

SALEM

Businessmen worry about crashes, speed

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Ron Cooper started noticing a disturbing pattern outside his office along Route 28 in the winter.

It seemed that every few weeks there was a car crash visible from the parking lot of Breckenridge Plaza just north of Dyer Avenue. In the last month alone, five accidents have occurred at the nearby intersection of Route 28 and Dyer Avenue — one requiring police to close the road for several hours while the fire depart-

ment used hydraulic tools to pry open the door of an economy-sized car struck by a crane truck.

Cooper, who operates his High Tech Opportunities business out of the plaza, was so moved by the number of car wrecks this past year he started a petition asking town and state officials to change the timing of the light at a nearby intersection.

Several other business owners and workers in the plaza joined him.

"It's a mess out there. I can't

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Marc Lorenz/Staff photo

Ron Cooper, president of a high-technology company, stands near the entrance to Breckendridge Plaza on Route 28 in Salem. There have been five motor vehicle accidents near this spot recently, Cooper said.

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Salem: Businessmen petition for traffic improvements

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tell you how many times we call 911," said Nanci Carney, a real estate agent with Masiello Group, located in the plaza.

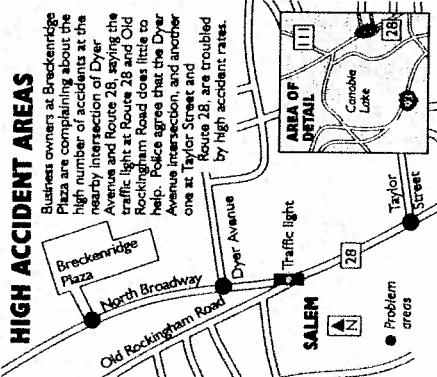
But the 75 signatures Cooper collected inspired little correspondence from local road officials. Police and other authorities continue to say the problem cannot be easily remedied.

Cooper said his wife, son and sister all work at neighboring businesses, adding to his concerns about the busy stretch of road.

"My opinion is there's going to be a fatal sooner or later and I'd rather it not be a member of my family," he said.

Mike Carney, another agent with Masiello, agreed. He said speeding along Route 28 is a major factor behind crashes in the area. "Nobody does 35 (mph) here. It's just too close to the intersection," Carney said. Drivers already use Dyer Avenue as a shortcut to avoid traffic and that will increase once widening of Interstate 93 begins next year, he said.

Statistics Cooper collected from the police department back up his concerns. So far, there have been



eight crashes near Dyer Avenue this year — double that of last year. In 2001, police responded to 12 accidents there, compared with 10 in 2000 and seven in 1999.

If the traffic light on Route 28 and Old Rockingham Road just south of the plaza were scheduled to change during the busiest times of the day, Cooper and others feel there would be fewer car crashes.

Yet solving the problem isn't that simple, according to town officials and police.

Three years ago, the town undertook a traffic study of the area and later installed the light at the intersection of Route 28 and Old Rockingham Road, said Town Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

Wal-Mart paid for the light at the time as part of traffic improvements when the store opened about a quarter-mile north of the plaza. When traffic volume is low, the light stays

green and Cooper believes some drivers speed up when they see it. "If that light isn't red, they go zipping right by," he said, adding that the light is the only thing that slows down drivers rushing north toward Breckenridge plaza.

Melissa LaRoche works at Garden of Eden hairdressers. She said when she leaves at the end of the day, she takes a right to avoid the onslaught of cars and trucks drivers have to clear when taking a left.

"People just speed and there's more traffic than there used to be," LaRoche said.

Jackie Fermoyle, a nail technician at the salon, said, "You take your life into your hands when you drive out of here."

The problem is two-fold in the eyes of local officials. The success of businesses at the plaza draws more traffic to the area, said Public Works Director Rodney

Bartlett, who noted the road falls under state, not local control. And being located between existing traffic lights doesn't help, he said.

"Their driveway location is a sort of in-between location between the lights at Old Rockingham Road and Wal-Mart, so they're either too close or too far away to benefit from the traffic lights," Bartlett said.

William R. Lambert, a state highway engineer and administrator, concluded in a letter to the town June 3 that there wouldn't be any benefit to changing the timing of the light.

Lambert couldn't be reached for comment yesterday.

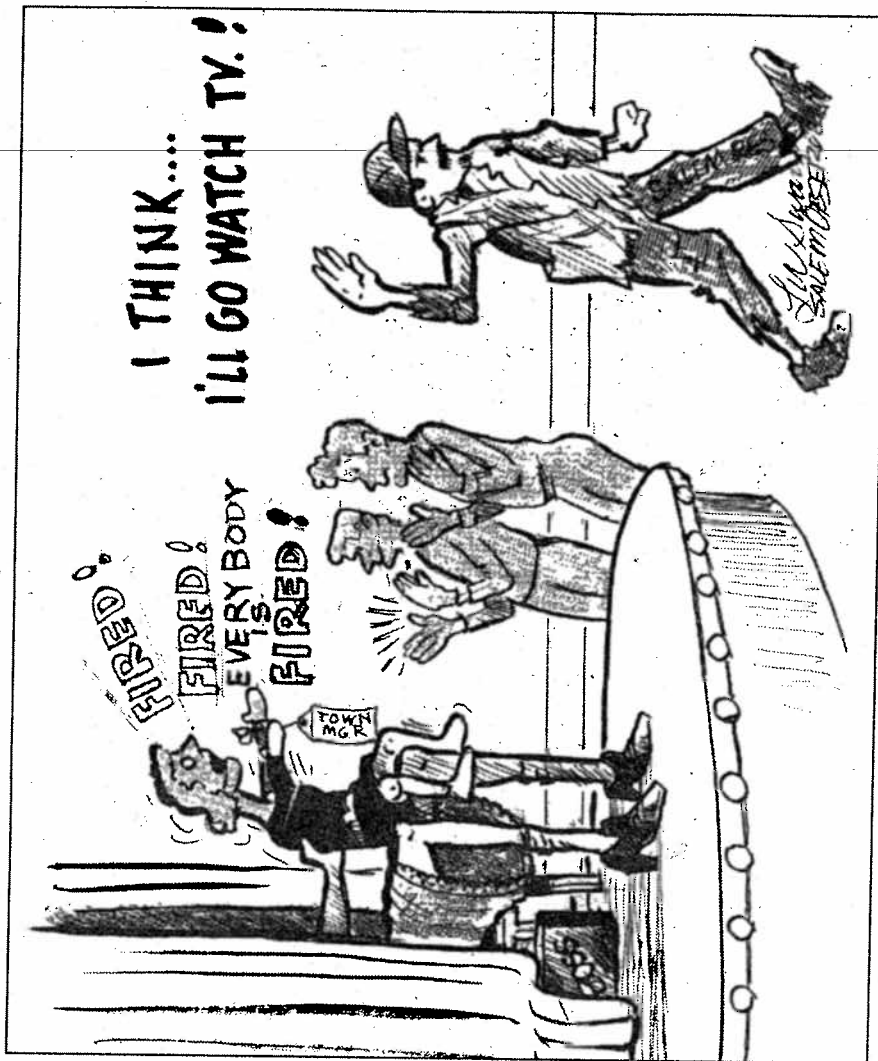
Police have remained well aware of the traffic woes in the area for the past few years and have attempted to make the best of the situation, said police Capt. Robert Larsen.

"There's a number of areas along 28 where we have speeding issues, and we try to address as many of the concerns as we can but I understand the concerns there because I live nearby," said Larsen.

A similarly troubled intersection next door to Dyer Avenue is Taylor Street and Route 28, which was the site of two fatal crashes with motorcycles in the past couple of years, Larsen said. Troubled intersections such as the ones near Dyer Avenue and Taylor Street are one of the reasons the police department is interested in creating a designated traffic unit, he said.

"It's not an easy problem and I understand the issues, but I don't know what we could do," said Larsen. He said the issue may not be resolved until there is further development in the area.

8/7/03 observer



8/7/03 Observer

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Fallout felt from town hall turmoil

Town manager defends firing of H.R. director

BY ERIC BAXTER

News Editor

Salem Town Manager Marcia Leighninger took full responsibility for firing seven-year Human Resources Director Mary Donovan last week ago.

Leighninger, who sat in Salem's top seat for about one month, refused to go into the reasons behind the termination but said the decision was her own and was done "by the book."

The firing has led to the questioning of Leighninger's motives by community members and the recent censure of Dick Gregory after he voiced his opinion that Donovan was treated in an unfair and professional manner.

For Donovan the question was which book. Donovan said she was called into Leighninger's office at about 4 p.m. Thursday afternoon with the understanding she and the town manager were to discuss some town policy issues. When she arrived the door of the office she discovered the town manager sitting inside with Selectman Stephanie

Micklon. She was told to come in and shut the door. When Donovan refused and asked what the meeting was about and why Micklon was present, she was told Micklon was there at the request of the Selectman Chairman Jim Holland, who was away, and that she, Donovan, was fired. Furthermore, Leighninger had a police escort ready and told Donovan she had five minutes to clean out her office of almost eight years and leave. She could not even make a phone call.

"It was a joke. It was intended solely to humiliate me," said Donovan. "Even criminals get a phone call."

In her 28-plus years as a human resources director, including a stint in the Boston, Massachusetts school system during desegregation in the late 1980s, she has fired thousands of people. She understands the process and dangers, as well as the humanity needed. In her seven years with Salem she also notified former town manager Dave Owens of his termination the day before Thanksgiving and spent the day after the holiday sitting on the floor in

Please see DONOVAN page 2

Selectmen call for censure against Gregory

BY ERIC BAXTER & JANINE GILBERTSON

News Editor & Correspondent

Salem Selectman Dick Gregory's comments over the firing last week of Salem Human Resources Director Mary Donovan earned him what fellow selectman Stephanie Micklon called a "censure" at Monday night's meeting.

Micklon, Chairman Jim Holland and selectman secretary Phil Smith said Gregory embarrassed the town and could have left it open to litigation by the comments he made following Donovan's firing.

In a later interview, Gregory characterized the censure as a public slap on the wrist.



GREGORY

Giordano seeks term limits.

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Please see GREGORY page 2

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DONOVAN: Firing leads to questions of town me

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his office and helping him pack boxes.

"We have never had anyone escorted from town hall," she said but even the president also

work or an attempt to char style of work," she said. She said she was not and understood changes in

DONOVAN: Firing leads to questions of town manager's professionalism

Continued from page 1

his office and helping him pack boxes.

"We have never had anyone escorted from town hall," she said adding there was no formal policy for doing so.

With the help of a few firefighters loading her truck she did leave.

But she remains worried about what will happen in the town.

"My biggest worry is that this happened within 30 days of (Leighninger) taking office and there was no assessment of my

work or an attempt to change the style of work," she said.

She said she was not naive and understood changes in power but even the president allows for a 100-day transition period.

Donovan had heard rumors for several weeks that Leighninger planned to fire her and the town manager's reluctance to bring her on as part of the team building also indicated some animosity.

Donovan had been an outspoken critic of the process used to hire Leighninger. It was this same criticism, leveled by Gregory, that

earned him the recent censure from Holland, Micklon and Selectman Phil Smith.

Former budget committee member Ron Giordano said Donovan's termination was an "outrageous abuse of power" and unwarranted.

Donovan voiced the same concerns.

"What happened on Thursday was beyond unprofessional," said Donovan, who added that she has retained a lawyer.

"The taxpayers have to start paying attention to what's going on.

GREGORY: Censured for voicing opinion about firing of human resources director

Continued from page 1

"All I saw it as was they said I was a bad boy and they told me publicly," said Gregory. "It's nothing."

He added that his criticisms of the firing were personal opinion, and he never exposed the town to any lawsuit or violated any laws.

Selectman Everett McBride voted against the censure and said it would cause more of a rift between board members.

Micklon made the motion for censure under section 40-8 of the Board of Selectmen's code of ethics for "violating section 40-2 in failing to foster respect for all government."

The motion further said Gregory violated section 40-9, which requires selectmen to believe the proper operation of a democratic government requires public officials to be "independent and impartial in their judgments and actions."

Micklon said the censure of a

fellow selectmen had only been posed a handful of times.

Holland described the measure as a public declaration of dissatisfaction with a person's actions or comments.

"Any time a public officer talks about an issue that could end up in court it leaves the town open" to a lawsuit, said Holland of Gregory's comments about Donovan's firing.

Instead, he suggested Gregory could have taken up the issue in a nonpublic session, which Holland said was the most appropriate venue for the matter.

Gregory's suggestion that the firing had been for political reasons was ridiculous, Holland added.

"I cannot believe a public officer would take an office and an oath to serve and let an employee go because of politics," he said. "I found that type of remark basically saying we violated our oath of office.

"It was nothing other than just plain defamatory," he said.

However, Gregory said he would not have had any comments about Donovan's dismissal if Holland, Smith and Micklon

had followed the usual procedure for hiring new town manager Marcia Leighninger.

"If they did nothing and went through the normal process like a background check and looking into her work experience, we wouldn't have this problem," Gregory said.

Leighninger was one of three applicants, culled from five, interviewed by selectmen. Her application was added to the mix by Holland at the eleventh hour after former Town Manager Jeffrey Towne, Holland and Donovan had culled through more than 20 other applicants, Gregory said.

Leighninger was chosen over other applicants with town manager and management experience. She was the Salem Police Department prosecutor before moving to prosecutorial duties with the New Hampshire State Police. She had no town management experience prior to her hiring.

Donovan had clashed with Micklon over the process used to hire Leighninger and that no background check was run on Leighninger before she signed the contract.

"I realize (the bickering) is not good for the town, but all they had to do was follow reasonable procedure," Gregory said.

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the paperwork to her lawyer, John Meyer of Manchester.

Donovan said she was then escorted to her office to collect some personal belongings, where she called Police Chief Paul Donovan, of no relation, to take the place of the officer.

"I asked the chief to come over to relieve his line officer. It wasn't a fair thing to do to a patrol officer on a shift, to have to dress me down and say 'go the easy way or the hard way,'" said Donovan. She said she also called Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Breen to help her remove some heavier belongings from her office. But valuable personal items, including a framed print belonging to Donovan from the Museum of Fine Arts, are still at Town Hall, Donovan said, because she was forced to leave so quickly.

Gregory said he heard rumors about Donovan being fired for weeks, but learned about it happening after the fact. He said Micklon had no right to be present at the firing.

"We're only the town manager's boss," he said. "We're nobody else's boss."

Gregory believes the motivation behind Donovan's firing was her outspokenness during the search that led to Leighninger's hiring. Donovan complained town leaders were not following proper search protocol by refusing to do a full background check on Leighninger, Gregory said.

The screening committee — former Town Manager Jeffrey C. Towne, Holland and Donovan — were to forward the names of four finalists to selectmen. Holland independently added a fifth person to the mix — Leighninger — and the board ended up forwarding her name and two others for consideration, Gregory said.

"The thing that really bothers me is when your friends are saying they were over at the racquetball club and that Jimmy Holland was spouting off that Mary Donovan is the first to go," Gregory said.

Control of the five-member selectmen's board has shifted away from Gregory since Micklon beat Ronald J. Belanger in March. He called the three-person team of Holland, Micklon and Philip A. Smith "drunk with power."

Selectmen hired Leighninger to the \$82,000-a-year job June 30. A lawyer and former prosecutor for the Salem Police Department, Leighninger held no prior town manager experience. Gregory said the two other finalists had more than 10 years' experience in town management.

Leighninger and Holland did not return phone calls yesterday.

Donovan wouldn't comment directly about Gregory's allegation concerning the background check on Leighninger. But she said Leighninger spent part of her first day on the job grilling her about Leighninger's personnel file dating back to when she was town prosecutor.

"Her motivation was to prove there was some breach of her file," said Donovan.

Donovan's lawyer, Meyer, said he had been speaking with Donovan for several weeks because his client has had issues in dealing with the town manager since she came on board. He said Donovan was concerned about the privacy of personnel records being maintained and "having consistent rules and regulations with procedures."

"She was given no advance warning and basically given a police escort out of the building. Given the fact she has been a long-term employee, it was a remarkably brutal way to treat her," Meyer said. "I was surprised by the fact she was terminated without any type of process and in a way so disrespectful."

Meyer would not comment on whether Donovan is prepared to file suit against the town, but said: "Certainly, we want to go over with her all her legal options and what legal rights she has."

Micklon declined to say much about the firing or Donovan, saying she had little interaction with the former personnel director. Gregory said Donovan was a hard-working, loyal employee who was unfairly kicked out the door because of bad politics.

"That's nasty, to be told, 'that's it. You're done. Get out of here,'" he said.

Personnel director fired amid cries of 'politics'

Salem selectman says trio of officials 'drunk with power'

By Jason B. Grosky and James A. Kimble
Staff Writers

SALEM, N.H. — New Town Manager Marcia Leighninger has dropped her first gauntlet, firing Personnel Director Mary Donovan.

Donovan, who is pursuing legal options through an attorney, said she believes she has been targeted by some selectmen and other officials for months.

Donovan said she was given no advance warning and basically given a police escort out of the building. Given the fact she has been a long-term employee, it was a remarkably brutal way to treat her, her lawyer said.

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He said Donovan was concerned about the privacy of personnel records being maintained and "having consistent rules and regulations with procedures."

"It's been a mission by a group of people to get me fired. They can hide behind anything they want, it was supposed to happen by the end of July and it did."

Fired personnel director Mary Donovan

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Donovan said Leighninger's secretary told her the day before she was terminated that the town manager wanted to meet her to discuss a policy issue at 4 p.m. Thursday.

Donovan said she noticed a police officer in the area about 20 minutes before 4 p.m. and was told the officer was there to pick up something.

She said she walked into Leighninger's office and found Micklon sitting at the town manager's desk.

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Marcia Leighninger

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Neighbors concerned over hospital expansion

7/31/03
BY ERIC BAXTER

News Editor *Olsen*

An appeal by neighbors of Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital of a decision to allow the business to build a 12,000-square-foot, two-story addition for office space has failed.

Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital, located at 70 Butler St., was granted a variance by members of the Salem Zoning Board of Adjustment to build a 12,000-square-foot addition on May 8. The May variance was an update of one granted to the hospital in 1981 that the company never acted on.

Questions about the specifications in the variance on the number of stories were raised at the July 22 planning board meeting. Chairman Mike Lyons said the questions were relayed to the town's attorney who came back with a clarification and indicated the stipulations in the variance included size and number of stories among other items.

At that meeting hospital neighbors spoke about their concerns that the new construction would have an adverse effect on the look of the area.

"We're not against it," said Butler Street resident and hospital neighbor Ray Giuffre in an interview after the meeting. "We'd like to change it to one-story or put it on another part of the property. This is a Stiles-Road-type building on Butler Street."

Giuffre and "three or four" other neighbors would look directly at the building if it is built to current plans. With a suggested height of 35 feet, the building would block their sight line.

For Giuffre, there were other considerations as well.

"I don't want people looking right into my living room," he said.

Lyons sympathized with Giuffre's concerns.

"This is a two-story building in the middle of a residential area. If this were Stiles Road I wouldn't think twice about it," he said.

The addition would bring the hospital's administration offices from an off-site location on Bridge Street to the hospital itself, said attorney James Troisi, of Troisi and Sullivan Law Offices in Salem. Troisi is employed by hospital's owner of record, Neuro Rehab Inc.

"(The addition) is strictly to support the current operation," he said.

Troisi added the hospital has agreed to a 100-foot setback and is planning a tree buffer. The normal setback for a rural zoned area is 30 feet.

"The owners of the hospital are very sensitive to the concerns of the abutters," said Troisi.

Giuffre said in the years he has lived next to the hospital he has never had a problem. But the new addition is a still a matter of concern for him.

While their appeal was denied, Giuffre said he will fight the addition if at all possible and is planning to go before planning board members at their next meeting.

"We'll see what they have to say," he said.

Lyons said the new addition still has to go through the paces with the planning board before a building permit is granted. He said the key to the issue is to ensure the addition is a good asset to the town, for both the company and the abutters.

"We have to take (the abutters') concerns into consideration," said Lyons.

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selectmen regularly apprised of developments.

Selectmen were scheduled to discuss having a joint board to draft ordinances, but tabled the matter earlier in the week.

Leighninger refused to comment on the matter, saying through her secretary it would be discussed by selectmen next week.

Concern over how the process would be handled came from selectmen who have been upset with the number of housing projects that have come before the Planning Board in recent months.

Within the past year, three senior housing projects — requiring at least one occupant to be 55 or older — have been approved by the Planning Board.

And a 112-apartment complex in North Salem now under construction has some selectmen worried about a new wave of children entering the school system and causing a demand in town services to soar. Three other plans that include some form of senior housing are currently before the Planning Board.

Planning Board member Bob Ellis said selectmen would still be able to draft proposed zoning ordinances and bring them to the Planning Board for review.

Ellis said he's pleased the two boards have come to an agreement, but was disappointed to see that only one selectman showed up at a recent planning workshop discussing the senior projects.

"Last week after all this squawking about all the housing and apartment buildings being built, we had a workshop for an hour and talked about the senior overlay district and what we're going to do about it," Ellis said.

Selectman Richard Gregory said his board's move to oversee the Planning Board in the creation of zoning amendments or revised ordinances was "a knee-jerk reaction" to proposed housing developments.

SALEM

Tribune 7/31/03

Planners to selectmen: Let us direct growth

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — If the town caps the number of senior housing or apartment projects that can be built in the next few years, the action will probably come from the Planning Board instead of selectmen.

Over the past two weeks, town officials have debated who should draft proposals for growth ordinances or moratoriums on housing.

In response to imminent growth — and the costs associated with allowing new housing — selectmen first said they wanted to retain control over the process and lead a committee overseeing the matter. Now the Planning

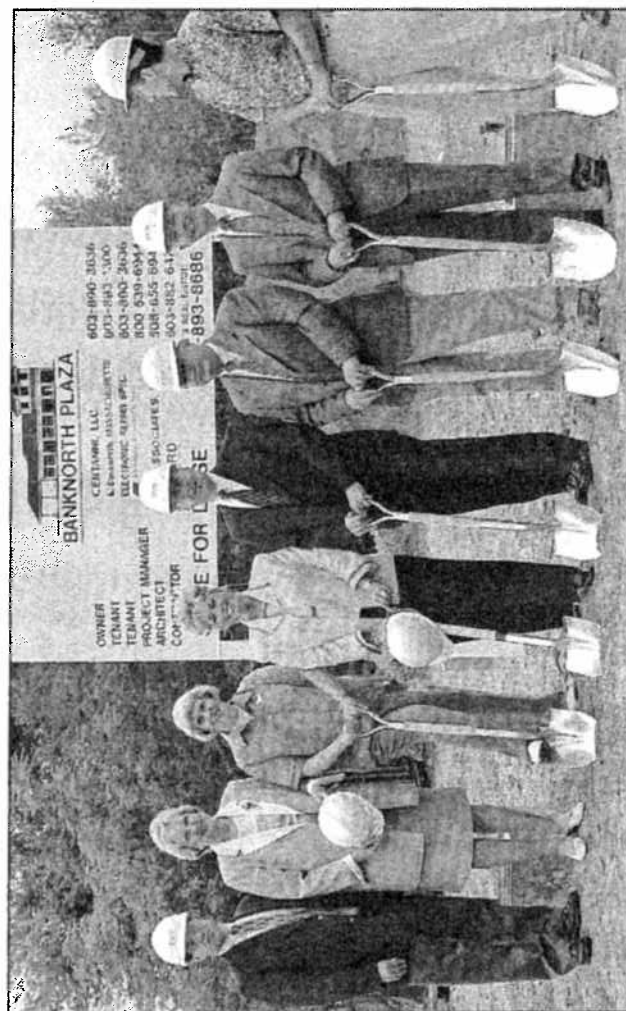
Board appears to have taken back the reins.

Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said he met with Selectmen Chairman James Holland, Town Manager Marcia Leighninger, Planning Director Ross Moldoff and Community Development Director Bill Scott this past week to discuss taking back the process.

"They didn't want to relinquish our zoning authority," Lyons said of Planning Board members.

The group agreed to have the Planning Board continue to hold workshops on proposed growth and zoning ordinances for the ballot next March and keep

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Observer/Jadd Naamani

Banknorth Massachusetts held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new branch that will be constructed on Route 28 next to the Service Credit Union. The building is being constructed by Fred Construction Inc. of Hollis, and the architecture is being provided by Financial Concepts Inc. of Natick, Mass. Pictured at the groundbreaking are, from left to right: Salem Planning Director Ross Moldorff, Salem Town Manager Marcia Leighninger, Selectman Stephanie Micklon, Banknorth Branch Manager Kelli Vecchiarelli, Banknorth Executive Vice President Ronald Trombley, contractor Jack Reed, architect Doug Watts, and property owner Joe Como.

SALEM

7/24/03
Tribune

Hospital building's height in question

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — A proposal to expand office space at Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital hit a snag this week when town planners questioned whether the variance the hospital has secured from the Zoning Board of Adjustment allows it to build a two-story building.

Last month, the hospital received a variance from the board so it could submit plans to build a two-story office space on its grounds, which are located within a residential neighborhood

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Salem: Variance puts height of hospital in question

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on Butler Street and Wheeler Avenue.

Examining the plans Tuesday night, Planning Board members raised concerns about the variance because it stated that it would allow for a 12,000-square-foot building but didn't specify whether it cleared the way for a two-story building.

"Basically we wanted clarification from the Zoning Board on whether they granted relief for a two-story building or just a 12,000-square-foot building. I think the abutters were concerned

of the view and of what they were going to see," said Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons.

Lyons said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff now plans to consult the town attorney to get clarification on the issue before bringing the matter back to the Planning Board.

Aside from those issues, board members were unhappy with hospital planners not addressing concerns the board aired about expanded parking and the size of the building at a meeting months ago, said Planning Board member Adam Webster.

"I don't think they addressed

those concerns we had. It was the exact same plan, so I was a little disappointed. I think the main issue is the height issue. I think there's a way of building the building so it's not as high," Webster said.

Neighbors who about the hospital, located on a former horse farm in a residential neighborhood, have organized an effort to block passage of a two-story structure.

Butler Street resident Ray Giuffre, who has hired a lawyer, isn't against the building but rather one that's two stories tall.

"I think the Planning Board is

more concerned than the Zoning Board as far as the abutters go," he said. "They were asking some serious questions."

Giuffre said the Zoning Board's variance seems unclear.

"They didn't say whether it's one story, two stories or 10 stories. It's going to give the lawyers a

field day," Giuffre said of the Zoning Board's decision. "Hopefully that can of worms works in our favor. We had at least five abutters and our attorney. We know they're going to make a building and that's fine. We just don't want them to make one that's terrible for the neighborhood."

Neighbors fighting hospital expansion

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Neighbors who live near Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital say they've been able to tolerate the loud whirring sounds from generators and the boisterous arrival of garbage trucks early in the morning before they wake up.

But they fear such noises could get worse, and their privacy could be lost if town planners allow the hospital to build a new, two-story office building on hospital property next door to their homes.

"When the garbage trucks come in, it's like they're coming in my yard," said resident Claudia Ramey, who has lived in a split-level home behind the hospital with her husband and two children for the

past six years. "They say there's going to be no traffic, but I don't think so. It's unbelievable ... But at the same time I understand, they have to grow."

Tonight the Planning Board is scheduled to hear plans that call for a 12,000-square-foot building and 6,000-square-foot basement floor.

Efforts to reach a representative of the hospital were unsuccessful.

Northeast Rehab is nestled in a tree-lined residential neighborhood on Butler Street, where Cape-style and split-level homes are buffered by stands of pine and hardwood trees. The hospital moved to the neighborhood in 1984 and operates a 102-bed rehabilitation facility that offers a wide range of rehabilitation services



Ken Yuskow/Staff photo

A group of Salem neighbors, including Raymond A. Giuffre, is rallying against Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital's plans to demolish the building behind him and construct a two-floor office building.

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including programs for those suffering from brain injury and burn victims.

To Raymond Giuffre, a Butler Street resident across the street from the proposed new building, the expansion would mean office workers would have a front-row seat to his living room.

"The 34 1/2-foot building would be right smack in front of my property," said Giuffre, who has hired a lawyer to represent him and other neighbors who oppose the current plans.

Giuffre said he'd prefer a one-story building and buffer of 20-foot tall trees, and for lighting at night to be a minimum so it doesn't illuminate neighbors' yards.

"I don't want (their) lights on in the middle of the yard," he said.

Giuffre hired Concord lawyer Arpriar Saunders more than a month ago after losing an appeal to Zoning Board of Adjustment on appeal for a variance it granted. The variance allows the hospital, which replaced an old horse farm, to expand its business in a residential neighborhood.

"Of course, it's been pretty cost-

prohibitive to spend \$10,000 to fight a hospital," said Giuffre.

Still, Giuffre hopes the Planning Board will consider other options for the building.

"I don't blame the abutters one bit for their concerns," said Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons. "They're very valid concerns. To me, we want to look at the size of the building and how it looks. What may be a great looking building for Stiles Road may not be for Butler Street."

Lyons said the board hasn't deliberated on the project yet, but always tries to hear abutters' concerns when it reviews plans. Neighbors acknowledged they'll likely not be able to stop the project.

An older building that has stood on the hospital grounds since the late 1800s, when the area was known as a private hunting grounds, would also be razed as part of the expansion plans.

Sitting on his porch yesterday, Al Powell, a Wheeler Avenue resident who has lived in his home

for the past 50 years, recalled that, when he first moved into his home in 1953, there were dirt roads and few signs of traffic other than the man who used to cut hay from both sides of the road.

"A lot of people in town don't want to see that building go," said Powell, himself included.

Years of vandalism, however, and lack of upkeep have deteriorated the building, according to Powell.

Mike Medwig, another resident of Wheeler Avenue, said he doesn't oppose the hospital expansion, but he worried the number of cars that now sometimes speed down his street would increase.

"It doesn't bother me," he said about the expansion. "But those cars come whipping down."

7/20/03 Tribune

Salem's town manager dispute goes too far

To the editor:

In response to Robert Ellis' letter in last Sunday's Eagle-Tribune, the following information applies.

Mr. Ellis stated he "see(s) a need to provide reliable information to the citizens of Salem when there are irresponsible actions and comments made by the elected officials." I agree. And, the "bully pulpit" Budget Committee has traditionally agreed, which is why, during Mr. Ellis' terms as selectmen they pointed out to the public irresponsible actions such as "French doors" and, I believe, bringing the Turner Well on-line. Mr. Ellis wasn't as adamant about informing the public during those episodes.

"Juris Doctorate" means "Doctor of Laws." If that degree was equivalent to a master's it would be LL.M., which would mean master of laws. But since the new town manager holds a higher degree than any of her predecessors, Mr. Ellis now decides education isn't important, experience is. What does he consider relevant experience? From his letter, one must assume those qualifications need to include either being a municipal finance director or a colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps. And, as for the citizen's selection committee that chose Mr. Owen as finalist, I think they did a great

job.

I never criticized past and present employees of Salem. I never chastised past town managers. I question those people who have chosen to criticize the new town manager prior to her assuming her duties. At the last Budget Committee meeting on June 25, Selectmen McBride stated that a background check had been completed, but he couldn't speak to the contract since it was considered confidential information until after it was signed. Yet, on June 16, there was a letter to the editor published in The Eagle-Tribune where Mr. Ellis had written that the salary for the new manager was outrageous, and that education dollars provided to her would jump to \$4,400. How would he know this if the information was confidential? I think the question now becomes who is so unhappy with the new town manager that they are violating confidentiality so someone on "their side" can write a letter to the editor?

The arrogant, disrespectful and condescending approach to citizens' concerns of the past has changed. Wake up and smell the roses. The rest of us are enjoying it.

KATHLEEN COTE
Salem, N.H.

7/17/03
Abbeville

Selectmen look to tighten ages in senior housing

BY ERIC BAXTER
News Editor

Members of Salem's Board of Selectmen, concerned with further growth that could strain town services such as schools, said they would consider restricting senior housing projects in the

future through more stringent age limits.

The suggestion was one of several made by selectmen at its Monday night meeting as the group moves closer to drafting growth regulation amendments to the town's zoning ordinances.

Selectmen suggested drafting

ordinances to be put before the voters requiring residents in senior housing projects be over age 18. Current regulations require at least one person in the household to be 55, and some projects require one person be at least age 62 or older.

Last year the town approved

three senior housing projects installing 230 condo units and 16 individual homes on separate plots within the town. Hard on the heels of those proposed units were an additional 112 units of general housing. All four of the projects have been prepping site and running roads but no build-

ing permits have been issued. An additional 337 units have been brought before the board and are pending final decisions. This one-year number represents more projects than were proposed and passed in the last decade.

Please see HOUSING page 2

Street crew

WINDHAM

Benson

HOUSING: Conflict over future of senior housing

Continued from page 1

Selectmen said that despite age requirements residents could still have school-age children and add to the school district's population.

"People who are 55 years old are not seniors," said selectman Phil Smith at the meeting.

The board decided to establish its own committee to draft a growth ordinance instead of allowing the planning board, traditionally responsible for the task, to handle the particulars.

The new committee will consult with members of the planning board, zoning board of adjustment and the conservation committee in a series of workshops that may begin as early as next month.

Smith and Selectman Stephanie Micklon said they did not want to give the planning board members authority to create new ordinances because the selectmen were the first to broach the issue of capping growth and were trying to respond to their constituents' concerns.

The sudden reversal of intent flew in the face of a joint planning board and selectmen growth-ordinance work session held earlier this year. At the session members of both boards hashed out ways to handle several trends affecting the future look and composition of Salem.

Among the topics discussed were a possible housing boom,

roadway improvements including the Depot area and the capital improvement program.

The intent of the meeting was not to arrive at conclusions or solidify plans. At the meeting, Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff said the intent was to get the members of both boards on the same page and moving in the same direction. The end result, they hope, will be more effective decisions for the town.

"We have two boards with a lot of people with strong opinions. This is the start of something positive," said Moldoff at the work session.

Not all the selectmen shared the same opinion regarding the changes. Selectman Richard Gregory said there were hundreds of variations the boards could use to change existing restrictions.

However, Micklon said there needed to be more affordable housing for seniors and suggested planning board members have not been making the best decisions lately.

Budget Committee member Stephen Campbell said "a lot of us feel like we're not well served by the planning board."

He urged the selectmen to take the lead, adding that the planning board members will be replaced "when these clowns don't do what we said."

Gregory said he took offense to the planning board members being characterized as clowns.

'Potshots' anger planner

7/16/03
Tribune

By Jason B. Grosky
Staff Writer

SALEM — Town officials are using the hot topic of development to take "potshots" at the Planning Board before an uninformed crowd, its chairman says.

A day after members of his board were referred to as "clowns," Planning Board Chairman Michael J. Lyons yesterday said he is discouraged by the show put on during Monday night's selectmen meeting.

"Constructive criticism of the Planning Board — there's nothing wrong with that," Lyons said. "But potshots and personal attacks are way out of line, and we've had more than our fair share."

The jabs at his committee flowed out of the selectmen's decision to craft a growth ordinance, a new law that would curtail construction in Salem. Selectmen want to create the law themselves, rather than leaving it to the Planning Board, which has final say over building proposals.

The strongest shot against

“Constructive criticism of the Planning Board — there's nothing wrong with that ... But potshots and personal attacks are way out of line, and we've had more than our fair share.”

**Planning Board Chairman
Michael J. Lyons**

Lyons' group came from Budget Committee member Steve Campbell, who referred to Planning Board members as "clowns."

Regarding the current group of Planning Board-approved senior housing projects scheduled for construction, Selectman

Please see **GROWTH**, Page 4

Continued from Page 1

Stephanie Micklon said: "There's smart growth and there's dumb growth ... and we want smart growth."

Lyons said he believes such criticism is done to curry favor with the common resident who does not understand how decisions on building projects — whether it's a new retail store on Route 28 or a housing complex in West Salem — are reached. So long as a proposed project is in accord with zoning regulations and the town's current laws, "Planning Board members have to approve it," he said.

While concerned his board is being left out of the growth ordinance work, Lyons said the move is within the selectmen's power.

If done right, the process of crafting the new law and putting it before voters should not be quick and easy, he said.

"I'm all for growth limitation measures, so long as they're on solid, legal ground," he said.

He pointed to the Rosen case of more than five years ago, when the Planning Board denied the current Best Buy plaza on Route 28.

"In that case, the Planning Board caved to 100 people who packed the room (and claimed) this project was the end of the world, and that it would destroy the fabric of town," he said.

The Planning Board had no strong legal reason to reject the development, Lyons said, and the decision was overturned in court.

Looking ahead, he hopes selectmen — and any other town officials who have issues with the Planning Board — take it up with them directly rather than spouting off in another venue.

"In all the hearings we've had on various projects, we've had virtually no public input, aside from abutters and people concerned about the view from their property," Lyons said. "Nobody came to us and said at a public meeting that we've approving too many units. The people taking the cheap shots have not come to the Planning Board" to complain.

SALEM

7/15/03
Tribune

Town eyes age limits for senior housing

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Worried that more senior housing will bring with it young wives with children who could flood the school district, town leaders may consider a minimum age limit for children to live in those developments.

Selectmen suggested last night they may want to restrict senior housing projects in the future so that young people under 19 years of age wouldn't be allowed to live on the premises.

The suggestion was one of several made last night as selectmen prepare to consider new growth ordinances to limit the influx of housing projects now being proposed in Salem.

In what may turn out to be a controversial move, the board decided last night to set up its own committee to draft a growth ordinance instead of leaving it to the Planning Board or a sub-committee.

"If there's a difference between the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen then we need to come here and battle it out," said Selectman Everett McBride. "I know people are going to say we're going to usurp the Planning Board's authority ..."

Instead members of the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Conservation Commission and Recreation Advisory Commission will be consulted during a series of workshops that may begin as early as next month, selectmen said.

Within the past year, three senior housing projects — requiring at least one occupant to be 55 or older — have been approved by the Planning Board.

And, a 112-apartment complex in North Salem now under construction has some selectmen worried about a new wave of children entering the school system and causing a demand in town services to soar. Three other plans that include some form of senior housing are currently before the Planning

A 112-apartment complex in North Salem now under construction has some selectmen worried about a new wave of children entering the school system and causing a demand in town services to soar.

Housing: Town eyes age limits for children in senior homes

Continued from Page 1

Board.

Last night, Selectmen Stephanie Micklon and Phil Smith said they didn't want to give the Planning Board authority in crafting potential ordinances because selectmen were the first to take up the issue of putting a cap on growth.

"The Board of Selectmen have taken the jump on this, and we've heard the people in the community who say we're not happy with this," Smith said about the housing plans.

Community Development Director William Scott told selectmen last night that town staff is in the middle of researching similar growth ordinances around the state and creating "build-out" projections for Salem's residential and business districts for years to come.

Planning officials may also propose eliminating the town's special exception clause that allows builders to construct almost any type of project in a commercially zoned district.

Scott asked for direction from

selectmen on how he should report the town staff's progress on drafting ordinances, so town planners wouldn't be caught between two boards if they had differences on the ordinance.

Selectmen have said in recent weeks that another concern they have with senior housing is that despite the age requirement, residents could still have a younger spouse and children that would add to the school district's population.

Not everyone has agreed with those theories, including Selectman Richard Gregory who suggested last night the town could restrict younger people from living in the senior complexes.

"There's hundreds of variations we can do," with existing restrictions, said Gregory. Smith said he would like to also see top end of the age requirement increase.

"People who are 55 years old are not seniors," Smith said.

Beneath the discussion of how selectmen may or may not add restrictions to incoming housing projects, town officials also took subtle, and not so subtle, jabs at the Planning Board members for approving the current group of senior housing projects now scheduled for construction.

Micklon, who said Salem needs more affordable housing for the elderly, suggested planning board members haven't been making the best decisions lately.

"We want to keep this a friendly community... There's smart growth and there's dumb growth... and we want smart growth. I'm not sure we've always done that," she said.

Budget Committee member Steve Campbell had harsher

words for the Planning Board. "A lot of us feel like we're not well served by the Planning Board," he said.

"You guys have to take the lead," Campbell told selectmen. "Then when these clowns won't do what we said," they'll be replaced.

Selectmen backed off on criticisms of the Planning Board following the "clowns" comment, and Gregory said he took exception to "10 volunteers on the Planning Board being called clowns."

In an interview after the meeting, Planning Board member Bob Ellis said he didn't take kindly to the comment either.

Ellis also took exception to the board's criticism of the senior

overlay district, passed in 1998 to encourage senior housing.

"I didn't see any of their faces when we discussed those ordinances," Ellis said, "and we discussed during several workshops then when the ordinances were written we had two public hearings and ... In none of those cases did we see any of these members to the Board of Selectmen or Budget Committee saying we shouldn't do it."

Staff writer James A. Kimble may be contacted by phoning (978) 946-2000, or by e-mailing jkimble@eagletribune.com.

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SALEM

7/10/03
Tribune

Officials grapple with boom in housing

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Town officials, who have lamented Salem's lack of senior housing for years, are suddenly finding themselves faced with an explosion of senior-oriented construction, and it has some of them worried.

A total of seven housing projects are currently in various stages around town, and all but one of them are aimed at the senior market. The choices include apartments, condominiums, and single-family homes.

But now there is a movement among officials to stem the flow of housing projects, citing worries over the burden they could place on everything from Salem's Fire Department to its water supply and school systems.

Town staff is now working toward drafting a growth ordinance to limit the number of apartments or senior housing projects coming to Salem if it approved by voters in March.

Drafting an ordinance will likely be discussed by both the Planning Board and selectmen over the next several months, but some officials have already taken hard-line stances on the issue.

And others are questioning whether the impacts would be as great as some officials fear.

"I will tell you what the people have told me," said Selectman Stephanie Micklon, "They don't want to see any more of these apartment complexes. I don't want to be Derry. The fact of the matter is they've let the apartments come in left and right, and that affects our school systems. What they'd like to see is some affordable housing. These apartments scheduled to come in aren't exactly what I'd call affordable."

Micklon noted that selectmen are still waiting to see what town officials draft for possible ordi-

Please see **SALEM**, Page 2



Tomorrow: Mostly
to partly sunny, 84°

Eagle-Tribune
WMUR weather

nances before making any decisions.

Back in March, selectmen and Planning Board members met, and a majority of selectmen said putting a cap on the influx of housing was a top priority for the next year.

"I think it's always something you want to keep an eye on," said Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons about the recent increase in housing proposals. "And I think the key is we need to demonstrate the growth we are having is having an effect on town's ability to deliver services. Once we've done that, then we have to determine how much we want to assess things. That has to be on firm ground because that could be challenged in court."

Lyons said he'd favor a growth ordinance, but only if studies showed that it was needed to prevent the burden on town services that some fear.

The Planning Board is still considering three of the housing plans. Only one of the four projects approved so far is open to residents of all ages: A 112-unit apartment complex off Route 28 in North Salem next to Wal-Mart.

But some selectmen have theorized that even the age-restricted complexes, which require a resident to be 55 or older, could still add children to the school system.

Schools Superintendent Henry LaBranche said based on the school district's experience and its own studies of what this new influx of housing could mean for the school system, the possibility of senior housing adding to the school population seems unlikely.

"With concern over housing for 55 and older, there's no data to support that," LaBranche said.

And even the multifamily units, such as the project near Wal-Mart that have no age restrictions, wouldn't add much to the school system's roster, LaBranche said.

"When you look at a multiple-family unit, based on the formula we use, it would indicate an addition of only 16 students. That's very marginal obviously. You wouldn't even characterize it as an impact," LaBranche said.

LaBranche did acknowledge that North Salem isn't the most desirable location for new housing because North Salem School and Barron School are at near capacity because of a "bubble" in the school population. Currently, population at both schools hovers between 380 and 400 students, and is expected to remain at that count into the next school year, LaBranche said.

The unknown factor the school district faces, according to LaBranche, is whether young

families who once shopped only for starter homes are now gravitating toward apartments because home prices are too high.

Selectman Everett McBride said now may be the time for Salem to re-examine how it distributes impact fees, usually paid by the developer to offset growth-related expenses in the school system.

"The point is it needs to go an appropriate level," McBride said. And it may be time for such fees to help town departments. "We may need money for more fire equipment or water," McBride said. "We need to look at how rapidly the development takes place, but I don't think the issue is with single-family growth in Salem."

McBride said the recent spate in proposals also may signal a time for revising the town's senior overlay district, which allows developers to add more housing units to a lot than what's allowed for an average property.

Salem passed the overlay district in 1998, but didn't have an immediate response by developers because they were still limited to building senior housing by the growth ordinance that was in place at the time, according to Moldoff.

"The ordinance expired in '01. They're may in fact be a tie between the sunseting of the residential growth ordinance and the rise we've seen in applications for senior housing," Moldoff said.

Moldoff said selectmen and Planning Board could have several possible options if they did want to limit future growth in town by revising currently ordinances on the books.

Selectman Richard Gregory said selectmen need to make a distinction between the senior housing now being proposed and the sole apartment complex now being built in Salem. He said the apartment complex is the first built in Salem in about 20 years.

"There's no apartments for couples who are out of college, married, that are new," Gregory said. "Out of all the approved projects there is only one approved apartment project. The other approved projects are senior housing, which is something the town said they wanted in the town in March four or five years ago. They voted to put it in," he added.

Gregory said the senior complexes now being proposed have been unfairly categorized as apartment complexes. And concerns over adding more apartments in town may be unnecessary because of the lack of property in Salem where more apartment buildings could be built, he said.

Continued from Page 1

The Salem branch is largely used for continuing education classes, geared to the nontraditional college population — adults who take classes at night. Students may earn associate's and bachelor's degrees. The college's other branches are in Concord, Nashua and Portsmouth.

The Planning Board gave its approval this week to plans that were unveiled in March.

Traffic is Salem's primary concern, as the site is off Pelham Road near Exit 2, Town Planner Ross Modolph said. The area is crammed with vehicles during the morning and afternoon rush-hours, he said. The two-story building will have 177 parking spaces.

Builders will pay the town \$45,000 in so-called "traffic impact fees," he said. The money will be set aside for future, unspecified improvements to the Pelham Road area.

"This is a good new building, and it's a positive development for the town of Salem," Modolph said.

Workers will begin clearing trees off the lot this month, Moon said, with heavier construction starting next month. The school anticipates moving into its new building in March 2004. Developer Jack Merchant, of NBI Realty Services Inc., said construction will cost "in excess of \$2 million."

Hesser will own neither the land nor the building sitting on it. Instead, it will lease the new building from the property owner, Moon said.

"This is a very good location for us, and the place for us to be," he said.

Hesser College plans move

7/11/03
Tribune

By Jason B. Grosky

Staff Writer

SALEM — Hesser College and its 550 students will move to a new home this spring, now that the school has received the go-ahead to build a new 16,000-square-foot building off Interstate 93.

The new location, at the corner of Manor Parkway and Industrial Way, will provide enough space for additional programs and another 200 to 300 students over time, college President Robert S. Moon said.

The Manchester-based college opened a Salem branch about 10 years ago, leasing space at the Keewaydin Drive Holiday Inn. "We have outgrown our present location in terms of capacity and size," Moon said. The new site is about 50 percent bigger than Hesser's current home.

Please see **COLLEGE**, Page 1

6/27/03
Tribune

Closure sought for zone loophole

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — When a developer wanted to build an apartment complex next to the Wal-Mart in North Salem, the first stop in the approval process was not with the Planning Board, but with the Zoning Board of Adjustment to seek a special exception to the town's zoning ordinances.

Residential uses aren't generally allowed in business zones, but the ZBA has the legal power to grant special exceptions to zoning rules. In the North Salem case, the developer sought two exceptions, and ended up battling .500.

An exception was granted allowing the project to be built, but a second request for buildings taller than allowed under current zoning was rejected. Construction is to start this summer.

The North Salem project offers an example of how the use of special exceptions has shaped Salem's commercial landscape, allowing things not envisioned when the zoning ordinances were drafted.

"What this provision has given us is sites with less parking that otherwise needed, taller buildings, not enough setback (or lots) closer to their property lines than otherwise would be. There's nothing there that's positive," said Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

Use of the special exception process is being questioned by members of Salem's Planning Board and ZBA who are considering making long-overdue revisions in the ordinance to either eliminate or drastically revise the special exception clause.

The change would still allow developers to seek variances from zoning regulations, a separate process governed by more stringent criteria, while closing the exception loophole, said Planning and Zoning board members.

Planners say requirements for a special exception are much lower than those for a variance. Exceptions allows developers to build almost anything within a commercial district, zoned primarily for business.

"This is only a loophole to meet zoning regulations, to come in and request relief (that's) not even relief," said Moldoff.

Moldoff believes the changes wouldn't have any impact on the vast majority of applicants that come before both boards each year, only the ones asking

Continued from Page 11

to be absolved of various regulations on things such as height and building use, among others.

Variances are governed by state law and requires the developer to show that their project:

- wouldn't diminish surrounding property values.

- would benefit the public interest.

- would suffer hardship if it had to be built without the exception (a financial hardship wouldn't count).

- would be making an alteration not contrary to the spirit of the variance law.

Changing or eliminating the special exception clauses is considered long overdue by board members. The special exception clause first came to Salem in 1961 in order to encourage developers to come to town, according to Moldoff.

"Zoning is something that needs to change with the times," said Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons. "When the special exception was put in place back in the 60s we were looking to encourage growth, we're obviously in a different situation today."

Zoning Board of Adjustment Chairman Joseph Scionti said the ZBA and Planning Board — which held a joint meeting on Tuesday night — haven't yet decided whether to modify or delete two parts of a special exception clause.

Ongoing talks between the town's attorney and Moldoff

seems to ensure that some sort of proposed change will be brought before the Planning Board later this year, according to Scionti.

The criteria for a special exception in the commercial zone now "makes it so you practically can have anything," Scionti said.

Zoning Board member Dan Norris said Tuesday's meeting also prompted a number of other discussions about how the Planning and Zoning boards could work more closely together.

The special exception clause was the issue that both boards seem to agree on the most, he said. "I think our special exception ordinance is deficient in a number of ways," Norris said. "It allows a landowner to seek the approval of virtually any use of a piece of property in our commercial district just by meeting some very broad and not well-defined criteria. Those aren't suitable zoning restrictions for a modern zoning ordinance to have."

"I think it was a good thing," Planning Board member Bob Ellis said of the meeting. "We feel there's a little better understanding with each other's board and how decisions with the Planning Board affect the ZBA."

Moldoff agreed that both boards seem to want to work closer in the months ahead, especially as large scale projects come before them. He added that changing the special exception clause seems to be an issue both board are about unanimous on.

"I think the only question is whether to delete it entirely or modify it," said Moldoff.

SALEM

6/24/03

Plans for doughnut shop rise

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Developers are brewing up plans for yet another coffee and doughnut shop to feed the public's apparently insatiable appetite for caffeine and sugar-laden goodies.

The latest proposal, scheduled to go before the Planning Board on July 9, is for a Dunkin' Donuts on Route 97 (Hampstead Street) right at the Salem-Methuen town line, said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

It would be the fourth coffee-and-doughnut related plan to go before the Planning Board in the last year. Currently, two doughnut shops are under construction in Salem: a combination gas station and Honey Dew Donuts at the intersection of Pleasant Street and South Policy Street, and a Dunkin' Donuts on Lowell Road replacing Pare's Variety, said Moldoff. And last year, plan-

ners had to approve renovations of the Dunkin' Donuts shop on Route 28.

The proposed Route 97 building would be located near the Green Barn Restaurant, and plans call for a 2,500 square foot building with 24 seats.

The Andover, Mass. firm of Lax and Sar Corp. is listed as the property owners. The owners of the Dunkin' Donuts on 539 S. Broadway in Salem want to develop the property, according to town records.

In addition to the recent approvals, there are also Dunkin' Donut shops near the Methuen line on South Broadway, and a small store is located in a Mobil gas station on North Broadway.

Moldoff said he imagines the profit margin from such businesses could be what's driving the proliferation of stores in Salem, but officials were surprised about seeing the latest set of plans.

"Everybody says the same thing: Another doughnut shop?" Moldoff said.

Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said business owners are most likely tapping the large number of commuters that travel through Salem on a daily basis.

"It is interesting how the doughnut shops are responding to the market. Consumers want their coffee and want their doughnuts and have a hard time getting into these places," said Lyons. He said the challenge with these shops is that local parking and other standards aren't designed to deal with them.

Doughnut shops are about the same size as a small convenience store, but have a much higher volume of traffic, said Lyons.

The Planning Board will get its first glimpse of the plans July 9.

Letters to the Editor

6/12/07
observer

Disappointed in selection process

To the Editor:

I have been following the Salem town manager selection process with great intensity, hoping that if we had to lose a good manager like Jeff Towne, that we would at least get someone as good

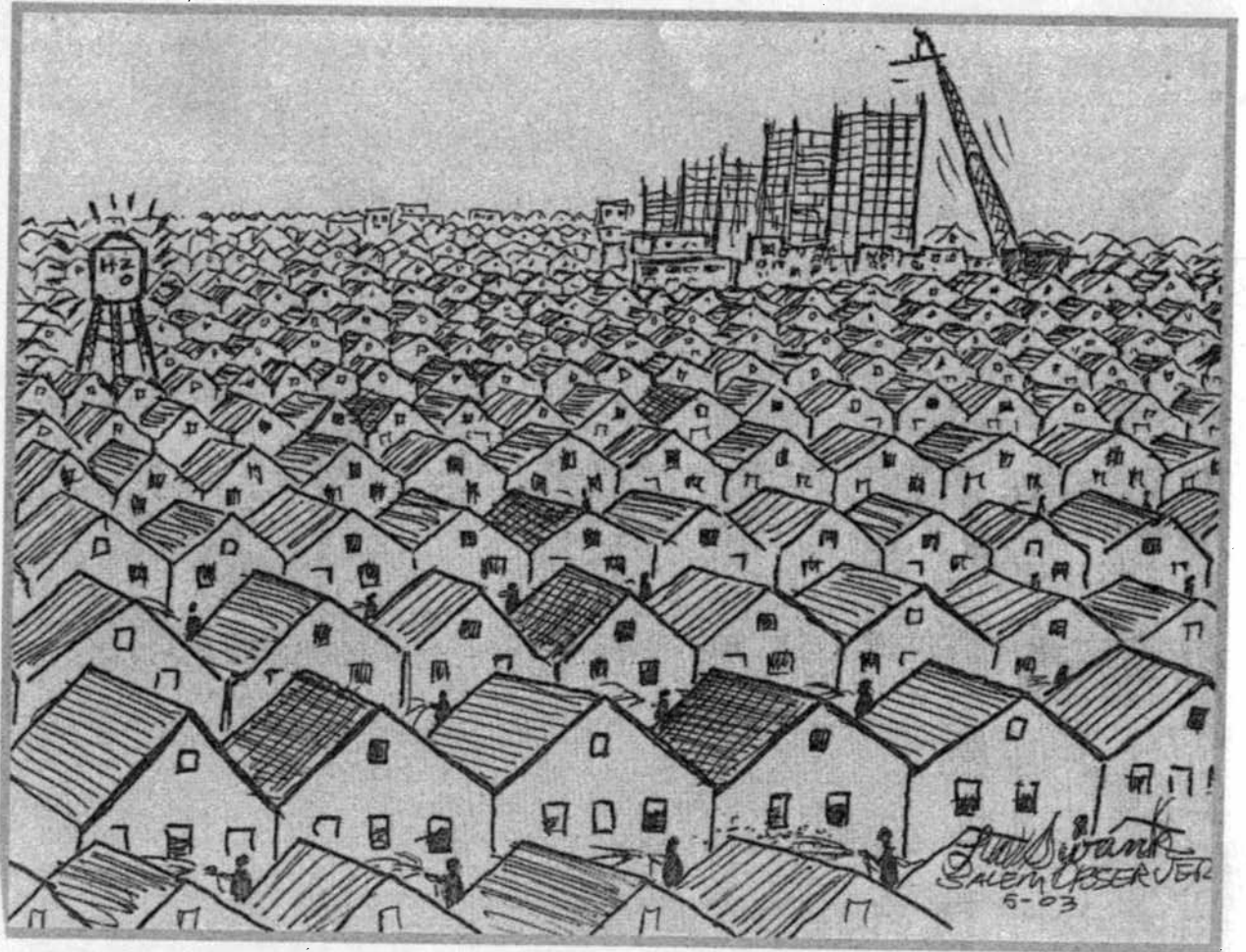
This entire process has been a sham and an insult to the residents of Salem. In March the board denied that they had made a choice. Marcia Leighninger's name was one of three at the time. In May a meeting was held and, according to the minutes, a motion was made by Selectman Stephanie Micklon and passed 4-1 to have Mary Donovan, Jeff Towne and Jim Holland review the 26 applications and select the top four. A fifth application was added to the four top

choices.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out who the fifth choice was, given the fact that, according to the article in the paper, the chosen candidate has no experience as a town manager. She certainly would not have been in the top four if someone were looking for a qualified town manager.

It's too bad that it appears that somebody's personal interest and gains are overshadowing this process. We need a qualified town manager, not an inexperienced person that will end up being a puppet for some members of the board of selectmen who have demonstrated a need to run every aspect of the town of Salem.

Robert Ellis,
Salem



6/5/03

Salem picks prosecutor for manager

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — The town's former Police Department prosecutor has accepted the job as Salem's next town manager, selectmen announced last night.

Marcia Leighninger of Salem could take the helm in as little as two weeks, pending a background check and ongoing talks regarding a contract, said Selectman Chairman James Holland said.

"We still have to do the background checks and some other administrative functions but it shouldn't take more than two weeks," said Holland, moments after he released a written statement on the job offer at Monday night's selectmen's meeting.

Currently working as a prosecutor for New Hampshire State Police, this will be Leighninger's first time working as a town manager. She beat out 26 other applicants, some of whom were town managers, and was one of three finalists interviewed for the job last week.

Selectmen made their decision on the candidate at a closed-door Friday night meeting after spending Wednesday and Thursday



Marcia Leighninger

interviewing finalists.

Selectman Stephanie Micklon said Leighninger was among "a wide range of applicants" who vied for the manager's position.

"It's fair to say, in our opinion she was the best person for the job," Micklon said.

Leighninger, who was rumored to be a pick for the job back in March, worked as the criminal prosecutor for the Salem Police Department for nearly seven years up until the end of 2001, when she resigned and began working for the state.

Prior to going to law school, she was a teacher and served as a department head, which included duties of budgeting and collective bargaining for the school district, selectmen said.

Selectmen stressed last night their enthusiasm of finding a new manager who lived in Salem.

Please see **SALEM**, Page 2

will begin as new superintendent of school hallways.

Continued from Page 1

Micklon said Salem hasn't hired a manager from the town in about 18 years.

"We felt the community was looking for someone local," Micklon said. "She is highly, highly educated and she certainly knows

the town and she's attended all the Town Meetings."

Leighninger has her law from Franklin Pierce Law Center and had a private law practice before working Salem for the first time as a prosecutor. She also had stints at the state Attorney General's Office.

al's Office Consumer Protection Bureau, the Department of Safety and the Division of Child and Youth Services.

"I think we did well by getting her," said Selectman Phil Smith, who worked with Leighninger when he was a police officer. "I

hope we have some longevity with her."

Smith also said he believes Leighninger's experience with the law will be "cost beneficial" to the town when negotiating contracts with unions.

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arrived, they say Kilbride was crying, covering her eyes on the front stairs.

Parent's attorney, Albert Hansen of Exeter, said his client is the victim of a set-up by Kilbride. "Some people get up in the morning and they need a cup of coffee," Parent testified, against the advice of his attorney. "Amy would get up and she needed heroin. She needed it every day."

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"The state has to prove my client was in possession of heroin," Hansen said. "So far we've heard a bounty of evidence that she's a heroin addict and a bounty of evidence that my client hasn't used it . . . I would move that you dismiss on those grounds."

It was an argument that fell short with Judge Bronstein, who ordered Parent held on \$75,000 cash bail, pending a grand jury session in Rockingham County Superior Court.

Should he make bail, Parent's under court order to stay away from Kilbride. He's due to face the misdemeanor counts this summer in Derry District Court.

Leighninger named Salem manager

By JANINE E. GILBERTSON
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM — Selectmen announced last night the new town manager will be longtime Salem resident Marcia Leighninger.

Leighninger, an attorney working as a prosecutor for the New Hampshire State Police, has worked for Salem before. She was the prosecutor for the Salem Police Department for seven years before leaving and taking a position with the state police several months ago.

"Marcia is highly educated and familiar with the town," said Chairman Jim Holland. "She has the skills required to be an effective town manager."

Leighninger will be the first woman to hold the position and the first town manager in 18

includes a clause stating that all cash assets now owned by East Derry and Derry fire departments will remain within the respective communities.

"If you want to have a marriage, here is the prenuptial," Nelson said, explaining once the final settlement proposal is drafted, local voters will not be able to amend the agreement. However, the town council or the East Derry voters could decide to reject the proposal.

The residents of East Derry will have other options to choose from, including whether they would like to continue operating as a smaller precinct, according to Nelson.

The council and the commissioners avoided discussions on the future on East Derry's substitution that was recently built but is now in Derry because of the new boundary changes.

The two boards will advise their legal representatives to privately handle the negotiations of the substation along Bypass 28, according to the tentative plan.

By RILEY YATES

Union Leader Correspondent

DOVER — A lawyer for Mark Linnane yesterday asked a judge to dismiss 10 new sex assault charges because they involve the

years who lives in Salem.

Selectman Stephanie Micklon said Leighninger's resume and her broad range of work experiences stood out from the two dozen applications the town received.

"Her interview was very impressive," Micklon said. "And we felt the community was really looking toward someone local. She certainly knows the town."

"We were fortunate to have someone apply from the town with such a wide background. She had an amazing resume. She was the best candidate in our opinion that applied."

Before attending law school at Franklin Pierce Law Center in Concord, Leighninger was a school teacher in the state of Washington.

same girl Linnane was convicted in 1998 of sexually assaulting.

Authorities say the new offenses occurred in Gonic and Durham before the charges that led to Linnane's 1998 conviction for sexually assaulting the girl in Salem.

Public defender Linda J. Slamon said the new indictments should be dropped because six years passed between the initial Salem investigation and the recent charges, denying Linnae's right to a speedy trial.

She worked for the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Bureau before joining a law firm in Goffstown and had her own law practice in Salem where she specialized in juvenile law.

Leighninger worked as an attorney for the Division of Child and Youth Services and the state Department of Safety.

Holland said Leighninger is active in numerous volunteer organizations in Salem.

"We are looking forward to working with Marcia," Holland said. "Attorney Leighninger is highly qualified for the position."

Leighninger is replacing Jeff Towne, who held the position for a little over two years.

Towne gave his resignation at the March town meeting and worked his last day on Friday.

Sex offender wants new charges dropped

Police in Strafford County were not informed of the Gonic and Durham allegations until the girl and her mother told police at the University of New Hampshire about them on Oct. 29, 2002, court records show.

Attorneys for both sides would not comment on why police in Stratford County were not notified sooner.

But the effect is clear, Slamon said: "It's unfair that they can tagger the prosecution this way

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Planners, selectmen mull town's growing pains

In 2002 Salem's five-year growth ordinance ended and opened the door for increased residential construction. This year the town saw proposals for 700 units of housing and continues to receive applications for single-family homes.

by
ERIC BAXTER
News Editor

The question facing the town is how it will maintain its level of service to the community while preserving resources like water. Last week members of the planning board and board of selectmen met to discuss the challenges facing the town and pursue possible solutions.

The general goal of the work session, said Community Development Director Bill Scott, was to educate the

members about what planning tools were available to them and how they could be applied.

Growth ordinance

In March 1997 residents voted to enact a five-year growth ordinance. The measure restricted the number of building permits the town issued per year in an effort to control the unchecked growth of the mid-1990s. The state does not allow towns and cities to make permanent restrictions. Other towns with similar growth restrictions include Derry, Londonderry, Sandown and Hudson.

Within the five-year timeframe Salem was obligated to make changes that would allow them to control growth without the ordinance.

"The ordinance had allowed for a

high density [of people]," said planning director Ross Moldoff at the recent meeting. "We changed the density once to lower it."

However, the change failed to make any substantive progress and was faced with similar problems at the end of the period.

"We may want to [change the density limit] again," Moldoff said.

Crafting an ordinance is not a simple measure. Growth is not a simple issue," Moldoff told the selectmen.

Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said many of the discussions at the meeting came back to quantifying the effect of the growth. Tallying of the effects is one of the first and most critical

steps in bringing an ordinance into play. Between 2001 and 2002 the Salem Fire Department saw a 14 percent increase in calls. Between the 1980s and 1990s burglaries jumped from 637 to 1,541, and larceny — a broad category covering a number of crimes, including shoplifting — jumped from 1,404 reported cases to 11,304.

Recently, the Salem School District decided to stop taking tuition students from Windham as one way of reducing overcrowding at the high school. With hard numbers in hand, the town can determine the correct limit to set, how to administer the limits and how those limits will affect desired developments including affordable and senior housing.

Once the town has determined

numbers and the best plan and whether an ordinance is necessary, it will be brought before the voters as a zoning amendment on the next March ballot.

Impact fees

Hand-in-hand with the growth ordinance is impact fees. The fees are used to pay for infrastructure development and help defray the cost of essential services like schools, fire and police. Building permit fees are levied to pay for the time and effort needed to shepherd a project through the various town offices from concept to construction.

The town last updated fees more than a decade ago. The essence of the need for the update, said Scott at the workshop, was to ensure fees cover costs.

In 2002, building fees cost the

town \$300,000, but the fees only brought in about \$149,000 in revenue.

The town currently levies fees for roads and schools. But the heavy development has and will continue to place more stress on other services increasing the price of service without increasing revenue.

Scott calculated the average amount of impact fees for a single-family home valued at \$200,000 built in Derry, Londonderry, Nashua or Manchester was \$852, with Nashua charging the lowest at \$483 and Manchester tallying the highest with \$1,435. Salem charged a total of \$327.

The new construction needs to share in the cost," Scott said.

—Staff writer Stanley Dankowski contributed to this report.

Rock looks to set pace

Harness meet under way today

By Ron Indrisano
GLOBE STAFF

SALEM, N.H. — Rockingham Park, which today opens its first harness meeting since 1980, will race opposite Plainridge Racecourse, but neither Rock nor Plainridge, which runs through Dec. 2, wishes to promote a conflict. Rock set its schedule — Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays at 1:05 p.m., and Fridays at 7:35 — to minimize problems with Plainridge, which races Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays at 4, and Rock will allow certain horses to ship back and forth to race at Plainridge.

"Guys who ship from a farm can go anywhere they want," said Rick Kane, the racing secretary at Rock. "They can pick their spots, but we give \$60,000 a day in purses [Plainridge offers \$45,000], and we'll get our fair share. And we're not going to limit the people who stable with us. We told them that if they have more than one horse in the same condition [category], they can go down there, race, and come back. We don't want to see anyone's stable get jammed up."

"I'm going down to Plainridge to race on Tuesdays," said trainer/driver Bruce Ranger, who shipped to Rock from Pompano Park in Florida. "They told me that whenever I can't race a horse here, I can take him down there. I have several horses who all fit in the same spot, and this will help me."

Plainridge stables 175 horses, and those horsemen will stay there. But the outfits who ship from Maine are free to go where they want, and will probably race at both tracks.

"We wish everybody up at Rock the best of luck," said Steve O'Toole, the general manager of Plainridge. "If they can create more enthusiasm for harness racing, that will be great. We get 20-25 percent of our starters from Maine, but the smart move for them is to keep their foot in the door with us. We have a long season after Rock closes. We're not going to lose any of our backstretch outfits, they are committed to us for the year. We're prepared, but I don't think Rock will have that much of an impact on us."

Mike Perpal has the largest outfit stabled at Plainridge with 18 head, and is the leading trainer. He's staying put, along with the other outfits stabled there.

"Some of the Maine guys are going to stop and give Rock a try, but they'll probably split their stables and race some days at Rock

and some days at Plainridge," he said. "I wonder if the Maine horses can be competitive at Rock. Plainridge has had an excellent meeting so far, both the live and simulcast handle are up, and there's been very good racing with full fields. We talked about this situation in the trainers' lounge the other day, and not one guy said he was leaving."

Rock management has been upfront about having only a two-year commitment to harness racing unless video lottery terminals are legalized in New Hampshire.

"There is a bill sitting in the Senate Finance Committee, but I'm not sure what they're going to do with it or when," said Rock vice president Ed Callahan. "It is an option for revenue if, ultimately, they decide they need it. There's a budget that has to be met, there could be a \$200 million biannual shortfall, and I don't know how that will eventually be done. We'll see."

"We're currently working with a development company to draw up plans that will fully develop the property. We anticipate that will take about a year and a half. We hope to have a good meet this summer, and again in 2004. After that, it is likely development will begin if there is no legislation for video lottery. If video lottery happens, then racing and gaming will be the primary factors in development of the property."

"The key is to put on some great racing. This is the first time since Suffolk Downs in the '60s harness racing on a mile track has been held around here. I think in combined handle, simulcasting and live, we may do pretty well. After Freehold (N.J.) closes, there are very few afternoon harness signals, and sites who take our signal have told us they're looking for something else out there to offer their customers."

Ranger, the leading driver at Pompano, raced at Rockingham in the late 1970s. Now he, and a lot of other familiar horsemen, are back.

"I've only been here a couple of days, but it's fantastic," said Ranger, 43, from Falmouth, Maine. "It's such a breath of fresh air. I've had more fun seeing all the faces I haven't seen in years. It's the same people, but we're all a little older. Seeing everybody who's coming in, it's going to be like old-home week around here."

Ranger, who is also a trainer, last raced in New England at the old Foxboro Park in 1986. This year, he is available because Pompano, reacting to the economy, will not hold a summer meeting, closing June 7 and not returning until October.

"They chased us out and closed the track," said Ranger, who has 20 head at Rock. "I had to go somewhere. I like racing at Pompano because you don't have the stress and pressure of the Meadowlands, but you can make a decent living and enjoy the weather. I have an awful lot of horses in training and I didn't know where to go. I didn't want to go to Toronto or the Meadowlands, so I said, 'Why not go home?'"

"The people here have been more than accommodating. Everything we've needed, they've done. They put in a jogging track for us so we could walk the bad actors. Everybody's upbeat. This is new and exciting."

According to Kane, Rock currently has 200-300 horses stabled on the grounds, and projects to top out at 700 for the 60-date meet, which ends Sept. 1. Ship-ins from farms will also boost the fields. The opening-day card, with a 1:05 first post, offers 11 races. The feature event, the \$12,000 Lou Smith Memorial, includes Gallo Blue Chip, a 6-year-old gelded pacer who was Horse of the Year in 2000, and has earned more than \$4 million in purses.

"We're getting quite a few horses from Pompano," said Kane, who was raised in New Hampshire, has worked at most harness tracks on the East Coast, and has been assistant racing secretary at Freehold since 1999. "Our meet fits in well for a lot of those horsemen. We'll also get a lot of horses from Freehold [which closes today] and Delaware, and we'll get some back and forth from the Meadowlands, too. Those outfits want to keep their horses racing on a 1-mile track, which we have. It's a four-hour drive, but it's all interstate highways. This is going to work out fine."

Ranger, who also catch drives [drives for other outfits], will have six horses from his stable on the opening program. Later in the meeting he will bring in his heavy hitters, older pacers The Paper Wazoo and The Aussie Fighter, and top mare Masked Ball.

"Unless you're racing at a top track you've got to both train and drive to make a living," said Ranger. "There's not enough money just to be a driver. I've worked some horses over this track [a stonedust surface laid down in April] and it's maybe a little cuppy. But it will settle down and we'll be fine. This track does have a thoroughbred rail" — harness tracks have only pylons, so horses can escape into the infield during an accident — "and that's a concern. But you've got to be aggressive and throw caution to the wind, or don't drive. A catch driver must have no fear, you just go for it."

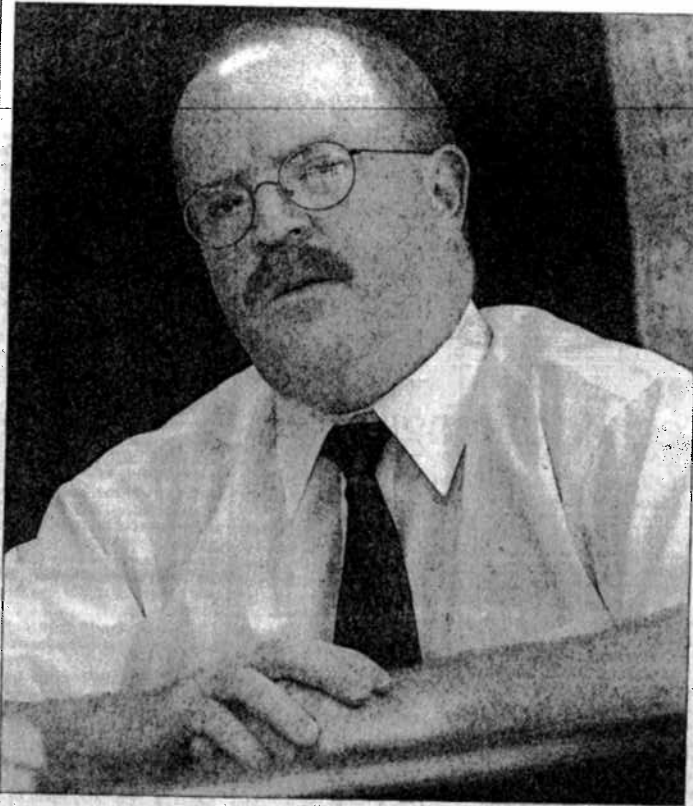
tribune 5/29/03

Lack of planning

Regarding the growth in Salem, N.H., I agree that the Planning Board has failed us. The tax revenue is not worth the additional stress on the almost maxed-out Fire, EMS, Police and Public Works departments as well as the schools. They should be called the "lack-of-planning board."

Resign

I agree with the person who called regarding Salem's growth. I can't believe that there are more stores even being considered when we have lots of vacant ones. They also have not taken into account the already-stressed public services and vital resources. As a citizen, I call for their resignations.



Salem Town Manager Jeffrey C. Towne works in his office. He will be leaving for another position after this week. Mark Lewis/Staff photo

Towne: Major challenges ahead

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — The town's next chief executive is going to face some major challenges, outgoing Town Manager Jeffrey Towne says.

In the upcoming year, the new manager will be faced with negotiating with police, fire and clerical workers unions, as well as helping to guide one of the largest private developments in Salem's history, with the anticipated closing of Rockingham Park after the 2004 racing season and transformation of the 170-acre property for other uses.

"It's going to be a huge undertaking for whoever sits in this seat next," said Towne from behind his desk at Town Hall yesterday. Today is his last day on the job in Salem.

After dealing with the daily challenges of the manager's job, Towne, 37, will get back to a more 9-to-5 track. He's going to a new job as a vice president and general manager for Municipal Resources Inc., a private consulting firm in Meredith. Even though his new position will still have him working with public bodies such as selectmen, town governments and school districts, he will be stepping back from the limelight and accountability that comes with being the top executive of a municipality.

Please see **TOWNE**, Page 2

Selectmen put off decision on manager

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Announcement of a new town manager was put off last night because selectmen decided they wanted more time to consider three candidates.

Selectmen will meet again tonight to discuss the candidates and review notes made during the interviews, said Selectman Chairman James Holland.

"We were hoping to have a decision last night," Holland said this morning. "But there's no good news yet — I would love to have this thing over with but there still things we have to do."

Holland said he doesn't expect to make an announcement by early next week because the town would need to conduct a background check and make an offer to the candidate.

Today is the last day of work for outgoing Town Manager Jeffrey Towne, who has taken a job as general manager and vice president at Municipal Resources Inc. in Meredith.

During a closed-door session at Town Hall last night, board members spent approximately three hours interviewing two candidates. When the interviews ended around 10:30 p.m., all four board members agreed they wanted more time to look over notes they took during the interviews, Holland said.

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Staff

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Towne: He sees challenges for Salem

Continued from Page 1

The job in Meredith, a small community that sits on the northern tip of Lake Winnepesaukee, is a coming home of sorts. Towne began his career as finance director for the Town of Meredith in 1995 and left for the same position in Salem two years later, where he was later promoted from within.

The 24-hour nature of the challenges of the manager's job were dramatically illustrated by an incident earlier this year when a police detective was accidentally shot by another officer on a Saturday night in April.

Towne was awakened by a phone call. He hopped in his car at his home in Concord without checking the time and drove to the Salem Police Station. He called selectmen, drove to a Boston hospital to see the wounded officer, Det. Rich Oliveri, and finally made it back home at 4 a.m.

The shooting incident was an uncommon one for Salem, but the unorthodox hours and calls from work aren't abnormal for Towne and other municipal managers like him.

"A lot of people don't realize that you take work home. You're reading materials, returning e-mails over the weekend, you're taking calls from selectmen. I get phone calls from the police station from time to time," Towne said.

If there's a flood or water main break, then there's a call from the Public Works Department, "it's well beyond the 37 1/2 to 40 hours per week," Towne said.

Having more time off is one the reasons Towne decided to leave his post earlier than first announced, he said. Originally, he decided his last day was going to be July 1, but about a week ago he had a change of heart and wanted more time off.

Towne said the change in lifestyle will give him more time to spend with his wife of 15 years and his two young daughters.

Almost inherently, the job of town manager or administrator comes with an after-hours schedule in addition to a full work day at the office. It's a straight salary with no overtime. Budget Committee meetings through the fall and winter require managers to present, then defend — sometimes in heated, nonstop debates that go on for hours — their budgets before committee members and the public.

Those demands apparently have taken a toll on managers in Salem.

Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff said he has seen Salem go through 10 town managers in the past two decades of his employment.

"I don't think it's an easy job for a variety of reasons. Some segments of community think we're still a small town and we're not. We're a large community. There's a tremendous amount of work," said Moldoff. "We probably need an assistant manager to help out because there's so many issues and so many people want to contact the town manager, then there's bargaining with the unions. Besides that, you have five bosses. By nature it's a complex job and takes a ton of time and it just wears down people."

One day he got a call because a resident had a dead squirrel in his yard and wanted someone to take it out. "So many people will call and they want the town manager because they think he's the only person who can take care of it," said Towne. "And you have to respond. It's an important part of the job."

"The thanks you get is a very personal satisfaction. They can't believe the job you did for them. I will miss a lot of people, but I'll miss most the people working for the town."

The job also entails being a community ambassador. "One of the things the board wanted me to do was to be active in the community. That meant attending parades, Memorial Day celebrations, attend ribbon cuttings for local businesses," said Towne.

Such appearances also called for getting hands-on with the event itself. When the Ingram Senior Center opened to the public last fall, Towne and one of his daughters spent their Saturday at the opening gala and dance, then spent a portion of their evening cleaning up alongside volunteers.

Towne has had his critics, from selectmen to budget committee members, but he said one of the tougher aspects of the job was to "not take criticism personally."

"I think some people will criticize you no matter what like when you have a strong budget and people haven't told you you've done your homework ... sometimes it is aimed to be taken personally."

Despite the contention, Towne said he has tried to keep town business moving in a positive direction, but still his decisions haven't always been met with approval, like when he hired Paul Donovan, a police captain from Hartford, Conn., as police chief in 2001.

"Hiring the police chief was very controversial. I don't think it's a secret selectmen wanted to hire someone local," said Towne. "The right decision was made." Towne insists that he looked for the best person for the job, and if the person happened to be local, then that was a bonus.

His hope is that selectmen will take the same approach when choosing his replacement, he said. "I know the board hasn't made a decision for manager yet, but I hope they'll select the best person for the job," he said. "I think it takes someone with strong management skills to run this community."

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REVITALIZING PROJECT

4/25/03



Joanne Cuomo and her husband, Joe, stand outside their business, Electronic Repair Specialists, where they plan to build a new two-story building. It's one of several projects in the northern part of the Route 28 revitalization the area. Mark Lorenz/Staff photo

Razing to raise image of Route 28 north

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — The old Dalrymple Gas building is scheduled to be razed within the next couple of weeks to make way for a new two-story building that will house a Banknorth branch and an electronics repair store.

When complete, the new building will be the latest in a series of revitalization projects cropping up along the northern section of Route 28, an area town planners have been targeting for more attractive store fronts to replace some of the town's oldest commercial structures.

In the past two years, Town Fair Tire has demolished an old car wash to make way for a new building. Dunkin' Donuts razed its old building near the Coca-Cola plant and built a new one. And Brothers Tattoo is being replaced with a new location of Sun-Sational Images, a local tanning salon, said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

When the Dalrymple building was constructed in the late 1950s, it was one of the first commercial buildings on the road and surrounded by farms, said

Joanne Cuomo, whose business, Electronic Repair Specialists, currently occupies the building.

"Back then, of course, it was quite a building," Cuomo said. "To them, it was very modern looking."

The new building will be a big change in appearance from the current one, which sports store advertising in huge block letters from end to end, said her husband, Joe Cuomo. The Cuomos started their business there about eight years ago.

Standing out behind his store, Joe Cuomo pointed out the tin-walled storage building that once allowed trains to pull up and drop off propane gas, and the cement supports that once held large propane tanks, all of which will be taken out.

Joanne Cuomo said talk about having the bank re-locate to their property began when a vice president of Andover Bank, later bought by Banknorth, came to them as a customer to have some home electronics repaired. Banknorth has offices on Route 28.

Talks progressed for a few years, and plans came to fruition when the banks merged, Joanne Cuomo said.

Moldoff said the new building will not only be another upgrade to the northern part of Route 28, but become more valuable and increase its tax base for the town.

"It's actually a real fun thing for me, and I think the Planning Board too, to get to work on things like this — when you can take a old tired building and make it an asset," Moldoff said. "The owner gets something they want and we think its an asset to the community."

Joe Cuomo said he has appreciated Moldoff's efforts in trying to improve the northern section of Route 28.

"Ross has been working hard to improve the look of Salem," he said.

And while he's excited about the new building, a part of him will miss the place where he started out years ago.

"To be honest with you, when they knock it down, I don't think I can be here. I've spent more hours here than I want to admit," Joe Cuomo said.

While the new building is under construction, Electronic Repair Specialists will take up a temporary home at Rocky Ridge Plaza in Windham.

He said construction should take five to six months.

5/15/03

B-6/6b

Senior housing: Is it a budget boon or buster for towns?

By James Varnis
GLoucester STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Usually when a developer proposes housing for people 55 years and older, leaders in many of southern New Hampshire's fastest-growing communities rally around the projects as a way to prevent younger families from moving into town and crowding their schools with more children.

Londonderry is perhaps the most vivid example of the euphoria that surrounds some of these projects. Voters at a special Town Meeting last fall agreed to pay a developer \$2.9 million to build

125 ranch-style homes for people 55 years and older, and to preserve some land as open space rather than having to deal with the 361 apartments for families as originally proposed.

But underneath the widespread jubilation for these projects, a few southern New Hampshire communities are starting to grow weary of 55-and-older housing, which is drawing Massachusetts senior citizens into New Hampshire.

Communities such as Bedford and Milford have changed zoning laws to restrict where this kind of

housing can go, and talk of restrictions is beginning in Salem, where the Planning Board has been swamped with proposals that could bring more than 600 units to town.

Critics accuse some developers of trying to take advantage of high-density housing in communities where little land exists for multifamily housing. They point out that under federal rules, which apply to these developments, 55-and-older housing requires that only one resident be at least 55 years old, leaving the door open

for children to move in with them. "It's backfired on many towns, in my opinion, and now we are trying to tighten up," said Karen White, town planner for Bedford, where 55-and-older housing no longer falls under a zoning exception for senior housing that enables 28 units per acre to be built in commercial zones.

Developers, however, deny they are circumventing local zoning laws. They say that they are simply trying to meet the market demand created by an aging population of empty-nesters who no longer want to keep up large

homes, and that most communities welcome building proposals for 55-and-older residents these days more than they do subdivisions or multifamily housing.

"I think [the 55-and-older proposals] may be more in response to zoning restrictions than the bulk of people 55 and older who want to live in an age-restrictive community," said Jack McBride, a principal of Commons Development Group Inc. in Westford, Mass., which is building a 55-and-older complex in Salem. "A lot of [empty-nesters] want the product

The lack of an income tax and low housing prices, compared with other states, also makes New Hampshire an attractive

SENIOR HOUSING, Page 6

► SENIOR HOUSING Continued from Page 1

place for these developments to draw out-of-state empty-nesters and retirees who want to get the biggest bang for their buck.

"What you can do is sell a house in Massachusetts for \$700,000 or \$800,000, and you can buy a house in New Hampshire and another in Florida," said Francese, who also noted that some people in "their mid-50s buy a house as a second home, come up on the weekends and holidays, and when they retire, they will move to New Hampshire."

But Francese warned that catering housing to the over-55 crowd, as some New Hampshire communities appear to be doing lately, could come with consequences. The demographics of a community could shift to one that is considerably older, making it difficult for school budgets and school construction bonds to pass, while sending a message that young families are not welcome.

"There's nothing wrong with building houses for the elderly, but if they are building it at the exclusion of everything else . . . New Hampshire will become the West Virginia of New England," Francese said. "You'll see an old state with old people and no work force to provide services they need to survive."

Salem, which typically approves 125 single-family homes a year, has emerged as a particularly popular spot for 55-and-older housing in the past two years, with more than 600 units proposed. Located just over the Massachusetts border, Salem offers proximity to medical centers, tax-free shopping, golf courses, and small lakes. Out of seven projects discussed so far — which could put 55-and-older housing next to a newly opened senior center, a nursing home, and a mausoleum — the Planning Board has approved three.

"It's pretty staggering in the sense we haven't gotten that kind of housing before," said Ross Moldoff, the town's planning director. "The sheer number is daunting to town officials."

Informal discussions have started among some town officials over whether Salem should consider changes to its zoning, which allows senior housing anywhere in the town with Planning Board approval.

If Salem pursues such a change, the town will join Bedford and Milford, where Town Meeting voters approved restrictions on 55-and-older housing this year and last year, respectively. In those two communities, perceptions started to grow that families were moving into 55-and-older housing, although neither community had numbers to back up anecdotes passed on from neighbor to neighbor.

A greater concern was that officials in those two towns felt that the proposals coming in — often for luxury units that include such amenities as swimming pools or golf courses — didn't address the more critical need facing the towns: being able to offer affordable housing to aging residents, which is why the towns enacted flexible zoning for elderly housing.

"They're just building high-priced condominiums for the high density," said Walter Murray, chairman of the Milford Planning Board.

"We want to take care of the population that's getting older," he added.

Still, there is a segment of the aging population that likes the high-end condos and houses going up even though those residences do not include access to other services typically geared to an aging crowd, such as a community dining room and house cleaning.

"I think there needs to be some solution of creating housing of all types," McBride said.

100 YEARS
of FAMILY OWNERSHIP

5/9/03

Salem to get first look at PetSmart plan

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — After a lengthy dispute over zoning issues, a proposal to bring a PetSmart next door to Circuit City on Route 28 will make its way before planners next week.

Two abandoned buildings on the lot once occupied by Rockingham Woodcraft and Gourmet Takeaway would be razed and replaced with a new 29,000 square foot build-

ing, said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

The conditions of the existing buildings are described by Moldoff as "pretty poor."

"They're older buildings," Moldoff said. "It's going to be an improvement to the area. They're going to have some nice landscaping in the front."

PetSmart is a national retailer of pet supplies for dogs, cats, and even reptiles. Their closest locations are in Nashua, and a store in Plais-

tow, State Line Tack, catering to the owners of horses.

Plans to redevelop the property have been pending for several years, said Moldoff, held up by a dispute over zoning requirements.

Those disputes have been settled following a state Supreme Court decision that overturned the ZBA's denial of a special exception. "They have all of the special exceptions from ZBA now and the Planning Board will be seeing

it for the first time," Moldoff said.

Developers came up nine parking spaces short of what's allowed for a project its size, according to Moldoff. The plan has 137 parking spaces. And designers asked if they could forgo placing a buffer zone between the store's parking lot and the neighboring Circuit City, said Moldoff.

PetSmart would use the Circuit City entrance for access to its parking lot, an

issue that the Planning Board will have to consider once they begin reviewing plans next week, said Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons.

Circuit City has a turning lane with a traffic light at the entrance to its parking lot.

"Obviously we'll want to look at that traffic situation and make sure the light there can take the (additional) traffic. We want to make sure we've got the capacity for the increased volume," Lyons said.

5/8/03 Observer

Bushway abutters pleased with progress

Abutters to the Salem school district's "Bushway property" on Main Street who are on a committee formed by the school board to find an amicable solution to the future of that property say things are going along smoothly.

by
**STANLEY
DANKOSKI**
Staff Writer

The committee — which includes three abutters, two school board members, town planner Ross Moldoff, a Manchester engineer who lives in Salem, and developer Steve Hatem — have officially met only twice.

The group was formed after the abutters in the neighborhood convinced the school board to give them a vital role in the development of the property, located at 213 Main St. somewhat across the street from Woodbury Middle School.

"It's getting better," said one abutter, Gerald Little. "We're getting acquainted with the school committee and they're getting acquainted with us."

The most important focus right now, Little said, is to find a way to demolish an aging and perhaps hazardous white building on the Bushway property and a small red barn behind it.

"The longer this building sits there, it'll be a bigger hazard," Little said.

New plans have been put forth by Hatem, the developer who had originally been in negotiations with the school district earlier this year to pave the lot for school parking use. After public outcry, another plan called for a 10,000-square-foot office building with a parking lot covering the rest of the property.

"I don't think the voters would have approved that anyway," said alternate committee member David Lemieux, whose wife Terry attends the committee meetings because he

works at night. "With 150-foot frontage space, and the building being 200 feet from Main Street, there's not much room for parking."

Abutters still complained about the idea of a large parking area (with its possible lighting and fume pollution) potentially devaluing their own property. The parking lot would have entered a residential zone, too, Lemieux said.

Now, after two meetings with Little, the Lemieuxes and the Flynns, the talks are heading in the direction

of a smaller office building.

The group has done a walk-through on the Bushway property, which abuts at least five other lots. A small patch of woods separate their view of the old white building.

Terry Lemieux agreed that the committee has stamped out any adversarial attitudes that were first seen before and during the school deliberative session.

"Next week we'll be narrowing down more options," she said. "It seems to be going well."

SALEM

Selectmen want to choose town manager

Editor's note: The following story was incomplete in yesterday's Eagle-Tribune. It is being reprinted here in its entirety.

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — They want to edit the advertisements, stay local and oversee the selection of a new town manager without consulting a search committee.

But if they want to go it alone, selectmen better stop dragging their heels.

That was the conclusion Monday night of a town department head and one selectman, following a contentious hour-long discussion on how selectmen will begin to find a replacement for Town Manager Jeffrey Towne before his July 1 departure for a consulting job.

In a rebuttal of the suggested search process, Selectman Stephanie Micklon trashed a report by Human Resources Director Mary Donovan, calling the idea "too cumbersome" with "too many people involved."

"Selecting a town manager is not a democratic process," Micklon told fellow board members.

Micklon also lambasted Dono-

van's written suggestion to convene "a variety of stakeholders" to take part in the search, soliciting the participation of town department heads, labor union leaders, citizens and community leaders.

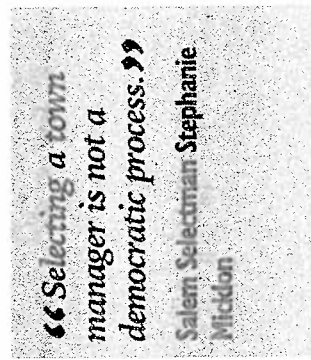
"That experience was an all-time career low," Donovan said after the meeting. "Selectman Micklon handed me a piece of paper that said the selection of the town manager is not a democratic process."

"I can't even comprehend that an elected official would even consider saying it, never mind putting it into writing. The importance of having a democratic process for the selection of a town manager cannot be overstated."

Micklon, who also wrote a draft advertisement for the manager opening, suggested Chairman James Holland appoint three selectmen to the task if the whole board didn't want to participate.

"Maintaining the distinction between manager and employee is essential if the manager is to be effective," she said, in response to Donovan's memo. "Employees do not oversee the manager and should not be part of the selection process."

The decision to tap Donovan was seen by selectmen as a cost-



saving measure last week when the board unanimously decided they would use internal resources for their search, instead of spending thousands in outside consulting.

The board favored using Donovan and her staff, and Towne asked Donovan to prepare a search process for the board that would have begun next week, according to Donovan's report.

Holland, who said he wants a decision on ad copy settled within the next few days, reminded the board, "I asked Human Resources to put a packet together," and told Donovan later not to take Micklon's comments personally.

Selectman Everett McBride said he didn't want a search committee, and reiterated his stance on keeping the search within New

England, an opinion also held by Holland, Micklon and Smith.

"I don't really want to use a committee," McBride said. "It may sound selfish, but I have the vote."

But another selectmen questioned whether their discussion was getting them anywhere.

"Everybody talks about process, and we've wasted a couple of weeks already," said Selectman Richard Gregory.

Gregory said if the board didn't start making decisions soon, then they wouldn't choose a manager in time for the Towne's departure.

After the discussion ended, and Holland moved on to the next presentation on the agenda, Gregory asked, "What are we doing with the process we just discussed?"

Board members also floated the idea Monday night of creating a residency requirement for the job, but Donovan said such a proposal could not be mandatory because of recent court cases that ruled residency requirements unconstitutional.

Following Monday night's meeting, she was awaiting further direction from selectmen.

"We're ready to go," Donovan said. "We were ready on March 17 when Jeff gave his notice."

Barbara Flynn, one of the residents whose land abuts the Bushway property, lives on Centerville Drive right across from the Woodbury School, said she is concerned her property value could depreciate depending on what happens with the Bushway land.

"We obviously don't want our property value to go down," explained Flynn. "We have a view of Main Street we don't want to lose, and there is a lot of other residential land back there. We felt the school needed property, but we want them to keep the scope of the project small."

Flynn's husband, James, and three Henderson Circle residents, Gerald Little and Theresa and Dave Lemieux, are also on the committee.

Berry said the committee, which had its inaugural meeting Wednesday night in the Woodbury School Library, has not established a timetable for completing the study, but hopes to reach a decision by the end of the summer.

The decision would end six years of deliberation over the best use of the land.

The school district purchased the lot in 1997 to provide more parking space for the Woodbury School.

"We are open-minded and starting from scratch with this committee," said Berry. "All options are on the table at this point."

Moldoff echoed Berry's and feeling on the project, saying, "I'm going into it with an open mind. I'll wait and see what the school board wants, and what the abutters concerns are. It might be all parking, it might be a building in parking. I'm not going into it with and preconceived notions."

Campbell said he would withhold any personal judgment on the use of the property until he has heard the concerns of abutting property owners, and any recommendations or thoughts offered by Moldoff.

Campbell also said the committee would like to stay consistent with the wishes of the property's former owner, the late Isabelle M. Bushway, regarding its use.

The next study committee meetings are scheduled for April 30 and May 14, both in the Woodbury School Library at 7 p.m.

4/11/03

SALEM

Panel studies uses for Bushway

By Mike Sullivan
Staff Writer

SALEM — Pamela Berry doesn't have a magical solution for what to do with the Bushway property at 213 Main Street. In fact, no one seems to.

"All options are on the table at this point."

Pamela Berry, Bushway Property Study Committee

Berry, a member of the Salem School Board and the Chairman of the Bushway Property Study Committee, isn't alone when she says she will listen to any and all suggestions

for use of the school district-owned parcel of land across from the Woodbury School.

But she did rule some things out.

"I'm really very open to ideas," explained Berry. "I don't think the school board has any interest in selling the property at this time. Property is limited in Salem, and any property you can acquire, you should hold on to. I don't think there's any interest in selling the land."

And using the parcel solely as a parking lot is unlikely. "Nobody wants to do that," she said. "It's very offensive to everyone."

Berry is head of a study committee that also includes school board member Bernard Campbell, a lawyer; town planning director Ross Moldoff; Manchester engineer and Salem resident George Fradette; Steve Hatem, a lawyer who owns the Hatem office building just west of the Bushway property; and a group of residents whose properties adjoin the Bushway land.

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Senior housing may go up next to mausoleum

By James A. Kirtble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Town planners have gotten their first glimpse at plans for townhouses for senior citizens that would be built on a wooded lot next to a mausoleum.

The 32 townhouses would be set back from Pond Street and neighbor Eternal Light Mausoleum. Trees would be planted to buffer the two sets of buildings.

The owners of the land, Eternal Light Memorial Inc. of Methuen, Mass., probably would sell off about 5 acres of the 18-

acre mausoleum parcel if the project is approved by the Planning Board.

"I know have they have not already sold the property. It's being done in consideration of a sale," said engineer George Fredette of SFC Engineering Partnerships in Manchester, who is designing the project.

A potential stumbling block town officials are researching is whether construction of the mausoleum originally was approved on condition that nothing would be built there in the future, said

Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

"One of the abutters told us the original mausoleum went in based on a variance back in the '70s. The applicant said (then) there wouldn't be anything else on the property. We need to do some research and see if there's anything to it," said Moldoff.

Seventy-five percent of the property is open space, with the stone mausoleum set back about 75 feet from the road. About 4 1/2 to 5 acres would be used for the housing, said Fredette.

"Generally it's a wooded area, there's a

pleasant setting," he said.

The fact that age-restricted housing might be constructed next to a building where someone goes at the end of life wasn't lost on the Planning Board or town officials, said Planning Board member Adam Webster.

"There was kind of a joke going around of having senior housing near a mausoleum. The engineer said that's a marketing issue they're going to have to deal with. I don't think it's anything the Planning Board would have to deal with,"

Webster said.

"I thought it was a pretty good project ... there's an issue of whether they're going to need a variance," he added.

Plans call for constructing eight buildings with four units in each building.

"The building closest to mausoleum is about 50 feet away. For the most part, it's in the same vicinity. The next closest building is about 120 feet. It's clearly going to be a very visible aspect. It's certainly different. We've never had anything like it," Moldoff said.

Planning board examines improvements to Veteran's Memorial Pkwy

During peak traffic hours, roughly between 4 and 8 a.m., more than 10,000 cars on average will traverse the two lanes of Veteran's Memorial Parkway between Route 28 and Lawrence Road. Presently, the intersections along the road are plagued with accidents and are difficult for drivers to navigate, especially those taking a left turn off or on to the parkway.

With several large housing projects planned for construction along the corridor and an anticipated increase in traffic, the town has been studying ways to ease

traffic on the stretch and better prepare it for future use. Last week planning board members adopted a tentative three-phase reconstruction design into the town's master plan allowing for the anticipated changes to the parkway in coming years.

Traffic engineer Stephen G. Pernow, who developed the design and reconstruction, said the plan, if followed, could ease traffic volume through 2012.

The new design calls for adding turning lanes to the three major intersections along the road: Route 28, Lawrence Road and Ceremonty Drive. In addition to the lane additions,

Pernow proposed adding traffic signals to Ceremonty and Lawrence Road.

Based on study numbers, Pernow estimated changes to the parkway would reduce intersection capacity from 100 percent at all three now to 66 percent at the Lawrence Road and Route 28 and 77 percent at Ceremonty Drive.

Each of the three phases is proposed to deal with one intersection. Phase one will revamp Ceremonty Drive, Phase two will address Lawrence Road and Route 28 will be last.

Pernow said the one part of the plan presenting some problems is the area just before the Route 28 intersection. The

study indicated the need for lights outside either the police station or the exit from the shopping plaza.

While no specific cost was presented for the plan as a whole, Planning Director Rose Moldoff said the price tag for widening Ceremonty and adding signals as well as pedestrian access was estimated at \$400,000. He added the town would seek grants to defray any expenses related to the intersection reconstruction.

The proposed changes and redesign, while adopted into the master plan, are non-binding and no time frame has been given for the project.

Selectmen, planners meet to map out future

During a recent work session, planning board members and selectmen hashed out ways to handle several trends affecting the future look and composition of Salem.

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

Among the topics discussed were a possible housing boom, roadway improvements including the Depot area and the capital improvement program.

The intent of the meeting was not to arrive at conclusions or solidify plans. Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff said the intent was to get both boards on the same page and moving in the same direction. The end result, hopefully, will be more effective decisions for the town.

"We have two boards with a lot of people with strong opinions. This is the start of something positive," said Moldoff.

One of the more challenging trends, along with the proposed redevelopment of Rockingham Park, is the mushrooming residential construction trend.

Selectmen and planning board members hashed through ways to control the trend and some of the effects it may have on the town.

Last year, planning board members approved three senior housing projects installing 230 condo units and 16 individual homes on separate plots within the town. Hard on the heels of those proposed units were an additional 112 units of general hous-

ing. At all four of the projects there has been site preparation and road construction, but no building permits have been issued.

An additional 337 units have been brought before the board and are pending final decisions.

Moldoff said the town is considering a number of strategies to control the effects the influx of residents could have. These included impact fees for road and school improvements, negotiating with developers to improve intersections and streets, phasing the projects to keep the influx as a steady stream instead of a flood and possibly re-instituting a growth cap.

As more people and businesses make Salem their home, both boards agreed to look into increasing the staffing in the town's code enforcement office.

Another glimpse into the future is a new computer program used by Community Development Director Bill Scott designed to analyze fire department needs within the town. The produced data will be an aid in determining future department needs and their location on the capital improvement program list. Scott said a similar program was being designed for the police department.

Board members and selectmen also discussed updating the town-wide traffic study, road impact fees, the Depot Project and affordable housing.

Observer 3/27/03

Planning session touches on Rock

Proposed development at Rockingham Park has been slow coming out of the gate but looks to be gaining

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

speed following the defeat of Article 2 at the March 11 ballot session.

During a recent work session with planning board members and members of the board of selectmen, Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff updated them on the progress of the park to date.

Moldoff said Eastern Development, the company contracted to develop the track's 170 acres, has met with the town several time and seems to be working toward an understanding of what the town's issues are and what resources Salem will bring in to examine their plan.

Eastern Development was contracted to develop the area last fall when Rockingham Ventures Inc., the track's owners, announced they would phase out racing in the next two seasons and transition the park to a mixed-use area combining businesses and industrial, commercial and residential development.

Following the announcement, the town attempted to pass a zoning ordinance aimed at ensuring development in the park would parallel what the town saw for itself in the future. The park's owners fought the measure, saying it was

restrictive to business and could hinder full development of the plot.

The town has again stressed they would like to see a pedestrian-friendly area and a mix of business that would be markedly different from the strip development along Route 28, tied together with a town center concept.

Physical drawings, however, are far from becoming a reality at this early date.

"There is no plan which shows what things are or where they will be going at this time," said Moldoff.

He estimated the park could begin drawing a physical master plan for development sometime around the end of April or May. Moldoff added that the firm had hired the same architect who designed the Loop mall in Methuen, Mass., and the developers said they were aiming at something a bit different.

"They think they can do a lot better than the Loop," said Moldoff.

If planning board members go ahead with approval for the general plan, Eastern Development is looking to submit hard plans for site approval sometime early next year.

Mushrooming residential construction trend has shadowed the possible development of the park.

Selectmen and planning board members also hashed through ways to control the trend and some of the effects it may have on Salem.

Hesser strives for facility, course upgrades

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Hesser College hopes to move out of its present location at the Holiday Inn and construct a 16,000-square-foot building sometime next year, enabling the school to expand its course offerings.

The Manchester-based college has had a branch school at the Keewaydin Drive Holiday Inn for the past decade, attracting about \$50 continuing-education students, most of whom attend at night. The college's new building would sit at the corner of Manor Parkway and Industrial Way,

less than a mile from its current location.

"We have outgrown our space, both in size and relationship with the hotel," said Hesser College President Robert Moon. "We hope by moving to another location we'll be able to offer a wider range of our curriculum such as our health sciences, which you need laboratory space for."

Moon said the Salem campus' growth has consistently outpaced its other branches in Nashua, Concord and Portsmouth. Students at the Salem campus hail from Southern New Hampshire and communities along the state

border, like Haverhill, Mass., he said. Many students attend Hesser for general education studies to complete either an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Plans for the new building in Salem are just in the beginning stages, according to Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

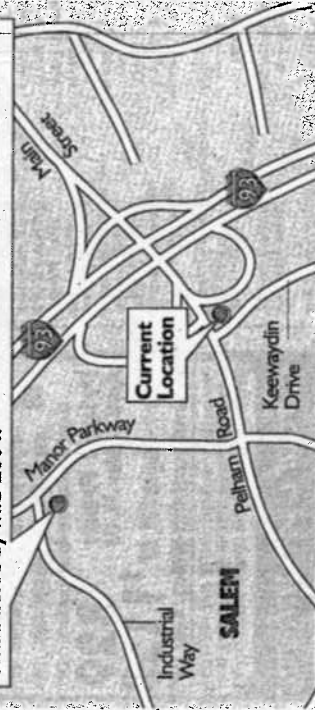
"We're still waiting for a variety of state approvals and staff approvals," Moldoff said. "There are some wetlands that are going to be filled."

Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said the board has seen preliminary plans for the

Please see **SALEM**, Page 2

NEW HESSER COLLEGE LOCATION

Hesser College has plans to construct a new building at the corner of Industrial Way and Manor Parkway. The building could be constructed by mid-2004.



building, and he's intrigued by the project because he believes it could prove to be a resource for Salem's industrial employers. "I'm a big fan of education because it fosters a pool of talent that our industrial community can draw on," he added.

Lyons said Salem hasn't had a freestanding college since New Hampshire College took up space in the Holiday Inn some years ago and then departed.

"I think the big thing is traffic impact. We could have some heavy use when people get out of work," he said.

Lyons said he's hopeful the expansion of Route 93 and improvements to Exit 2 would ease traffic in the area.

The town's Conservation Commission will also be reviewing the wetlands plan in early April, Moldoff said. Moon said he first hoped the new building could be ready for January 2004, but after speaking with construction managers for the project, he believes they could open by the middle of next year.

Moon stressed the school has good relations with Holiday Inn, and hopes the new building will enhance relations with the town. "Salem has been great to us, and they've certainly embraced us," he said.

Continued from Page 1

Town could see first capital project in 20 years

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM, N.H. — Plans for a new police station could start being drawn up as early as this spring as town meeting voters yesterday approved \$350,000 for engineering and site work.

There was no debate on the appropriation, nor on funds for dozens of other projects, including road improvements, a new skate park, and planning for a new North Salem Fire Station.

Police Capt. Robert Tine and resident Peter Rayno, who led a study committee for a new police station earlier in the year, showed residents how the police headquarters on Veteran's Parkway is both cramped and antiquated for the 59-member staff.

Voters will likely be asked to support plans for construction in 2004. Rayno and his resident-based committee chose a piece of town-owned land behind the Ingram Senior Center as the site for the new station.

A feasibility study done by the group also recommended building a 28,800-square foot station for a cost no greater than \$7.4 million. The station would

also be able to take on a 6,500 square foot expansion when needed.

If approved, building a new police station would be one of Salem's first capital projects in about 20 years, according to town officials. The last building project taxpayers footed the bill for was in the late 1980s when Salem built a district court building.

Police also won approval for \$151,600 to upgrade its dispatch and radio equipment which hasn't been upgraded since 1988. The department's communication equipment crashed last July and was out of service for 10 hours until pieces from the North Andover police department were found.

The following were other measures voters passed yesterday:

- \$100,000 to create detailed plans and a cost estimate for a North Salem Fire Station.
- \$180,000 to upgrade communications equipment for the Fire Department.
- \$493,596 for winter cleanup and weather operations.
- \$1.4 million for road improvements.
- \$87,000 to complete construction of the second floor to the Ingram Senior Center.

Towne: Manager quits

Continued from Page C1

Towne's most controversial moves because police and some selectmen had lobbied for an internal candidate. The debate grew when Towne told firefighters during a charity golf event he chose Donovan instead of an insider for the job before telling selectmen.

Selectman Everett McBride downplayed Gregory's opinion on the pay issue, saying Towne had found, "an opportunity he couldn't pass up."

"I didn't talk to him that much about it," said McBride. "I know it was a great opportunity for him. He is a great town manager and he helped us accomplish a lot. 'I wish he was staying but he's not.'"

Asked about the pay issue, McBride said, "It could very well be. I honestly don't know. He did get a cost-of-living raise. Anything is possible. I thought we were under tough economic times. It's a loss but town managers seem to run their course."

SALEM, N.H.

Town manager to resign

3/16/03
Tribune

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM, N.H. — Town Manager Jeffrey C. Towne announced yesterday he is resigning effective July 1 to take a private sector job, fueling speculation that a raise selectmen gave him then took back a month later was a "last straw."



Jeffrey C. Towne

Towne gave his notice to selectmen at a breakfast meeting hours before Saturday's Town Meeting, where it was later announced by Town Moderator Charles "Chuck" Morse.

Selectman Richard Gregory, who was chairman until after Town Meeting when new officers were appointed, said he believes a nonpublic debate about Towne's latest raise could've inspired him to seek employment elsewhere.

\$350K OK'd for police station at Town Meeting. Page C3.

"Around November or December, we gave him a good review and a merit raise of three percent. A month later the Board of Selectmen on a 4-to-1 vote took it away," said Gregory, who is critical of his fellow board members for retracting the pay. "They didn't realize he already gets a cost-of-living raise of three percent. It's in his contract. Everybody has access to it, but nobody read it."

Towne's annual salary is \$87,968. His contract calls for the cost of living increases; the merit raise was also to be three percent.

Towne did not say what job he was taking, but did say that it was in the private sector. He couldn't be reached for comment.

Towne rose to the ranks of Salem's top manager two years ago once selectmen ousted embattled former Town Manager David Owen, and promoted Towne from his position as Salem's finance director. Towne started his career in municipal administration as a finance director for the Town of Meredith, N.H., in 1995.

During his tenure, Towne has hired most of the department heads now running Salem's municipal services. Those positions include Fire Chief Arthur Barnes, who had recently retired from the town's fire department; Community Development Director Bill Scott; Senior Services Director Patti Drelick; and Police Chief Paul Donovan.

Hiring Donovan, a seasoned captain of detectives from Hartford, Conn., was one of

■ **SALEM:** Condos won't be burden, builder says **Page 6**

MPSHIRE

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March 24, 2003

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Vol. 285, No. 71

28 pages 50 cents

3/24/03

Project won't burden services, developer says

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Developer Steve Lewis says his plans to build a development that mixes small neighborhoods of townhouses for residents 50 and older, apartments for the elderly, and affordable housing won't become the menace to town schools and water and sewer services that some officials fear.

His project, on a long-vacant 108-acre site off Veteran's Memorial Parkway, is partly modeled on similar mixed-housing projects he's done in Atkinson.

Lewis has yet to present formal proposals for the Braemoor Woods project to the Planning Board, but town officials' comments on the conceptual plans for the 255-unit development have ranged from "innovative" to "out of control."

Lewis said he plans on bringing the first phase before the Planning Board within the next 60 days.

Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said the board hasn't seen a mixed-use development proposal like Lewis' in recent history.

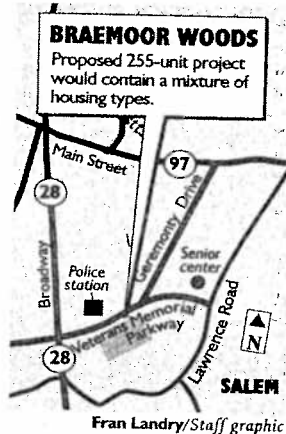
"I do think it's an intriguing idea of what I've seen so far on the conceptual level," Lyons said. But the board has yet to weigh the possible impacts of the plan, he said.

Lewis said the project's layout, which keeps nearly half the property as open space. Building the housing over a five-year period would keep it from flooding public schools with new students.

The two Atkinson developments, which included age-restricted and targeted housing for baby boomers, brought a total of 12 students to the Timberlane Regional School District, according to a district estimate.

"You have to ask, 'Why didn't the sky fall here?'" Lewis said in an interview from his Atkinson office. "Even if I wanted to build them all tomorrow I couldn't. I wouldn't even dump that many units from a marketing standpoint."

Lewis, owner of SLI Consulting Inc., is hoping his reputation will precede him. Over the past decade, he has built a third of the housing in his hometown of Atkin-



son.

Two of his Atkinson developments, Bryant Woods and Settler's Ridge, use the mixed-development concept that he hopes to bring to Salem with the Braemoor Woods project.

The first phase of Braemoor Woods proposes age-restricted buildings that include a 24-unit apartment building, 15 townhouses, rental units and affordable housing whose rental rates would be dictated by federal standards. Lewis said he is in discussions with the Salem Housing Authority about developing the units.

Each type of housing unit is clustered in its own neighborhoods, sometimes separated by stands of trees, according to the plans. The first apartment building sits back about 1,000 feet from Veteran's Memorial Parkway.

Lewis said amenities such as community vegetable gardens, walking trails and a clubhouse sets his project apart from what Salem has seen in the past.

But Selectman Stephanie Micklon has denounced the recent spate of housing approvals by the Planning Board. Three separate projects designated for people 55 and older have been approved that could bring up to 246 town houses and condominiums to town.

Another 112-unit apartment complex next to Wal-Mart has also been approved. That project

Continued from Page 6

has no age restrictions.

Micklon said she wants to give Planning Board members "more direction" in regards to approving apartment building projects. The two boards are scheduled to meet to discuss town goals tomorrow.

Chris Goodnow, a Salem based consultant for commercial and industrial projects, said he believes the impacts from such projects aren't as nearly as great as some are afraid of.

"The vast majority of units coming online are senior projects that are for 55 and over. People say there's 650 units but 500 of those are senior units," Goodnow said. "I think there's an educational process that needs to happen for the leaders of the community and residents themselves for what impacts senior housing is going to be. I've read a couple studies that lead me to believe that they would be minimal."

Goodnow, who has seen Lewis' conceptual sketch, said fire and ambulance service could increase because of senior housing and Lewis' plan, "but I think at the end of the day, there's going to be

some surprises. There's not as many impacts as people believe. The selectmen in town and the people need to be educated about the reality of seniors development."

Becoming overbuilt with senior housing isn't something Salem should have to worry about, according to Goodnow.

"Some service one part of the market and some service the other, and just because you get them all approved doesn't mean almost all get built," he said.

Selectman Richard Gregory, the selectman's representative to the Planning Board, agreed that not all projects that get approved get built.

"We still don't have one single unit (of senior housing) started yet. We still have projects that come before the Planning Board and get approved that never get built," Gregory said. "I think everybody is panicking."

Gregory said he thought Lewis' idea "looked beautiful" and offered a difference from four-bedroom family homes that eventually drove Salem to declare a housing moratorium in the 1990s.

Please see SALEM, Page 7

3/20/03 Observer

Towne says he'll resign as Salem's town manager

• Salem has had 19 town managers since 1962.

By Eric Baxter
News Editor

On July 1, Salem Town Manager Jeff Towne will leave his office for a private-sector job with Municipal Resources Inc. of Meredith. While his notice was

officially delivered at the Salem Town Meeting on March 15, Towne has been contemplating the move since last November and the agreement itself was reached about three weeks before the elections on March 11. Towne will take over as the company's vice president and oversee finances and business.

While speculation about the reason behind his departure has

run from an increase in pay to a shift in the composition on the board of selectmen to being jilted over a merit increase last year, Towne said the reason is much more simple.

"It's about quality of life," he said.

Towne estimated he was working anywhere from 50- to 70-hour weeks, not including commute time from his Concord

home. The new job will be closer to home and entail fewer hours. Towne did not discuss pay levels.

"This is a new opportunity. It's going to be very exciting spending time with my children and enjoying life," said Towne.

Towne first began working for Salem as finance director in 1999 and took over as town manager in 2000.

His tenure has been the fifth

longest in Salem, which has seen 19 acting and serving town managers since 1962. The town's reputation as a manager mill is well known. High turnover has been attributed to the treatment the managers received from the boards and committees.

Towne was treated in such an offhand manner last year when

Please see **TOWNE** page 20



TOWNE
...leaving

TOWNE: Quality of life reason for resignation

► Continued from page 1

selectmen voted to grant him a 3-percent merit increase. Later, when they found he was entitled to an equal cost-of-living increase the board rescinded and voted 4-1 to rescind the merit portion of the raise.

It was this treatment that led a past selectman chairman and current member to characterize the other members of the board as "banana heads" following the town meeting on March 15.

"It's a sad day," said Gregory following Towne's announcement on Saturday. "He was bright, hard-working and gave to the community."

However, Selectman Phil Smith said the move was simply about the money and had little, if anything, to do with other factors.

Towne disagreed.

"It's not about money. But there was a message sent when those things are done," he said of the vote to rescind his merit increase.

Towne will be staying on through his contract and is hoping he will have a chance to finish some of the projects he has led and make the transition for the new or acting town manager a little smoother.

"I love the people who work here, I've enjoyed working with them and I'm going to miss them," he said.

3/14/03
Tribune

■ Salem Depot

Building buy revives talk of easing jams

◆ Last week, the town of Salem bought 2 S. Broadway for \$325,000. It's likely to be torn down for intersection widening.

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — At Friday afternoon rush hour, the backup at the intersection of South Broadway and Main Street stretches a half-mile to the west, where drivers find themselves staring at the Fisk School or at the street sign for Sullivan Avenue.

The backup is just as long for drivers coming from the east, north or south.

For nearly a decade, state and town officials have been discussing widening of the intersection to ease the jam-up, but the talks had sort of faded into the background.

But last week, the town of Salem bought 2 S. Broadway — a building that houses a tattoo shop and dart supply store — for \$325,000, breathing some new life into the talks.

The building is likely to be razed to make way for a wider intersection, but town officials said yesterday lengthy talks among the state, selectmen and

BREAKING THE JAM

Salem has purchased the building at 2 S. Broadway, which will probably be torn down to widen the congested intersection.



abutters are likely to happen first. And two other projects in the works, the redevelopment of nearby Rockingham Park and proposed widening of Interstate 93, are sure to factor into those talks in the months ahead, officials said.

Please see **SALEM**, Page 2

Salem: Building buy revives talk of easing jams

Continued from Page 1

"We're trying to get a discussion going again," Town Manager Jeffrey Towne said yesterday. "We believe with any redevelopment at Rockingham Park it's going to have an impact on the Depot area, so we're going to try to coordinate talks between the (state), Rockingham Park and Salem."

When workers begin widening I-93, which could begin as early as next year, Towne and others believe Salem will be deluged with hundreds more vehicles on its main roads and side streets as drivers try to avoid the construction.

"In the short term, it would be

nice if we could get a full three lanes at the railroad tracks," said Selectmen Chairman Richard Gregory.

Gregory said if Rockingham Park redevelops its 170-acre property, "it will absolutely become part of that project."

When New England Development created the Mall at Rockingham Park in the late 1980s, mall developers paid for \$20 million in road improvements that included Route 38, South Policy Street, the Depot intersection and an extension from Route 93, leading to the mall.

The town still nets an additional \$69,000 annually from mall developers. Some of that money was

used for buying 2 S. Broadway and goes into the town's Depot Improvement Fund, established to pay for road improvements.

Previously, the fund was used to cover Salem's tab in buying the defunct Cellular One building at 90 Main St., next door to 2 S. Broadway, according to Towne.

Proposals for widening the intersection by the state Department of Transportation have included buying other properties and razing the buildings on them, which is the fate likely for the Cellular One and 2 S. Broadway structures.

But since discussions have been near static, it's unknown what course planners could recom-

mend to state officials in the months ahead, according to Towne.

Salem's Planning Director Ross Moldoff said the last conversation state officials had with selectmen was in 1999. The Planning Board also adopted a conceptual plan in 1994 for widening the intersection, Moldoff said.

"There was a lot of controversy then because it showed a significant amount of buildings being acquired for road improvements. But it was only a plan in concept," said Moldoff.

Towne said selectmen could begin talking about the plans for the intersection again as early as Monday, March 24.

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The Union Leader



Where to expect traveling delays

ROAD WORK. Here is a rundown on key road projects to look out for on highways and streets throughout the state.

ANDOVER. — Work on the Route 11 bridge over Elbow Brook. There will be single-lane traffic from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

CHESTERFIELD. — Alternating traffic for Route 9 bridge project.

EASTON. — Expect minor delays for work on the Route 118 bridge over Wild Ammonoosuc River. There will be single-lane traffic from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Bridges closed to trucks.

ENFIELD. — Shaker Hill Road bridge in Enfield is closed. There is a detour.

HAVERHILL. — U.S. Route 302 bridge over the Connecticut River between Woodsville and Wells River, Vt. is closed for renovation. Traffic is detoured over a nearby railroad bridge, which has been prepared for two-way traffic.

HUDSON. — Watch for reconstruction on Route 3A.

KINGSTON. — Expect minor delays on Route 107 in Kingston.

There is a lane closure and one-way, alternating traffic because of the widening of a box culvert over Little River.

LACONIA. — Traffic shifts for work around the Elm Street Bridge.

MANCHESTER. — Watch for bridge and road work, Route 101 and I-293.

PLYMOUTH. — Traffic restrictions for bridge and road work on I-83 in Plymouth, Campton, Thornton and Woodstock.

Traffic also will be reduced to a single lane on Route 3A for box culvert replacement.

The Union Leader

Derry/Londonderry

Manchester, N.H. • Monday, March 17, 2003

SECTION

B

Barns reborn, B3

Salem town manager to leave

■ Jeff Towne announces decision at annual town meeting.

By JANINE E. GILBERTSON
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM. — Town Manager Jeff Towne announced his resignation Saturday morning before residents and town officials who gathered for Salem's annual town meeting.

Towne, who has held the position for two years, told the board his last day

"He had an opportunity in the private sector."

— Selectman Everett McBride

would be July 1, Selectman Everett McBride said.

"He has an opportunity in the private sector," McBride said. "I thought he did a good job as the town manager, but he's

gotta do what he thinks is right."

Before taking the job as town manager, Towne, who lives in Concord with his wife and children, worked for four years as Salem's finance director.

"He did a great job as town manager," Selectman Dick Gregory said. "I'm sad to see him go."

Selectman Jim Holland said he had "mixed emotions" about Towne's resignation.

"I don't think we were that hard on him at all," Holland said. "At the beginning, it seemed like he was a lot more willing to communicate with us, but then the communications broke down. Maybe we were in his job too much and he was

TOWNE, Page B2

Cinema looking at location in Derry

■ Flagship Cinema's plans include 12 screens in a 35,066-square-foot building next to Derry Meadows.

By KIMBERLY HOUGHTON
Union Leader Correspondent

DERRY. — Flagship Cinemas is hoping to build its first movie theater in New Hampshire, and has selected Derry for its future location.

Since Derry does not have its own cinema complex, town planners believe this project will be a great asset to the community and surrounding towns.

"We are very excited they decided to choose Derry," said George Sioras, community development director. "This is



room addition
people want
I have to pay
able costs off
id.
disappointed

vided under the new superintendent next year are not deemed adequate.
Choosing a moderator, clerk, treasurer and one school board member will take place on May 13 at the town office building.

31)
nt on the proj-
ship Cinemas
ryland, Maine

the cinema complex from Ash-
leigh Drive or from the Derry
Meadows strip mall.
About 515 parking spaces are
being proposed, or about one
parking stall for every four the-
ater seats. Engineers for the proj-
ect are MHF Design Consultants.
"I believe the community will
really welcome this," Sioras said,
explaining the cinema could im-
prove business for local restau-
rant owners since patrons often
like to eat dinner before going to
the movies.

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By ADRIAN ZUPP
Union Leader Correspondent
A trio of researchers in the Uni-
versity of New Hampshire's Cen-
ter for Coastal and Ocean
Mapping (C-COM) have found
themselves on the brink of a new
frontier — literally.

Professor Larry Mayer, re-
search scientist Martin Jakobs-
son and adjunct professor Andy
Armstrong are leading a project
to conduct extensive multi-sonar
mapping of the continental shelf
off both coasts of the United
States, a project that could even-
tually help reap \$1.3 trillion in re-
sources, according to a report by
the United Nations' International
Seabed Authority.
"We are very confident that we
can expand the limits of our con-
tinental shelf," said Professor
Mayer, who is co-director of C-
COM.
The goal of the project is to

TOWNE (Continued From Page B1)

in ours."
Holland said he also had mixed
emotions about Towne's perform-
ance since he became town man-
ager and said he has been
advocating the need for a second
town manager.
"I've been working on that now
for two years with the Budget
Committee," Holland said. "I've
been trying to convince them that
we need another town manager
in addition to the one we already
have. There's just too much work.
We could pay someone \$100,000
to do the job, but the bottom line
is there are only so many hours in
the day."
Holland said if Salem had two
town managers, one could focus
on the administrative parts of the
job and the other could focus on

FIRE (Continued From Page B1)

nies and porches.
Garrity said no official cause of
the blaze has been determined
yet. Fire officials would likely
know more today, he said.
Carol and Tom Levasseur
worked to get orange snow fenc-
ing around the entire site yester-
day afternoon. Water poured out
from the pile and ran down Wil-
son Street. The smell of burned
wood and soot was thick in the air
and the roads were covered with
a grayish-black goo.
Carol Levasseur, who said the
building was owned by a group

Sea convention to expand its ju-
isdiction on the sea floor beyond
the recognized 200-mile limit of
its Exclusive Economic Zone.
The United States has yet to rati-
fy the Law of the Sea treaty but
the federal government's support
of C-COM's work indicates that
that is likely to change.
"Once a nation does sign it,
they need to present mapping
evidence to the relevant U.N.
commission that will help define
their claim," explained Mayer.
The project will be funded with
a \$3.2 million appropriation se-
cured by Senator Judd Gregg (R-
NH) and recently approved by
Congress. Gregg, who is chair of
the appropriations committee
that oversees the National Ocean-
ic and Atmospheric Administra-
tion (NOAA), has played a leading
role in the development of C-
COM and its work.
Making sea floor maps and
"displaying them in new ways" is

personnel and other issues.
He said the two could work to-
gether and act as each other's
back-up.
"That way we would not be
burning through our town man-
agers," Holland said.
The town manager's salary is
about \$88,000, Holland said.
Towne has been popular with
residents since he took over as
town manager for David Owen
who kept the job only for a year.
About a year ago, residents
with picket signs reading "Save
our Towne" marched around at
town hall when Towne was criti-
cized by other town officials who
thought he leaked the name of
the candidate chosen as the new
police chief.

called 169 Wilson Street Associa-
tion Inc., said she heard about the
blaze at about 4:30 p.m. and ar-
rived in time to see the collapse.
"When the building dropped, I
just couldn't believe it," Carol Le-
vasseur said.
Officials and parishioners at
the St. Anthony church on Bel-
mont Street opened their doors to
fire victim families last night,
according to the Levasseurs and
other onlookers at the scene yester-
day.
And Red Cross workers in
Manchester sprang into action
Saturday, contacting eight of the

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Merrimack
credible,"
president

TRACK: Future look of town is at stake in vote

► Continued from page 1

the new regulations were unfair, restrictive and bad for the future of the track.

Callahan added the language of the amendment, which makes the planning board the ultimate authority for any changes within the park, is an example of government overstepping its bounds and not leaving the park's owner with anywhere to appeal decisions.

Both Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff and Planning Board Chairman Mike Lyons said the changes were designed to protect the town's interest and, by using one board to make decisions rather than several, the park's redevelopment could go more smoothly and with less cost.

"Clearly what the planning board did not want to see was the big boxing of the parcel," said Lyons. Big boxing refers to allowing "big box" stores, akin to Home Depot or Best Buy, to develop on a parcel.

Moldoff said if the measure passed at the March 15 town meeting, Callahan would have the ability to appeal any planning board decision to one of the state's higher courts.

If the measure fails, the park will proceed as any other business looking to develop land within Salem's borders.

The size of the parcel and its proximity to the center of Salem has made it a key location both for the town's vision of itself in the future and for future business development.

Lyons said he would have fought the measure, as Rockingham Ventures is, if he was in their place. But as a planning board member he was duty bound to see to the town's best interest.

He said the town has had little interest in changing the park's zoning over the past 15 years.

But with the announcement the track was possibly closing operations and changing the focus from racing to retail it was time to make some changes.

Moldoff said the zoning addition has six separate clauses serving to harmonize development at the park with the town's vision of itself as

defined by the master plan adopted in 2001.

The first suggests the park should have an overall development plan in place before making any changes, rather than coming before the board with piecemeal alterations to the land. The town also suggested the park gear its development towards a "downtown" atmosphere with a mix of residential and smaller businesses and a pedestrian friendly layout.

Moldoff stressed the language, unlike most zoning regulations, used "shoulds" rather than "wills" giving the park more flexibility.

"One could argue it's not strong enough," said Moldoff of Article 2.

Callahan's, and the park's, disagreement lies with the need for an overall plan and the idea of creating that downtown area.

The need for an overall plan would tie their hands and keep the park from making rapid changes if need be, said Callahan. He used the example of video lottery.

If passed by the state Legislature, the track would need to make fast changes to the park to take advantage of the new laws. The changes could generate \$100 million for the state and \$5 million for the town.

"We'd have to move as quickly as possible to get it approved," said Callahan adding the need to have a master plan in place could slow the process and lead to lost revenue.

Moldoff said he didn't believe the park would need a master plan to make those changes as that part of the regulation pertained to adding buildings to the existing stock.

Callahan also questioned the need for the park to create a downtown for Salem.

"I don't know what a downtown is, it isn't spelled out in the language," he said.

The park's general manager also railed against Rockingham Park being singled out for additional restrictions.

"This could end up preventing great things from happening with the property," said Callahan.

'Rock' zoning may be key to future

• Track's general manager says proposal could prevent 'great things in the future.'

By Eric Baxter
News Editor

Planning board members and Rockingham Park officials began hashing out how the track's 170-acre redevelopment would fit into Salem as a whole shortly after Rockingham announced its intention to close racing after two seasons and convert the parcel to business and residential use.

After several months of work, planning board members finalized a zoning regulation addition to the park's land that they said they felt would benefit the town and the track. Rockingham Ventures Inc., the track's owner, disagreed. Ed Callahan, vice president and general manager, said

Please see **TRACK** page 20

Salem

Votes

ing out how the track's 170-acre redevelopment would fit into Salem as a whole shortly after Rockingham announced its

3/6/03

When Voting Article 2... Just Say NO!

Rockingham Park is working on a Master Plan detailing the potential future development of that valuable property.

This plan is being prepared with input from Town officials and with full consideration towards enhancing Salem's landscape.

Obviously, since this is private property, certain practical considerations must be made to realistically achieve that goal.

This Master Plan, when completed, will be presented to Town officials for their review, reaction and further input. In addition, Track ownership has already committed to a special election to change the zoning if and when it is needed.

Article 2 expands the Planning Board's traditional authority and can adversely effect development options and possibilities.

Additionally, it denies the property owner the inherent right to an appropriate appeal process.

Article 2 further establishes a questionable precedent regarding the future development of **all** private property in Salem.

Say NO to:

Limiting exciting development opportunities for one of Salem's most valuable properties.

Denying the property owner his inherent right to an appropriate appeal process.

A "well-intended" but potentially damaging precedent for future, private development in Salem.

Government control of private property beyond that which is required by law.

Adversely affecting the "balance of power" among Salem's governing bodies.

Ignoring the advice of Selectmen who strongly oppose this amendment.

Seriously jeopardizing any possibility of Video Gaming at the Track.

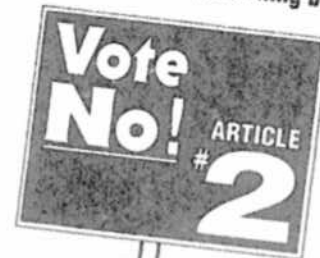
Imposing a development restriction in Salem that exists nowhere else in the state.

Eroding our individual property rights through expanded, intrusive regulation.

A zoning amendment which is unreasonable, unnecessary and just "doesn't make sense".

Concentrating too much authority in a single Town board.

Voting No... is the RIGHT thing to do!



Signed:
Edward M. Callahan
Five Timothy Lane
Salem, NH

Fiscal Agent:
George J. Khoury
Seven Longwood Road
Salem, NH

3/6/03
Salem Observer

Rockingham Park zoning plan still in the gate

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Developers have quietly been meeting with town staff as they research ways to rebuild the struggling Rockingham Park racetrack property into a mixed-use development that could hold retail stores, office space and housing.

The developers ask mostly about impacts — on the fire department, police department, water and drainage infrastructure — rather than presenting different proposals, said Town Manager Jeffrey Towne.

The development firm's representatives haven't divulged to town officials just how horse track might be transformed once racing ends in 2004, Towne said.

"We have not gotten into any detail at all. They said they'll probably be submitting plans by early summer," said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff. "The meetings now are very preliminary in nature. They want to get an idea of what our problem areas are in town. They can't put out traffic counters yet because the plow trucks would hit them."

Only preliminary site work has

been done on the parks' 170-acre property, said Ed Callahan, Rockingham's general manager and vice president.

"Before the freeze, we had test pit borings done on the property," and engineers are working on a traffic study, he said. And market studies on what combination of retail and other uses would work at the park are under way, he said.

"There's a concern about the amount of business office vacancies (in the area) and the way the economy is going. We're working on the economics of the whole scheme," Callahan said. "It will still be a few months before we put something together."

Without solid plans in hand, town officials continue to wonder what new demands are going to be placed upon their departments.

"It's tough to know what the impacts are going to be when you don't have a plan yet," Towne said.

Meanwhile, Rockingham Park is fighting a warrant article on next week's town ballot to rezone the 170-acre property. The owners have filed a protest petition against the action, which means it must be approved by a two-thirds majority in order to pass.

Large signs have been posted around town urging a no vote on article 2, the rezoning action.

Under the proposed article, some Planning Board members hope to alter zoning to allow a mixture of hotels, restaurants, entertainment, office, retail and residential development to create a pedestrian-friendly downtown. The article stipulates that the Planning Board would have sole authority for approval of a master development plan.

Supporters say the zoning changes would protect the town from a worst-case scenario of runaway "big box" development — Wal-Mart, Target and Home Depot-type stores — being dropped onto such a large parcel of land.

But two of the five selectmen have been lobbying against rezoning the park, worrying that it could limit the profitability — and the potential tax revenue — of whatever takes the racetrack's place, once racing ends in 2004.

Aside from being one of the largest development projects in town history, Rockingham Park's redevelopment will be a project where town staff will be looked to for professional advice more often

than on other development as plans emerge, according to Towne.

"The direction we got from Jeff (Towne) is to be ready for any one of several different outcomes — whether it's manpower, budget — whatever impact it can have on the delivery of services," said police Chief Paul Donovan.

Roughly every three weeks, representatives for Eastern Development LLC, of Westford, Mass., the firm hired by Rockingham owners to transform the racetrack, meet with town staff.

Konrad Gessner, director of

development for Eastern Development, usually brings one or two consultants, according to Towne.

And Towne will bring someone from the Fire Department, Police Department or Public Works Director Rodney Bartlett.

Moldoff and Community Development Director Bill Scott sit in on the meetings as well, but no selectmen go to the meetings.

Fire Chief Arthur Barnes said the fire department staff has been to only a few meetings with Rockingham developers. "They have not decided what they're planning to do over there. They're talking

serve.

♦♦♦♦♦

Continued from Page 1

LLC of Londonderry, is bringing 88 condominiums for seniors this spring to a side road off Cluff Road behind the Target store. Construction is expected to begin sometime later this month.

"We'll start out with tree clearing, and clearing off the top soil," said David Jordan, vice president of the T.F. Moran engineering firm in Salem, which designed both projects.

Moldoff said he expects work to soon begin on a 112-unit apartment complex next to Wal-Mart in North Salem off Route 28, noting developers recently acquired a building permit.

"My understanding is they're ready to go," Moldoff said.

Despite ongoing concerns about the economy, inquiries about building even more projects don't appear to be slowing down, Moldoff said.

The Planning Board recently saw a conceptual plan for an approximately 255-unit apartment complex off Veteran's Memorial Parkway. And another one for 16 single-family homes for seniors, off Main Street near Greystone Farms.

The influx of project has caused Moldoff some concerns about monitoring what impact it could have on town services such as police and

fire department response.

Town Manager Jeffrey Towne said he's been aware of the number of new projects coming into Salem. "We've talked about it quite a bit," said Towne, who believes the school district may suffer a larger impact than town services. "We certainly look at all the projects that bring additional occupancy and what service levels we are going to be able to provide."

And all these projects will be weighed in addition to whatever may be developed at Rockingham Park once horse racing at the track ends in 2004, Towne noted.

Developers say low-interest rates have continued to keep prospective home buyers interested in condominium projects or pre-built homes.

"The segment I'm busiest in is manufactured-housing communities," said Ed Huminick, a local developer with GFI Partners in Boston, which is developing the project in north Salem.

Huminick is also overseeing an apartment development in Portsmouth that's using an old brewery; a manufactured housing complex in Farmington; an apartment complex rehabilitating an old mill building in Goffstown, and another 55-and-over senior housing project being proposed in North

Hampton.

Yet for all that new business, building high-end homes, priced at \$800,000 or more, has "come to a screeching halt," Huminick said.

One-bedroom units for the Kensington project will be sold for about \$179,000 while large two-bedrooms will be around \$229,000. And 17 units are being designated as "affordable," at 80 percent of the market rate.

And developers of the 142-unit complex, Commons Development of Westford, Mass., are now going to sell units off as condominiums instead of renting them, Jordan said.

One-bedrooms would have rented for about \$1,250 a month, and two-bedrooms between \$1,400 and \$1,600 a month. But it's unknown what the asking price will be for the condos. Developer Jack McBride couldn't be reached for comment.

SALEM

Hammers hot as boom hits Salem

◆ "We've never seen anything like this in the 20 years I've been here," said Ross Moldoff, Salem's planning director.

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — Before the temperature was even close to getting above freezing, town workers already heard the sounds of blasting and chainsaws buzzing down trees behind Town Hall, making way for a new housing complex.

The noise was from a construction site off Sally Sweet's Way, where 142 garden-style apartments are being built. Those kind of sounds will be heard more in the coming weeks as Salem heads into one of its busiest construction seasons in recent years.

"We've never seen anything like this in the 20 years I've been here," said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff. "We've never seen a run of four or five apartment-style projects."

The garden-style complex, called the Club at Meadowbrook,

THE PROJECTS

■ 142 units: Garden-style apartments off Sally Sweet's Way for seniors 55 and older.

■ 88 units: Condominiums off Cluff Road behind Target store for seniors 55 and older.

■ 112 units: Apartment complex near Wal-Mart on Route 28

■ 16 units: Single-family homes off Main Street for seniors 55 and older

is one three large-scale housing projects recently passed by the Planning Board that will bring hundreds of new residents to town within the next two years.

Another project, by Kensington

Please see **SALEM**, Page 8

amendment simply provides additional restrictions to the property," he said. "There is a considerable amount of other property on Route 28 that is zoned (the same way). We don't feel it's appropriate."

The park is currently zoned as "commercial-industrial," which allows for a variety of retail, office and industrial uses.

Under the proposed article, some Planning Board members hope to alter the zoning to allow a mixture of hotels, restaurants, entertainment, office, retail and residential development to create a pedestrian-friendly downtown area. The article also stipulates that the Planning Board would have sole authority for approval of a master development plan.

Supporters say the zoning changes would protect the town from a worst-case scenario of runaway "big box" development — Wal-Mart, Target and Home Depot-type stores — being dropped onto such a large parcel of land.

But two of the five selectmen have been lobbying against rezoning the park, worrying that it could limit the profitability — and the potential tax revenue — of whatever takes the racetrack's place once racing ends in 2004.

Selectman Everett McBride, who has been opposed to rezoning the Rock, said the protest petition comes as welcome news.

"I understand the Planning Board's concerns but I don't agree with them," McBride said. "I don't want to limit the development at the track. They've already committed a special election to change the zoning once they've proposed whatever they're going to propose. It's the most valuable piece of real estate in New England, and it's going to go from a gold mine to a diamond mine for taxpayers. (The track) is going from thousands in taxes to millions in taxes. It's not like it's a small company."

McBride acknowledged the Planning Board is going to have a much tougher time getting its petition passed because of the supermajority requirement under the protest petition. "It's going to be very difficult for it to pass, but I know I'm going to be speaking out against it anyway," McBride said.

Callahan said from the beginning he was opposed to the change because he didn't know what the park's development team, Easter Development of Woburn, Mass. would propose for the park. "I concerns us because the amendment would put too much power in the hands of one board," said Callahan, "and it would not provide a proper appeal process in the event things were not agreed to within that board."

Salem Planning Director Ros. Moldoff said from the town's standpoint, there is nothing new to report on the topic of Rockingham Park.

"We're in a holding pattern," he said. "It's in the hands of the voters."

Callahan hopes the voters look carefully at the language adopted in the article. He says it does not provide any direction in the event gaming were passed in New Hampshire.

If both gaming and the zoning amendment were passed, Callahan is concerned both sides would then have to go through the entire process of establishing the proper language and guidelines regarding gaming and video lottery, which is not currently in use.

"The language they adopted does not allow for it. We know if video lottery were approved by the state of New Hampshire, we would be able to generate about \$100 million for the state and \$5 million for the town of Salem," Callahan said.

"It would not be appropriate to have to delay that to a year or year and a half," he continued. "It's not in the best interest of Rockingham Park, it's not in the best interest of New Hampshire, and it's definitely not in the best interests of the people and community of Salem."

Staff writer James A. Kimble contributed to this report prepared by Salem reporter Mike Sullivan. If you have questions, comments or material to add on this subject, please feel free to contact him by phone at (603) 893-9555 during business hours, by mail at 100 Turnpike St., North Andover, MA 01845, or by e-mail at msullivan@eagletribune.com.

■ Rockingham Park

Track's petition raises ante for zoning vote

By Mike Sullivan
Staff Writer

SALEM — The ownership of Rockingham Park has filed an official protest petition against the zoning changes for the 170-acre property proposed in a warrant article that will go to town voters in March.

The legal move effectively raises the bar for approval of the changes. A two-thirds vote, instead of a simple majority, is required for approval of zoning changes if a protest petition is filed.

Track General Manager and Vice President Ed Callahan said yesterday he expects signs urging a "no" vote on Article 2 at the polls on March 11 will be posted around town soon.

Callahan said there were many reasons for filing the petition.

"No. 1, the property is already zoned, and the

Please see **TRACK**, Page 6

2/20/03 B-6/66

Fire chief puts new station on front burner

Response time called a concern as the north end of town grows

By Caroline Louise Cole
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

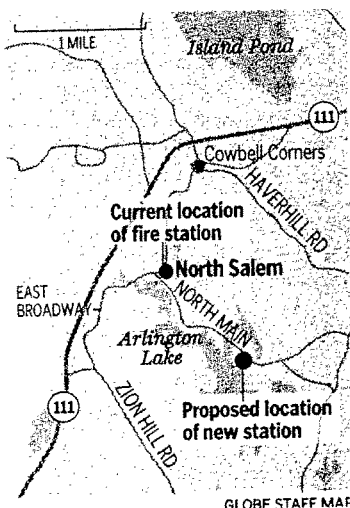
As the crow flies, the proposed location of a new North Salem Fire station at the intersection of North Main Street and Arlington Pond Court is less than a mile from its current site on East Broadway.

But recent and anticipated residential growth in this section of town and the configuration of roads around nearby Arlington Pond is prompting Fire Chief Arthur Barnes to ask Salem's Town Meeting to make the long-proposed fire station a priority when it convenes this spring.

"The old station outlived its usefulness many, many years ago," Barnes said about the cramped 100-year-old wood-frame building opposite the North Salem Post Office. "The town bought the land for a new station back in 1974 but constructing it keeps getting put on the back burner. We just don't think it can be put off much longer if we are to meet expected response-time standards."

The location, a 3½-acre wooded parcel, will also allow the department to solve a nagging problem with the current North Salem fire station's waste disposal and drinking water systems, Barnes said.

"The septic tank failed a while back and because the fire house pretty much takes up the entire parcel we own, we were unable to install a new one," Barnes said.



GLOBE STAFF MAP

"That means we are operating with a tight tank that must be pumped out every three to four weeks depending on usage. And because of high mineral content in the building's well, we have to provide bottled water for drinking and cooking."

Barnes said to move the construction project forward, he will ask Salem's Town Meeting to commit \$100,000 this spring to hire an architect to design a building. Preliminary sketches show a two-story structure of 10,700 square feet with room to accommodate the current station's complement of an ambulance, fire engine, and brush truck. Barnes wants to build enough space so that the depart-

ment can garage a rescue boat for water emergencies.

Once plans are in hand, Barnes will then ask Town Meeting for the \$1.8 million he estimates it will cost to construct it. He said he expects the plans to be ready in time for the spring 2004 Town Meeting.

Richard Gregory, chairman of the Board of Selectmen, said Barnes has his support.

"We definitely need a new North Salem Fire Station because the one we've got is an antique," Gregory said. "From an emergency response standpoint, the old location is just not optimal. The needs of that neighborhood have

changed, and we need to address that."

Salem is served by three fire stations. The Central Fire Station is located on Main Street, just off Route 28, and the South Salem Fire Station is located on Lawrence Road, about 1½ miles from the Methuen line.

Gregory said he supports the plan to move forward with a new fire station for North Salem even though anticipated commercial and residential growth on the west side of Salem suggest a fourth fire station is in the town's future.

"Right now, a study is under way to consider relocating the Central Fire Station or build a fourth station to better serve the

▲ FIRE STATION

Continued from Page 1

ment can garage a rescue boat for water emergencies.

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"We definitely need a new North Salem Fire Station because the one we've got is an antique," Gregory said. "From an emergency response standpoint, the old location is just not optimal. The needs of that neighborhood have

west section of Salem," Gregory said. "But it seems to me more prudent to go ahead with the North Salem project now, because it is going to be at least a year or two before we can decide what is best to do to serve the west side."

Gregory cited the potential for a major commercial development that would replace the Rockingham Park horse racing track, as well as 650 units of apartments that are in the planning process, as the forces driving demand for more emergency services.

Town planner Ross Moldoff said it also makes sense to him to move forward with the North Salem project now, but he said com-

munity leaders need to be prepared to address the demand for better west side fire protection sooner rather than later.

"The town is experiencing a real growth spurt now, particularly in apartment-style housing units," he said, noting that Salem's 25 square miles can accommodate up to another 2,700 units of housing. "In addition to the construction of 120 single-family houses a year, we have 650 apartment units in various stages of the planning process. Clearly the delivery of every town services is going to be impacted by this kind of growth."

Caroline Louise Cole can be reached at clcole@clb.com

2/12/03

255 units slated for land off Parkway

◆ The proposal is the latest in a string of projects that could bring up to 650 apartments to town within a few years, according to Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — The Planning Board got its first glimpse of plans for a new 255-unit apartment complex last night, a first-of-its-kind combination of senior housing and a multi-family apartment building set on 80 acres along Veterans Parkway.

The proposal by Atkinson developer Steven Lewis is the latest in a string of projects that could bring up to 650 new apartments to town within the next couple of years, according to Salem planning director Ross Moldoff.

Lewis' project is set on 80 acres known as the Lord property that is part of a prime wetland area, and Moldoff said it would need approval by the state Wetlands Bureau before it can move forward.

And the town Conservation Commission already has recommended against approval due to the proposed placement of an access road.

"The commission is not opposed to the concept of the project," said Conservation Commission member George Jones. "It sounds like a worthy enough project, our concern is the route he wants to take."

Lewis has proposed locating the access road near Freedom Drive and Telfer Circle but Conservation Commission members are

Please see **SALEM**, Page 2



A Malay boy stands near Adha, or the Festival of in America, a speaker and apostate regimes,

Muslim pray for

From staff and wire re

Muslim worshippers mourned the loss of a holy site in Arabia yesterday. The loss is seen as a means of cleansing the earth around the globe.

Chanting "Allah" pilgrims threw several gray stones at a five-day hajj, or a ritual, which ends tomorrow. The ritual, which ends tomorrow.

The denunciation of Osama bin Laden in Iraq. Bin Laden urged Muslims to



Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, blustery. 14°
Eagle-Tribune

Salem: 255 apartments proposed

Continued from Page 1

backing an alternate route that would go around the wetlands areas, according to Jones.

"We're hopeful the wetlands bureau will see it our way," said Jones.

It could be months before the Planning Board decides on this proposal, but Moldoff said the latest project, along with several others, may prompt town officials to start examining the impact of these developments on

town services.

"The police department is talking about building a new station, the fire department is talking about building new stations... water, I assume, is going to be issue," Moldoff said.

But first, all of the projects would have to be approved, Moldoff said.

The Planning Board has already approved two housing projects this past year: a 142-unit senior apartment complex on Sally Sweets Way and an 108-

unit complex off Cluff Road behind the Target store on Route 28.

A project for approximately 120 apartments in North Salem near Wal-Mart is still pending before the Planning Board. The developer is Ed Huminick of Salem. Another complex soon to be proposed to town officials could bring the total number of new apartments up to 650, Moldoff said.

"So all of a sudden in a relatively short amount of time,

we're now getting hit with quite a large number of people," Moldoff said. "650 units is more apartments than has been built in Salem since the '70s. There's a lot of potential projects coming in."

This report was prepared by Salem reporter James A. Kimble. If you have questions, comments or material to add on this subject, please feel free to contact him by phone at (603) 893-9555 during business hours, by mail at jkimble@eagletribune.com

Greenspan Bush's ta

WASHINGTON (AP) — Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has added his very influential voice to the group questioning President Bush's new \$1.3 trillion package of tax cuts, saying they would have a bad deficit outlook even without them.

The White House sought to downplay the damage from Greenspan's remarks while Democrats' criticism sounded the death knell for a package that was already facing serious questions in Congress. Greenspan was certain

Abuse: Bill breaks seal

Continued from Page 1

requirements for sexual abuse of minors that are even more stringent.

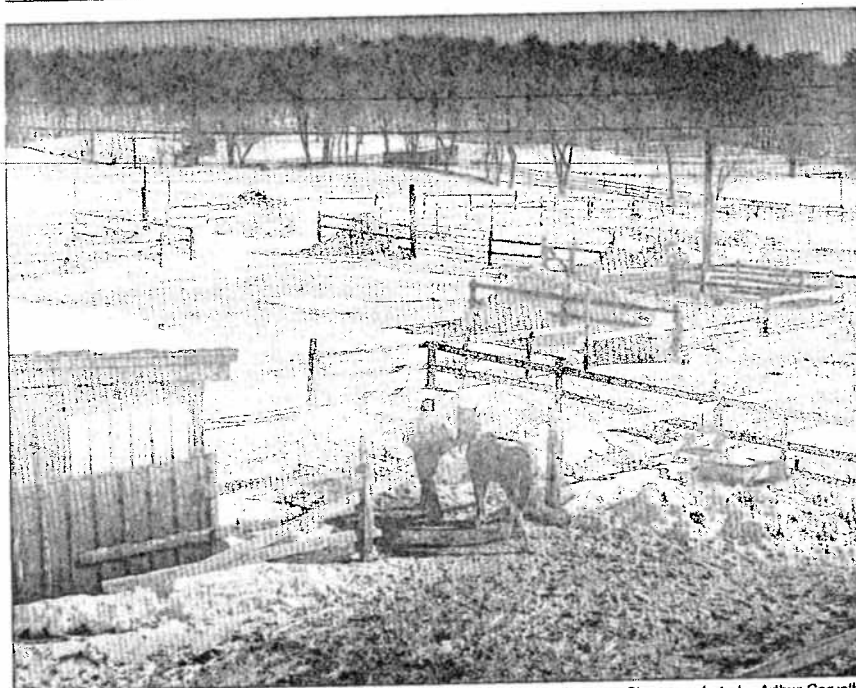
Alert: Valley showing few signs

Continued from Page 1

homes that can be sealed with

until he heard of security advisory from the Homeland Security

The Massachusetts Management Agency



Observer photo by Arthur Carvalho

Horses brave the cold on one of the remaining large farms in Salem. With land prices and demand rising, the town has turned its efforts to preserve large tracts of land before developers. While this farm is not being sold and in no danger of development, several other tracts have been snatched up the greenery lost to the town.

Salem's future tied to Rockingham Park, wide open spaces

The polar opposite trends of development and open space preservation, embodied in Rockingham Park and the town's open space preservation efforts, have become the crystal balls for determining Salem's future.

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

While other factors, such as the national economy and housing trends, will play a role in Salem's future, taken from a broad perspective those two key points represent the buttresses for the town's economy and infrastructure.

The redevelopment of Rockingham Park, officially announced in October of last year, will become the core of revitalizing the aging stretch of Route 28 and will have an overall effect on the town.

"Rockingham could reshape the community like the Mall did 10 years ago," said Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff.

Eastern Planning, a Massachusetts-based redevelopment corporation, is currently under contract to develop a master redevelopment plan for the 170-acre parcel. Most plans, including Salem's 2001 master plan, envision this area as a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area interspersed with businesses, light commercial and industrial use and residences.

The Park is currently struggling with falling gambling revenues, and

the possibility of the state legalizing video lottery has left much of the redevelopment planning in limbo. Town planners would like to tie the redeveloped Park into a town center, linking it to businesses in the Depot area.

Selectman Everett McBride agreed with Moldoff's assessment of Rockingham's importance, adding that it would most likely spur other development in and around town. However, he stressed Rockingham's transformation would take a period of years, and changes would be slow in coming and possibly coincide with an expected economic pickup.

Hand-in-hand with shift from track to shopping and business is the redevelopment of older businesses along Route 28.

With about 1,200 existing businesses in Salem, aging properties like Brothers II Tattoo are being replaced by glossier, newer businesses — in this case a tanning salon. Delahunty's Car Wash has changed to Town Faire Tire. Property prices along Route 28, and in just about every corner of Salem, have skyrocketed; older, seemingly derelict properties are being sold for reuse.

While high land prices are a sign of economic health they have a down side.

"There is a tremendous pressure to sell land," said Moldoff.

Even more precious than open developed land is open undeveloped land. In the last 25 years the amount of undeveloped land has dwindled from more than 50 percent. A recent open space preservation article will seek money allowing the town to buy open lands and preserve it for future generations.

McBride stressed more open space beautified the town and kept pressures on essential services, like schools, police and fire, from increasing by controlling residential and business development.

While open space will help check out-of-control growth, the town would like more development in the commercial sector to help build a stronger tax base. Rockingham Park will be a step in that direction, but Salem still needs to lure businesses to the community.

Moldoff said while the town progresses every year in many ways, there are also some areas where the town is stagnant.

Salem is facing increasing concerns about water resources and traffic problems. Another concern is over the lack of affordable housing, but the desperate need for the service sector workers who would occupy affordable housing.

While the key indicators are known, no one can say with any assurance what the town will look like in 10 or 20 years.

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Salem weighs option of joining 40-mile Mass.-to-NH bike path

1/30/03 Observer

Riding a bike or jogging on Salem's cramped and crowded roads takes a large measure of courage. However, a new feasibility study being performed by the state's Department of Transportation could provide non-drivers with a safe way to get around the town.

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

Salem would contain one section of a 40-mile trail stretching from the Massachusetts border to Concord and passing through 11 New Hampshire communities. While ostensibly a bike trail, and used for commuting within the towns, resident Linda Harvey characterized it more as a linear park. Depending on Salem's needs and wants, the stretch would have plants and trees, benches and decorative lights.

Harvey, who serves as the Salem representative to the Citizens Advisory Committee to the state's Bike Path Feasibility Study, has had a long history in trying to bring a similar bike path concept to the community.

In 2000, Salem sent a letter to the state outlining their intentions to recycle the abandoned railway running through town into a bike path. When the state announced its intention to expand Route 93 and was offering money for the creation of other routes for walking or biking to help further ease congestion, Harvey and the town shelved their bike path plans and joined with the state.

At Monday night's selectmen's meeting, board mem-

bers reiterated their position on converting the rail bed as the best way of installing a bike path and threw their support behind Harvey's state efforts and listened to the state study's efforts to date.

Under the study, Salem would be given three possible routes for the bike path. The first would follow existing roads, the second would install a path roughly following Route 93 and be built as the highway was expanded and the third would follow the abandoned railway.

Both selectmen and Harvey agreed the railway, which parallels large sections of Route 28, would be the best choice for the town. The pre-graded route would offer few hills and follow an almost straight line through Salem. The section borders shops and homes and improving it would remove an eyesore and use land too small and awkwardly situated to build on.

Similar rails-to-trails conversions were successfully accomplished in Maine, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

No date has been released for completion of the study, but once the study is completed member communities and the New Hampshire government will begin talks on who will pay for the trail and how it will be built.

A public information hearing on the southern portion of the trail will be held at the Derry Municipal Building on Tuesday, Feb. 11. For more information on the project contact Harvey at rharvey422@aol.com.

Communities, state tackling increasing traffic

1/30/03
Observer

Highway widening, new bypass among plans

The growth of southern New Hampshire has brought not only more people to the region but more automobiles, too. And those vehicles are straining the capacity of local highways and roads to handle them.

by
**DARRELL
HALEN**
Staff Writer

But state and local officials have plans to expand road infrastructure and improve traffic flow.

Chief among those projects is a state plan to widen the 18-mile stretch of Interstate 93 between Salem and Manchester from four lanes (two on each direction) to six or eight lanes.

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation says the extra lanes are necessary because the highway is at capacity, forcing motorists to suffer traffic congestion and delays.

The highway's maximum capacity is between 60,000 and 70,000 vehicles, according to the DOT. But seven years ago, according to the department, the average daily number of vehicles traveling south of Exit 1 in Salem was 100,000 and segments of the highway north of that were carrying between 60,000 and 80,000 vehicles.

And the growth is expected to continue. The DOT projects there will be 140,000 vehicles traveling at the state border by 2020.

Construction of the widening project would begin in 2004 and take six years to complete. Exits would be revamped to improve traffic flow and a 525-space parking lot would be built near Exit 3 in Windham to support the commuting public.

In connection with the widening project, Salem plans to construct a \$1.8-million Intelligent Transportation System. The ITS would synchronize traffic lights along Route 28 to improve vehicle flow, use large highway message boards to inform drivers about road conditions and place cameras at key intersections to monitor traffic. Half of the cost is being provided by a federal grant.

As part of a separate project, the DOT also plans to widen Route 111 to four lanes starting east of the route's intersection with Wall Street in Windham.

And it plans to begin construction this year, and complete in 2006, a 3.2-mile Route 111 bypass in Windham and Salem.

According to DOT project manager Jeff Brillhart, the bypass would veer off Route 111 east of the Routes 111/11A intersection in Windham and continue northeast, intersecting Route 28 about a half-mile north of the current Route 111/28 intersection. The bypass would continue in a northeast direction, rejoining Route 111 east of Shadow Lake in Salem, Brillhart said.

The bypass would be four lanes wide, two in each direction, except for its stretch east of Route 28 where it would be two lanes wide, Brillhart said.

Brillhart said the bypass would improve public safety for people who live along the heavily traveled



Observer photo by Arthur Carvalho

Growth in southern New Hampshire in recent years has brought more people — and more vehicles — to the area. Busy intersections, such as this one at the corner of Route 28 and Hampshire Street in Salem, are not uncommon.

Seven-year growth in area daily traffic counts

	1994	2001
IN SALEM		
Route 38 west of I-93	11,000	13,000
Route 111 east of Route 281	5,000	17,000
I-93 south of Rockingham Blvd.	96,303	10,189
IN WINDHAM		
Route 28 at Derry town line	10,974	11,812
Route 111 east of I-93	17,000	19,000
I-93 between Exits 3 & 4	58,851	70,263
IN PELHAM		
Route 38 south of Bridge St.	12,000	13,000
Route 38 at Salem town line	8,500	11,000
Keyes Hill Road at Hudson town line	2,800	3,700

Data provided by the
N.H. Department of Transportation

Range Road portion of Route 111 in Windham and Shadow Lake Road in Salem.

According to Brillhart, there are 14,000 vehicles traveling daily on Shadow Lake Road and 19,000 vehicles driving on Route 111 between Route 28 and I-93 every day.

Without the proposed bypass, he said, "It's going to get tougher and tougher to get through that area."

Although I-93 does not cut through Pelham, that town has experienced growth in traffic counts. One area of Pelham that officials there are trying to control is the town's center.

According to Selectman William McDevitt, 11,400 cars pass the town's public safety building in the center of town daily.

"That's an outrageous number," he said.

A Boston engineering firm hired by the town has proposed two solutions: construction of a roundabout,

in which traffic from five streets would feed into a circle, or installing traffic lights.

McDevitt said the town would explore those options after the town's March elections.

"It's high on our list to attend to," he said. "It's something we definitely want to address."

The consultant, who advised selectmen that the town was experiencing about a 2.5-percent annual growth in traffic, has warned officials that the town center would "choke" if nothing was done to alleviate the problem.

For the roundabout to work most effectively, McDevitt said, the town's public safety building, which houses the police and fire stations, would have to be removed.

That could be possible because the police department is moving to a new municipal center being constructed at the former E.G. Sherburne School and the town has instituted impact fees for future fire station space.

DONATION: Presentation 'floored' board

Continued

"Someone had to step up to the plate, had to preempt the giving process," Beshara said.

Though the bank's donation has come a long way toward allowing the club to reach its fund-raising goal of more than \$3 million, it has also served, hopefully, to prime the donation pump.

The new club will retain the pool and gym from the old building and add 3,000 square feet to the footprint. The second floor will add 9,300 square feet and house the proposed teen center. If fund raising goes as planned, construction could begin as early as September 2003.

Club board members are seeking an additional \$917,966 in the form of community development block grant accessed through the town. The money will be used to bring the build-

ing up to code and improve preschool programs.

The original Boys and Girls Club was built in 1965 to house 700 members. Today, the Geremonty Drive club's membership hovers around 2,000 and it employs a staff of 35. The club is in use from early morning to about 10 p.m. on weekdays and sees similar use on the weekend.

Recent statistics from the state Planning Office estimated the number of teens between ages 15 and 19 would increase by 46 percent between 1990 and 2010. A youth profile conducted in March 1998 for Rockingham County estimated a 10 percent increase for children aged 10 to 14 and a 63 percent increase for 15- to 19-year-olds in the same time frame.

"For us, this was a beautiful statement," said Morse of the donation.

Station owner: Article meant to protect water

Restricting trade was not the intention of citizen petition articles submitted by US Gas owner Wayne Lucier, he said. Instead,

Lucier said, they were aimed at protecting the water resources in Salem.

The articles were given the thumbs down by planning board members.

In an earlier interview, Salem planning director Ross Moldoff said planning board members felt that the petition articles, while properly submitted and following town requirements, were proposed by a person associated with a gas station and were possibly aimed more at reducing competition than protecting the town's water supply.

Lucier added that his move to submit the articles was hasty and he should have consulted with planning board members before filing the amendments.

"I have the utmost respect for the Salem Planning Board, and looking back, I should have talked with them first," said Lucier.

When the idea for the petition articles first came to Lucier, he approached several other Salem gas station owners. As the articles moved closer to submission to the town, the other owners gradually pulled away until Lucier was the only one, besides the required 25 citizens who signed the petition, supporting the measures.

The first petition asked voters to approve increasing the building distance between stations from 1,000 feet to 3,500 feet. The second petition asked voters to approve zoning prohibiting any new gas stations from locating within 1,320 feet of the surface water protection area surrounding Canobie Lake and the "Arlington Mill Reservoir." The footage will be added to the existing surface water protection area already in place.

The submitted petitions' stated goals were preserving and protecting drinking water within Salem as well as reducing contamination risks associated with the gasoline additive MTBE.

Lucier said there were three possible lots in town that would be affected by the zoning changes. Those three lots are also the only three where stations may be built under current zoning rules.

There are more than 15 gas stations operating within Salem. Existing stations will not be affected by the new zoning if it passes at town vote.

While planning board members did not recommend the passage of the two citizen petition articles, voters will determine the ultimate fate of the articles at the town ballot vote on March 11.

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Community Calendar

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

Business Network Int'l	7:30 a.m.	lcenter
Families Cope	10:30 a.m.	Kelley Library
Sight Services	1 p.m.	Kelley Library
Salem/Derry Elks Bingo	6:45 p.m.	R'ham Park

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24

Rotary Club of Greater Salem	7:30 a.m.	Holiday Inn
Washington Update	7:30 a.m.	Franklin Pierce Coll.
Drop-In Story Hour	10:30 a.m.	Kelley Library
Overeaters Anonymous	5:30 p.m.	Kelley Library
Salem/Methuen Rotary	12:15 p.m.	Red Tavern

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25

Brownie Troop 2723	10 a.m.	Kelley Library
Kiwanis Bingo	6:45 p.m.	R'ham Park

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

Boys/Girls Club Bingo	6:30 p.m.	R'ham Park
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MONDAY, JANUARY 27

Salem Widows & Widowers	1:30 p.m.	Kelley Library
Teen Center	2:30 p.m.	Kelley Library
Kiwanis	6:30 p.m.	Park Place Lanes
board of Selectmen	7 p.m.	Town Hall

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

Chicken Soup/Pretzen Soul	4 p.m.	Kelley Library
Boy Scout Troop 267	6:30 p.m.	Triumphant Cross
(of C Bingo	6:45 p.m.	R'ham Park
Planning Board	7 p.m.	Town Office
School Board	7:30 p.m.	SHS Media Ctr.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

Jeffer Ctr./Milville Arms Lib.	9 a.m.	Community Bldg.
Salem Exchange Club	12:15 p.m.	Holiday Inn

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

Business Network Int'l	7:30 a.m.	lcenter
Families Cope	10:30 a.m.	Kelley Library
Salem/Derry Elks Bingo	6:45 p.m.	R'ham Park



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11/16/03 Abner

Zoning proposal gives incentives for senior housing

In addition to the future of Rockingham Park and two citizen petitions asking for tougher rules on new gas station construction, Salem planning board members reviewed and approved several amendments aimed at cleaning up an aging zoning map and increasing the amount of affordable senior housing. Members also added

amendments to current zoning offering incentives to developers to preserve more open space when considering the layout of new houses.

Most of the incentives focus around density bonuses. The bonuses, which allow for greater numbers of units within a given area, are granted when a developer voluntarily exceeds the town's basic minimum zoning requirements.

In the senior overlay district, the town is asking that 80 percent of units built to be occupied by people 55 and older. The remaining 20 percent must have one household

member at least 55 or older.

However, if the developer wishes to restrict the ages of all the occupants to 62 and older they can add 10 percent more units to the total number.

Similarly, if the developer wants to exceed the town's current request to require developments with more than 80 units offer 10 percent as affordable, they would receive another 10 percent density increase. The language in the requested changes to the zoning articles would halt any density increase at 20 percent.

On parcels of land greater than 40 acres, only about 12 remain undeveloped. Following planning board approval, developers may receive a density bonus of up to 20 percent if the site plan consciously seeks to preserve open space. At least half of the parcel must remain as open space.

Other zoning changes finalized at the hearing included retail store restrictions and rezoning areas to better reflect their current use.

1/16/02, Observer

Rockingham Park, planners spar over zoning proposal

Representatives of Rockingham Ventures Inc. say they plan to file a protest petition over amendments to the park's zoning before a vote on the articles on March 11.

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

Disagreement between Salem planning board members and Rockingham Park sparked the protest petition, which would increase the minimum number of votes needed to pass the amendment from 51 percent to 66 percent.

The town and park disagreed over how much say Salem would have in guiding the Rock's future development.

In October 2002 Rockingham announced they would stop racing in two seasons and change the focus of the 170-acre parcel from gambling to a mixed-use cocktail of retail, commercial and residential development. The decision meshed well with the Salem's vision of a future town center district.

However, the two parties differed

on how much control the town should have. Rockingham Park contended the town's proposed zoning changes were too restrictive and could hinder development.

"We believe the current zoning is satisfactory," said track general manager Ed Callahan. "We see no reason to move forward with new zoning at this time."

Proposed zoning changes put the town in a key approval role for any future development. Salem planning director Ross Moldoff said the goal of the zoning changes was not to hinder development at the park but to guide the plans to better mesh with the town's vision of town center district. The envisioned district would be a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use area with the buildings and space adhering to a specific style drawn from the park itself. The proposed zoning would also guide changes outside the park, weaving roads and traffic together and controlling how the site affects the surrounding businesses and homes.

1/16/03 Brewer

Citizen petitions get thumbs down from Salem Planning Board

• *Planners: Petitions aimed at protecting water supply may be aimed more at reducing competition.*

Planning board members recommended against approving two citizen petition articles restricting new gas station construction last week, saying they felt the articles may be an attempt to restrict free trade.

by **ERIC BAXTER**
News Editor

At a zoning amendment public hearing on Jan. 8, legal representation for Wayne Lucier spoke about the two petition articles. Lucier is associated with US Gas, located on North Broadway in Salem. The owner of

record of US Gas is US Gas Inc.

Salem Planning Director Ross Moldoff said planning board members felt since the petition articles, while properly submitted and conforming to town requirements, were proposed by a person associated with a gas station, they were possibly aimed more at reducing competition than protecting the town's water supply.

Moldoff said the planning board was against using zoning articles to possibly restrict free trade.

The first petition asked voters to approve increasing the building distance between stations from 1,000 feet to 3,500 feet. The second petition asks voters to approve zoning prohibiting any new gas stations from locating within 1,320 feet of the surface water protection area surrounding Canobie

Lake and the Arlington Mill Reservoir. The footage would be added to the existing surface water protection area quarter-mile buffer already in place.

The submitted petition stated preserving and protecting drinking water within Salem as well as reducing contamination risks associated with the gasoline additive MTBE as reasoning for the increase to the quarter-mile buffer zone.

There are more than 15 gas stations operating within Salem. Existing stations will not be affected by the new zoning if it passes at town vote.

Neither Lucier nor his legal counsel could be reached for comment by press time.

The articles will meet with final approval or disapproval at the town ballot vote on March 11.

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11/4/03

Town moves to preserve open space

◆ Selectmen plan to ask residents to approve the land deal at Town Meeting in March, along with another \$1 million to buy more property for conservation.

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM — The town hopes to buy about 13 acres of property owned by Salem Haven Nursing Home and to implement a "fast track" procedure that would allow selectmen to expedite land purchases for open space preservation instead of bringing the issue to Town Meeting every year.

The Salem Haven land is located behind the nursing home off Germonty Drive and is assessed at approximately \$750,000, said Town Manager Jeffrey Towne.

Selectmen plan to ask residents to approve the land deal at Town Meeting in March, along with another \$1 million to buy other properties for land conservation.

Towne said last night there are no plans for the Salem Haven property but noted a long-term goal of selectmen is to purchase property in the town center area along Germonty Drive when it becomes available. The town center district is home to Town Hall and the town library.

Selectmen last night unanimously backed buying the Salem Haven property but disagreed over allocating the \$1 million for land conservation.

Selectman Ronald Belanger questioned whether the town should be spending the money during a tight economy, and whether the purchase would take

taxable land off the town tax rolls.

"The way the economy is going now, the state has to be tight with its money," Belanger said. "The town should be tight with its money. I don't like being in the real estate business."

But the board approved the \$1 million proposal by a 3-1 vote.

Towne said the \$1 million fund is something town officials have talked about for years, but haven't put through as a proposal until this year.

Towne said about 79 percent of Salem's land was considered open space in 1962, and that number had fallen to about 25 percent in 2000.

Selectmen Chairman Richard Gregory said the community has supported the idea of creating such a fund to conserve land.

Gregory also said he supported fast-tracking land purchases — noting some people may want to dispose of their property faster than Salem can respond if it has to wait until the following March for Town Meeting approval.

"If Mrs. Smith's son needs the money to take care of Mrs. Smith, then this would allow us to do things in those cases," Gregory said.

Voters would still have input on such land purchases because proposals would have public hearings before the Planning Board and Conservation Commission, Gregory said.

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page 4

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The Union Leader

Derry/Londonderry

Manchester, N.H. • Tuesday, January 14, 2003

SECTION

B

☆☆

Entertainment, B9

TODAY IN Business

State regulators investigate Enterasys

State securities regulators said yesterday they are investigating Enterasys Networks Inc., a successor to a company co-founded by Gov. Craig Benson.

Today's section begins on
Page B4

Yesterday's Stocks

▲ DOW
8,785.98 +1.09

▲ NASDAQ
1,446.04 -1.68

AROUND THE TOWNS

PELHAM:

Phone disruptions possible

Police Chief Evan Haglund said Verizon notified his department that there will be a short disruption in phone service between midnight tonight and Wednesday morning.

"Verizon is switching over systems and regular phone service should only be down for a few minutes, providing everything goes well," Haglund wrote yesterday in a posting on the on-line bulletin board, www.pelhammessageboard.com.

"If you need to make an emergency call," he wrote, "cell phone service will still be available. Additional emergency personnel will be available and on duty should they be needed."

Salem seeks \$1 million for open space

■ The town now has only 17 undeveloped tracts of 25 acres or more, planners say.

By JANINE E. GILBERTSON
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM — With only a handful of large, undeveloped tracts of land left in Salem, town officials are hoping voters will approve a bond article that will make it easier for the town to purchase land for open space.

Town Manager Jeff Towne said there are only 17 undeveloped tracts of 25 acres or more, a sharp contrast to 40 years ago, when the town was 79 percent

undeveloped.

"The loss of the open land has changed the character of the community," Towne said. "The reason why we need to do this now is because we have been talking about this for a long time."

Towne said the \$1 million bond article authorizes selectmen to purchase town land without going to town meeting for approval of the land purchase.

The money would essentially be pre-approved to \$1 million by the noteholder. If a piece of property becomes available, selectmen would seek approval from the Salem Planning Board and Conservation Commission before the town can get the money needed for the

purchase.

Currently, if the town wants to purchase land for open space or any other reason, a warrant article for the purchase must be approved by voters.

But under that process, the desired land purchase often falls through because property owners get offers from other buyers who have faster access to cash and don't have the added uncertainty of whether voters will approve the purchase.

Towne said there is a safeguard in place with the proposed article that allows residents to oppose any land purchase by filing a petition with at least 50

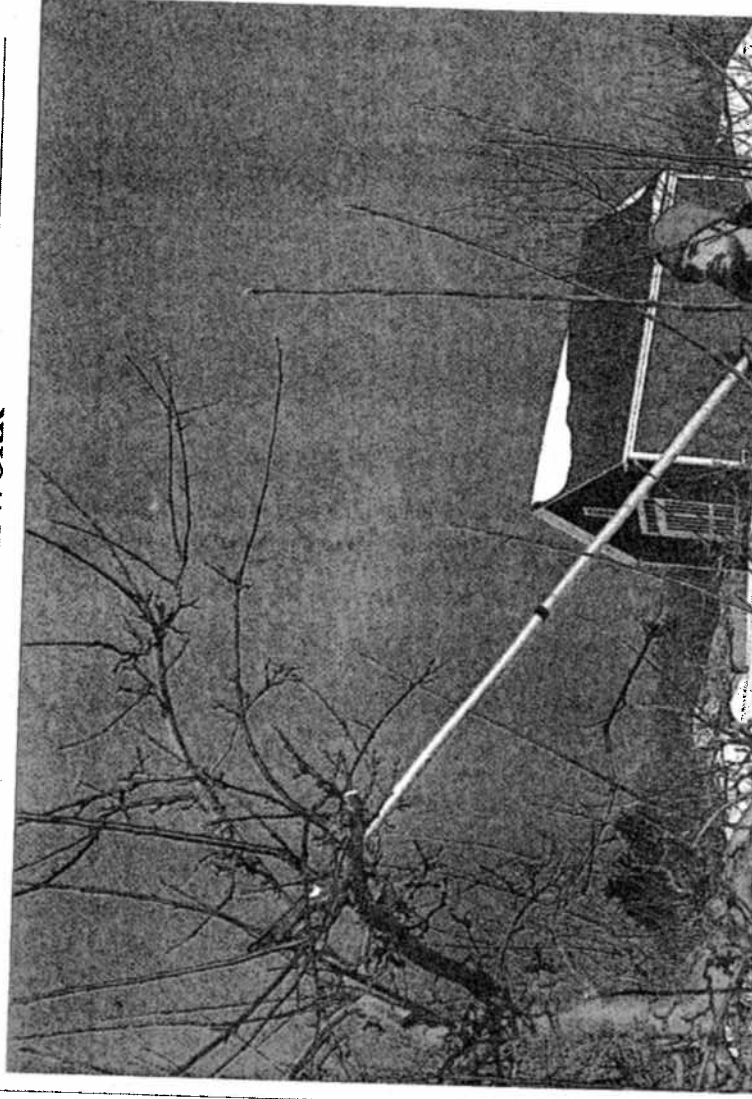
The petition would force the purchase to be placed on the warrant for voter approval.

Selectman Ronald Belanger said he would like to see any proposed land purchase go before voters at town meeting. "I think the voters should have the ultimate say," Belanger said.

But Selectman Everett McBride said residents have raised the issue of preserving open space again and again during the development of the town's master plan and in community surveys. "One of the topics people have been most interested in is open space,"

SPACE, Page B2

WINTER WORK



Shaw's plans to expand

■ The Londonderry store would grow by about a third.

By DAVID LAZAR

Union Leader Correspondent

LONDONDERRY — With a brand-new Hannaford Brothers grocery store slated for up the road, owners of the nearby Shaw's Supermarket in Apple Tree Mall have plans to expand.

By fall, they say, shoppers can expect about 15,000 more square feet. The Bridgewater, Mass.-based chain wants to take over the former Osco Drug, which has sat empty next door for more than a year. The expansion would boost the grocery's shopping area to more than 60,000 square feet and be a virtual replica of the Super Shaw's at Hood Shopping Plaza in Derry.

Hannaford Brothers plans to build a store off Gilcrest Road, near the recent-

BROWN AVENUE:

Traffic light improvements at I-293 under way

State transportation workers have started work to improve the traffic lights at Brown Avenue and Interstate-293, officials said yesterday.

Within a few days, the lights should once again be in sequence, said Bill Boynton, spokesman for the state Department of Transportation.

Several weeks ago, the antiquated signals went out of sequence, causing backups on Brown Avenue, Boynton said. Airport Director Kevin Dillon said the backups are worse at afternoon rushhour. Then, Brown Avenue traffic can regularly back up to Goffe's Falls Road, he said.

"I think we were a little slow to recognize the problem, in part due to heavy holiday traffic," Boynton said.

Boynton said no one is certain what caused the signals to go out of sequence. The DOT believes either a lightning strike or construction workers severed a cable between the two signals. George Cairns & Sons Inc. of Londonderry is rehabilitating four bridges on I-293 and widening a portion of the highway.

Boynton said Cairns could only move up the signal replacement, originally scheduled for spring 2004, to this spring.

Transportation Commissioner Carol Murray said that wasn't soon enough, and the state Traffic Bureau has been dispatched to the site, Boynton said. Workers are expected to install some equipment this week.

"It's going to certainly be a lot sooner than the other timetable, a matter of days," Boynton said. "The bottom line is, we're trying to address it as soon as possible right now."

—Mark Hayward
Union Leader Staff

Official defends federal education act

CONCORD (AP) — Education The administrators say the law Undersecretary Gene Hickok met imposes unfunded and underfunded mandates on schools. with New Hampshire lawmakers They say the law will cost New standards in the year-old No Hampshire taxpayers at least \$108 million per year when fully Child Left Behind Act.

Hickok later told reporters his message to lawmakers was that education is first and foremost a local and state responsibility. He said yesterday the federal school improvement law is intended to raise education standards nationally without imposing national curriculum or tests on states.

He said a study by the New Hampshire School Administrators Association is inaccurate.

Hickok disagreed and pointed out that the Bush administration increased education funding dramatically.

In exchange for increased funding, the federal government is demanding that schools meet performance goals or face consequences ranging up to state takeover.

U.S Army

Rock Band

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Wednesday, January 15

Jillians

Federal building target of petition

BY JODY RECORD
Union Leader Correspondent

PORTSMOUTH — Concerns about renovations proposed for the Thomas J. McIntyre Federal Building, in the heart of the city's historic district, have spurred an effort to push federal offices out of the neighborhood entirely.

As of yesterday morning, more than 100 people had signed an online petition started by Har-bour Light Productions, a downtown business whose employees are worried about safety issues connected to the building as well as its aesthetics.

The petition asks the General Services Administration, which oversees the Daniel Street property, to consider relocating to Pease International Tradeport. The building houses numerous

SPACE

(Continued From Page B1)

McBride said. "I think this is something the residents have wanted."

Belanger said he was concerned that taking open space out of the hands of developers would take away from the town's potential tax revenues.

He also said if people in Salem are asking for more affordable

Cheshire Superior Court.

Assistant County Attorney William Cleary said that in 2001, Carpentino engaged in many sexual acts with the girl, sometimes in front of other girls, one as young as 12. Cleary also said that Carpentino enticed one of these girls to join him and his girlfriend.

"She had her first sexual experience with me," Carpentino said. "She wrote, 'He's my life, my heart, my soul.'"

Caradonna said the trouble really began when Carpentino started seeing someone else.

"That woman recently gave birth to Kurt's child," Caradonna said. "So if she can't be hurt di-

story, originally, some 85 indictments were lodged against Carpentino last March, most centering around his relationship with his girlfriend. These were condensed for efficiency.

In New Hampshire, aggravated felonious sexual assault is punishable by 10 to 20 years, a penalty that doubles if the defendant is found to be convicted of similar matter.

Caradonna said the trouble really began when Carpentino started seeing someone else.

"That woman recently gave birth to Kurt's child," Caradonna said. "So if she can't be hurt di-

crimes: his Hinsdale home.

Carpentino is wanted in Vermont on four charges of sexual assault on a minor under the age of 16. Vermont authorities have declined further comment on the matter.

bour Light, called the McIntyre building out of character for downtown Portsmouth, a comment repeated time and again by those who attended HDC meeting.

Savoie also expressed concern regarding the safety of having a federal property located in the heart of downtown Portsmouth.

"As it currently exists with its security alerts, it's a liability to the downtown," Savoie said yesterday. "If there was a security alert, they would have to shut down a significant portion of town and many of us would be affected."

At the HDC meeting, Janice Ramsey, GSA's Northern Service Center director, said the administration would consider all options before going forward with its renovation plans, which do not re-

land may bring in more tax dollars, it also puts more demand on town services.

"If land is not developed, you could actually be saving money," Towne said.

Selectmen Chairman Dick Gre-gory said the proposed article was supported by the town's budget committee.

Residents will also decide if the

quire city approval. However, GSA spokesman Paula Bergin said yesterday there hasn't been any talk about scrapping the renovations for new construction.

"If moving is a possibility, we have not started a discussion about it or internally evaluated the idea," Bergin said. "That's a totally different direction."

Savoie said it would be better for the community to have the federal building located at the Tradeport, where the National Visa and National Passport Center are located.

GSA planned to spend \$11 million renovating the McIntyre building, with an estimated \$4 million for asbestos mitigation alone. Bergin did not have estimates on what a new building would cost.

town should spend \$750,000 to purchase a 13-acre property located behind Salem Haven on Geronimo Drive.

Towne said seven of the 13 acres are buildable; the lot is being eyeballed for a new police station.

He said the purchase would be funded over 20 years and abuts town-owned property.

CTV-20, GOV-22 release schedules through Jan. 18

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LONDONDERRY — CTV-20 has released its schedule through Jan. 18:

- "Army News," 6 p.m., 2 a.m., 10 a.m.; "Monarchs Insider," 6:30 p.m., 2:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.; "Cooking with Georgia," 7 p.m., 3 a.m., 11 a.m.; "The Chuck Piper Show," 7:30 p.m., 3:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.; "Lancer Basketball vs. BG," 8 p.m., 4 a.m., 12 p.m.; "Focus on Londonderry," 9 p.m., 5 a.m., 1 p.m.; "Evolving Traditions," 10 p.m., 6 a.m., 2 p.m.; "MSL: Next Millennium," 11 p.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m.; "The Doctor Is In: Silent Epidemic," 12 a.m., 8 a.m., 4 p.m.

The mailing address for The Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News is: PO Box 9555, Manchester, NH 03108-9555.

It's just a question of what they're
ing to do."
's also a question of how much
ages would cost.
he commission vote comes nearly a
th after town councilors awarded a
tract for the 21,000-square-foot build-
to New Ipswich-based Hutter Con-
nection. It also comes after councilors
nounced they would cut the tax rate
despite the new police station
other multi-million-dollar
projects.
What a redesign would do to the bot-

STATION, Page B2



THIS is an architect's rendering of the new Londonderry police station, as evaluated by the town's Heritage Commission Tuesday night.

1/9/03

Union Leader

'Rock' to protest zoning article

By JANINE E. GILBERTSON
Union Leader Correspondent

SALEM — Officials from Rockingham Park race track said last night they plan to file a protest petition against a proposed zoning ordinance they say would place too many restrictions on the race track's redevelopment.

The planning board held a public hearing on an amendment to the track's current zoning and voted to place a zoning article before voters in March that will require track officials to submit a master plan for the 170-acre parcel prior to submitting a site plan.

That master plan would have to be approved by the planning board before Rockingham could come forward with specific site plans.

The zoning change, if approved by voters, would also require Rockingham to adhere to redevelopment plans that include the planning board's "vision" of the property that includes a pedestrian-friendly downtown area with a town center and mixed use of the property such as a combination of retail and office space.

Ed Callahan, vice president and general manager of Rockingham Park, and Dan Callahan, attorney for the track, presented the planning board with their idea of zoning changes they say the track could live with.

Under their zoning change, the track would still be obligated to submit a master plan but would not be bound to specific types of development such as creating a downtown area or a town center.

The master plan would also not need approval from the planning board before submittal of a site plan.



Dick Morin/Union Leader



'ROCK'

(Continued From Page B1)

submitting a site plan if the planning board's amendment wins voter approval.

He said he would rather have the development company hired by Rockingham put together a plan before any zoning changes are sought.

"We do not support their vision," Callahan said. "We prefer there not be any zoning changes at this time, but we have come up with one that we would support. We don't want to give up any rights in the development process until we know what will work."

Rockingham has hired Eastern Development of Woburn, Mass., to come up with a plan to redevelop the racetrack over the next two years.

The plans were announced late last year when track officials decided it was time to make plans for the future after legislative bills to expand gambling at the

state's four racetracks have failed year after year.

Callahan said the wording in the zoning changes sought by the planning board was vague and could be a matter of interpretation.

"Our principal concern is that at the end of the day you are still requiring that it look like a certain type of project," said Callahan.

"And it is still too early to tell what will work best there. Our amendment also creates a standard for which waivers could be granted and eliminates any suggestion of a specific kind of development. We have to allow the developer to do his job."

After nearly two hours of debate, the planning board voted 5-2 to stick with their version of the zoning amendment that voters will face in March.

Planning board member Bob Ellis, who voted against the plan-

ning board's amendment, said he didn't want to see the board try to put restrictions on a conceptual master plan for redevelopment of the 96-year-old racetrack.

"When we are talking about a master plan, we are talking about a conceptual plan," Ellis said. "I am having trouble trying to regulate something or put control over something that doesn't exist. I think by trying to put this ordinance together, we are going to end up with what we have always had. But if we don't give them any restrictions, they are going to come up with something we never saw before."

Callahan said the protest petition will change the requirements for the amendment's passage by voters and will require two-thirds of the vote instead of a majority.

Callahan said the park will work to ensure the zoning amendment is defeated and will likely take out advertisements to get their message out.

**By KIMBERLY HOUGHTON
Union Leader Correspondent**

DERRY — Two local state representatives will be drafting legislation that would enable municipalities to spend money to plow private roads, a controversial issue that has plagued this community for two years.

Under the guidance of the town council, state Rep. Bob Letourneau, R-Derry, and state Rep. Phyllis Katsakiores, R-Derry, have been asked to draft a bill on the issue. On Tuesday, the council voted unanimously to allow the two legislators to file the proposed bill.

The town has been spending public funds to plow several of Derry's private roads for at least 20 years. Recently, however, the town's legal counsel advised officials that it was illegal to spend public money to plow and maintain private ways. Since then, the town has struggled with various ways to keep the private roads plowed without charging residents.

"They are paying the same tax fees, so they ought to get the same service," said councilor Mi-

chael Relf.

Under the proposed legislation, New Hampshire communities could place the private road re-plowing on an election ballot for voters to decide, or the town council or selectmen could vote on whether to plow roads, spend public funds on private roads, or both.

Katsakiores warned councilors that if the bill was approved, town officials could not specify what private roads they want to plow with public money. All private roads would need to be included, she said, stressing what apartment complexes and condominiums would be excluded.

"I fully expected to do every thing in town," Relf said, explaining that would be the only equitable solution.

Since many towns in the northern portion of the state have doz-



LETOURNEAU

SNOW
(Continued From Page B1)

Plastow. "We've started off this year with a bang," said Scruton. "In the fiscal year we just finished, there were a higher figure at the Feb. 8 De-



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Zoning amendments public hearing set

1/2/07
Observer

• *Input sought on first draft of proposed zoning for future development at Rockingham Park.*

After discussions with Rockingham Park over easing zoning language for future development, planning board members have finished the first draft of the 2003 zoning amendments. They are asking for public input at a hearing to be held at town hall on Monday. The public's opinions will be taken into account when the final drafts of the amendments are set.

by
**ERIC
BAXTER**
News Editor

While the Salem Master Plan has set ideas for the area in and around Rockingham Park, the track's recent decision to close racing after the next two seasons prompted planning board members to work closely with the park to see that their development met with Salem's future plans.

Prolonged discussion marked a recent meeting where Rockingham Park General Manager Ed Callahan asked planning board members to create more flexible zoning for the area to ease the transition from track to mixed-use area.

Planning board members added several provisions to the existing zoning with the intent of creating an area

Please see **HEARING** page 16

► *Continued from page 1*

containing a town common, retail shops, restaurants, business offices and residences placed in a pedestrian-friendly area.

To achieve this, Rockingham will be allowed a large share of independence from current land use rules if the park submits an overall master development plan approved by the town and follows that plan.

Any deviations are subject to approval by the planning board.

Members are also seeking input on zoning amendments aimed at increasing the stock of affordable elderly housing and defining exactly who can occupy the units.

Zoning rules currently require that 80 percent of the units must be occupied by people 55 and older with the

remaining 20 percent with at least one occupant older than 55.

The proposed amendment will add that all development with more than 80 units will offer at least 10 percent of those units as affordable. Added to this, the town is offering an incentive in the form of a density bonus, of up to 10 percent, for developments that restrict the age of all occupants to older than 62. An additional bonus would also be granted to projects offering a higher-than-required percentage of affordable units.

Other zoning changes being presented at the hearing include retail store restrictions, rezoning of apartment buildings, revising the current open space preservation ordinance and the presentation of two citizen petitions restricting future gas station construction.

SALEM, N.H.

Firefighters cite ambulance shortage

Worried Rockingham redevelopment could make things worse

By James A. Kimble
Staff Writer

SALEM, N.H. — Built in the early 1900s, the North Salem Fire station has no septic system and the water is so bad firefighters drink the bottled variety.

But the problems firefighters say they face are far more serious to residents — such as not having an ambulance available one-third of the time when they receive calls.

And now the possible redevelopment of Rockingham Park is likely to compound the already-strained resources of the current three-man station, town officials say.

"We found (more than) 40 percent of our calls occur west of Route 28," Assistant Fire Chief Kevin J. Breen

said of a study the department conducted this past year. "What's significant is we have no station west of Route 28. The community has grown there, it's not only the mall."

Fire officials plan to make a bid for a new North Salem Fire Station in 2004. Fire officials have spent the past year studying the demands placed on the existing staff over the years as housing, retail stores and other business have flourished in town.

Selectmen say they are aware the department needs a new North Station and that redeveloping Rockingham Park into a mixed use — possibly having some variety of retail, business and maybe residential uses — would increase demands.

But with no development plans for the race track in place yet, determin-

ing the park's needs remain unpredictable for now, town officials say.

"There's no question that redevelopment of Rockingham racetrack would definitely change something. You'd have different people, different uses, and possibly many more people there," said Selectmen Chairman Richard Gregory. "That's going to be up in the air for a couple years. But the problem is we can't keep putting it off."

Breen said even though Rockingham Park announced this year it will likely end racing in 2004, planners have been looking at ways to cover the west side of town as it has continued to grow during the past decade.

"Some people in North Salem would

Please see **STATION**, Page 10

■ **Raytheon**
Navy mi
to be bui
By **Andy Murray**
Staff Writer

ANDOVER — Raytheon contracts worth a couple of millions of which are contractor's Andover. The contracts include for ship-borne Aegis from the Department of Defense and Japan. A large portion of the contracts will be do facturing plant, at 2005, according to site.

Raytheon officials yesterday on what new jobs.

With approximately Raytheon is the A

Continued from Page 9

say, 'Why would I care?' Well, whenever we send an ambulance (from Central Station) and there's another call, the next truck is coming from North Salem. While they're going they don't have another one."

In fact, all three firefighters stationed at North Station go with the ambulance, Breen said.

"Thirty percent of our calls occur simultaneously. That means one-third of the time we're already busy on another call," he added.

The department plans to host an informational meeting Jan. 15 at the current North Salem Fire Station, at 115 East Broadway, where they plan to explain the current demands on the North Station and unveil a conceptual plan for a new North Station.

This year the department plans to spend \$100,000 to survey a location for a new station, a three-and-a-half-acre lot the town purchased in 1974 at 1 Arlington Pond Court. But without plans,

officials don't yet know of a price for a new building. Breen said the hope is the new station would allow for more equipment storage, and possibly personnel.

Selectmen will likely decide whether to increase staffing in 2003. Selectmen turned down a

request to add 12 firefighters to the department this past year, citing a lean budget.

Breen said, "We'll probably be bringing that issue up again this year," but that wouldn't mean more manpower at North Station.



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