox said the hospital engages in pandemic planning year-round for

Edgecomb forum over school

By Jessica Clifford

A public forum in Edgecomb on Monday, March 9 grew tense as discussion hovered around education costs and some members of the public called for the closure of Edgecomb Eddy School.

The Edgecomb Board of Selectmen arranged the forum to hear from residents and talk about the budget and the town’s future with the budget committee present. The forum followed a regular selectmen’s meeting.

“The select board was not ever implicated in any discussion about closing the school. ... We didn’t bring the idea up,” Selectman Mike Smith said in a phone conversation after the meeting.

“I think the vast majority of people in this town that have invested in the facility over the last 20 years want to see it succeed as a school,” he said.

At the beginning of the forum, budget committee Chair Jack Brennan spoke about the budget process, which is in its final phase this month.

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Somerville vote election of r

By Alexander Violo

Somerville voters adopted rules for marijuana businesses, decided to go back to electing their road commissioner, and approved a broadband grant application and



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a unique setup in dent is able to choose a library of books gradually want to read assignments throughout spend a lot of time

books. The school's in providing me a ks. ... I have a really for kids to choose orks," Cooper said.

was inspired by the Atwell, who ran The ching and Learning at the time Cooper n college. She said d time, choice, and hing.

search showed that se what you want to a lot more," Cooper

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ed some secrets that ed over the years th the sometimes- student-teacher namic.

are with kids every o build a relationship d you get to know get to know you. And w somebody, it's a ge every day. You're id, you're not their f you respect them you like them than

She also said she is quick to laugh at herself, which helps with rapport with the students. "I'm always the first to make fun of myself. And if I do it before they do, I'm going to beat them to it," she said.

Cooper also said she has enjoyed teaching multiple generations of students, including her two sons, her nieces, and now, her great niece.

"In fact, if you started actually going down the roster, I have had many, many children of children. It's funny, one boy in eighth grade, one poor boy, I keep calling him by his father's name. He's very good-natured about it," Cooper said with a laugh.

Cooper said she is also very proud of her several students that have gone on to become teachers.

Cooper said that Kayla Wright, who teaches English language arts at South Bristol School, has credited Cooper with inspiring her love of teaching.

Cooper also mentioned Jack Taylor, one her former students who is currently teaching at a university in Uganda. Taylor said that one of Cooper's assignments, when he had to turn a story about Zaire (what is now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo) into a poem, inspired his interest in African history.

One of Cooper's most memorable experiences during her teaching tenure was traveling to Estonia as part of a teacher exchange program, where she taught and attended a reception and concert at the Swedish embassy.

"It was very cool to see how education is in another country that is so different from ours," Cooper said.

After retirement, Cooper plans to make up for lost time and pursue her many extracurricular interests, as well as spend more time with her retired husband, Earle Cooper.

She said she plans to read, write, walk, and run outside; play trivia at The 1812 Farm; practice her French speaking; spend more time with friends; and do more sketching and jewelry-making.

Cooper also said she is excited to finally have a chance to visit Pemaquid Beach in September, which she sees as the best time of year to go.

Cooper said she will miss teaching greatly, even hinting at an eventual return to the school, possibly volunteering or substituting again one day.

"What is it they say? 'Old teachers never die...'"

DEP staff are reviewing public comments and editing the permit based on comments and the final DEP review.

At the March 10 meeting, Spinney said he expected to receive the permit that week.

Spinney was seeking conditional town approval for the project based on the Army Corps permit and conditional DEP approval.

The planning board voted to hold a site walk and, in response to pressure from the public, a public hearing.

The town will distribute the paperwork for the project through its email list. The public may submit comments to the town clerk by email at alnaclerk@gmail.com, and she will forward them to the planning board.

Board member Jim Amaral told members of the public to submit their comments without delay.

During the meeting, board member Tom Albee acted as chair. Spinney recused himself from voting.

The board voted that alternate member Laura Hiestand would serve as a voting member in Spinney's absence.

Peter Tischbein, another board member, recused himself from voting. Tischbein works for the Army Corps, but said he did not have a part in approving Spinney's permit. He decided it was best to recuse himself from decision-making for the project on the town level as well.

Spinney has altered the project to address conflicts with the Alna shoreland zoning ordinance and local concerns.

"It originally started out one way and it would have been easier to do it that way, but then we found some things, some people complained and said, 'Oh no, this ordinance says this,' so we said, 'OK, fine, we'll change the project to meet the ordinance,'" Spinney said in a phone interview.

There is some confusion about the shoreland zoning ordinance. The ordinance on the town website from 2010 has conditional approval from the DEP and is currently in effect.

A revised version of the ordinance approved by voters in 2011 was never filed with the DEP. The planning board has not decided how to proceed to address the issue.

Spinney is the founder of the Golden Ridge Sportsman's Club, a nonprofit corporation registered with the secretary of state. The ramp and floats would improve access to the river for the club.

Club activities include fishing, hunting, and swimming. Members

Since club members pay dues, Pentaleri views the club as a business that requires a business permit.

Spinney does not believe his club requires a permit.

"It's private. It's like if you wanted to have a private club of a dozen of your newspaper friends," he said in a phone interview.

Of whether a club or entity is necessary to receive a Natural Resources Protection Act permit, Madore, the DEP spokesman, said: "Typically, the department is unable to approve boat ramps that serve a single individual."

The minutes of the Oct. 8 planning board meeting summarize other concerns from residents, including more noise and traffic on the river and disruption of natural resources.

"This segment of the river is one of the most sensitive and pristine portions of the Sheepscot; where tremendous public resources have been invested on behalf of environmental preservation and restoration," Pentaleri said in an email.

"There is great concern over the nature, intensity, and frequency of uses that his club might bring, and the adverse impacts that this might have upon existing scenic, aesthetic, and recreational uses," he said.

Spinney believes decisions about the permitting of the project and whether it will harm the environment will be made appropriately by the Army Corps and DEP.

"The actual authorities that are the ones that are most knowledgeable about all of these things are weighing in and taking appropriate measures to ensure it doesn't," he said. "I own over half a mile of riverfront property on this river and I'm the last person that wants to see it have a problem."

Resident Cathy Johnson expressed concerns similar to Pentaleri's. Johnson was the senior staff attorney and forests and wildlife director for the Natural Resources Council of Maine for 30 years until she retired last month.

She listed her concerns in an email, including the "negative impact that the introduction of multiple motor boats will have on the natural, undeveloped character of this stretch of the river that has in recent years been used primarily for non-motorized recreation."

The meeting minutes from Oct. 8 state the new project "will not be a marina."

The use of Jet Skis came up during the Oct. 8 and Dec. 3 meetings, according to the minutes. According to the Dec. 3 minutes, Spinney "indicated there are no

...you respect them
...you like them, then
...it and like you back.
...been something I've
...per said.

...What is it they say? 'Old
...teachers never die, they just lose
...their class... for a while,' Cooper
...said with a laugh.

...hunting, and swimming. Members
...pay annual dues to maintain
...Spinney's property, which includes
...a gun range on an upland area of
...the property and a camping area,
...as well as the boat ramp.

...Spinney "indicated there are no
...specific plans for jet skis."

...In addition to concerns about
...the project itself, Pentaleri and
...many others have concerns about
...Spinney's ability to oversee local
...permitting as chair of the planning
...board.

...In addition to the project, the
...planning board is developing bylaws
...for its work, a process that has come
...under criticism from opponents of
...Spinney's project.

...Spinney said the drafting of new
...bylaws is "independent of" his
...project.

...More than 30 residents and
...property owners signed a letter,
...submitted as a public comment
...about the bylaws, asking the Alna
...Board of Selectmen to intervene
...and establish an independent
...committee consisting of residents,
...property owners, and members of
...the planning board other than the
...chair, to develop the bylaws.

...The chair's application poses a
...clear conflict of interest," the letter
...states. "We believe that anyone in
...his position is liable to draft bylaws
...with his or her own interests in
...mind."

...At its March 10 meeting, the
...planning board voted to have
...former Lincoln County Planner
...Bob Faunce conduct a review of the
...bylaws process.

...The site walk will take place
...at 5 p.m., Friday, March 13. The
...public hearing has not yet been
...scheduled.

First National Bank Donates \$30,000 to CLC Ambulance Service

...First National Bank recently
...donated \$30,000 to
...Lincoln County
...Ambulance
...Service to
...purchase new
...ambulances.

...said First National Bank President
...and CEO Tony McKim. "Two new
...ambulances will improve timeliness,
...quality of care, and reliable access
...for emergency medical services in
...Lincoln County."

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...Ambulance Service is
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...provides quality emergency
...transport for nine local
...towns including Alna,
...Bristol, Damariscotta,
...Jefferson, Newcastle,
...and South Bristol. CLC
...is seeking to raise
...funds for the purchase of two
...ambulances. The company has
...received \$170,000 toward its
...goal to support CLC
...Ambulance Service's campaign."



...First National Bank Senior Vice President/Senior Regional
...Relationship Officer Todd Savage, Branch Manager Jessica
...Sident/Regional Manager Michelle Curtis, Central Lincoln
...County Ambulance Service Chief Nicholas Bryant, First National Bank
...CEO Tony McKim, and South Bristol board representative
...stand.

...Ed Pentaleri, an Alna resident
...and former selectman, has
...previously expressed concern about
...the proposal in meetings and letters
...to the editor.

...Pentaleri believes the planning
...board should treat the club like a
...business.

...The issue is that it's a business,
...not that it's a club. Businesses are
...required to get permits under Alna's
...building ordinance, as described in
...Section 20 of the ordinance,"
...Pentaleri said.

...The building code ordinance
...defines "business" as "Any
...enterprise engaged in the sale,
...lease, production or distribution of
...any products, equipment, supplies,
...goods, commodities, including
...plants and animals, or services
...which are sold, leased or distributed
...by the owner or an affiliated person
...where revenue exceeds \$500 per
...year," the ordinance states.

Newcastle...

...continued from page 1

...was being made at a special town
...meeting rather than annual town
...meeting.

...Frey said state law dictates that
...the town manager question must
...be decided prior to annual town
...meeting, so the town manager's
...salary can be approved by voters
...at annual town meeting.

...State law also designates a town
...manager as the "purchasing agent"
...for a town.

...A question was raised about the

...maximum expenditure the town
...manager could approve.

...Selectman Brian Foote said
...this and other details would be
...worked out in the town manager's
...contract.

...Resident David Levesque asked
...if the town plans to automatically
...hire Duke as town manager or if it
...is going to conduct a search to fill
...the position.

...Foote said he would like to
...see Duke in the position, as he is
...already getting the job done.

Best Vacuum AND SERVICE

...with vacuums with
...FREE annual service
...Authorized Dealer of
...and Miele Vacuums
...Repair and Estimates
...Come in and visit Max & Tucker



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