

Barre Town Newsletter

Municipal News

Changes In East Barre!

By Joseph Colangelo, Management Intern



Turn and face the strain: ch-ch-changes are once again upon East Barre. In 1927, a great flood devastated a once thriving commercial center. Eighty years later, a slightly less biblical event will once again alter the neighborhood's landscape. A round-about will be installed by the Vermont Agency of Transportation to alleviate traffic congestion and improve safety for motorists in July 2007. The round-about will be constructed at the intersection of VT 302, East Cobble Hill Road, and VT 110. In 1994, this intersection had the highest accident count in the state, and a 2001 traffic study by Lamoureux & Dickinson concluded that a

round-about should be installed because of the heavy traffic volume and the high instances of accidents.

Currently, stop signs are in place on East Cobble Hill Road and VT 110, while VT 302 has no stop signs and motorists can travel 50 mph. According to Barre Town Engineer Harry Hinrichsen, "The round-about will provide safer and less confusing access from side roads by providing drivers with yield conditions. The round-about will also slow traffic upon approach and allow everyone to exit at the right spot without requiring drivers to come to a complete stop."

Round-abouts work by allowing drivers inside the circle right-of-way to the drivers on the approach. "Slip" entrances and exits allow for smoother and more orderly driving opposed to 90° turns.

The installation of the round-about next summer will be just one more chapter to a neighborhood with a rich and storied past. Originally the area that is now East Barre was named Jackman's Mill. Power generated from the waterfall along the Jail Branch River made settlement of the area practical for entrepreneurs of the mill industry. Because advances in electrical technology allowed mills to be located away from water falls and granite was discovered, the mills began to die out and the local granite industry was born. Somewhere along the line and up until the mid-1880s, Jackman's Mill was renamed Carnes Mill. Carnes Mill (named after Nathaniel Carnes, a granite cutter) had a sawmill, schoolhouse, stoneshed, and a half dozen houses.

The 1890s was a period of dramatic growth and prosperity in East Barre, thanks in part to the success of Mr. Carnes' expanding granite business and the construction of the East Barre & Chelsea Railroad that connected East Barre to Barre. Prior to the finished rail line, granite had to be taken by oxen 10 miles to the nearest station. The rail line also supplied passenger service for Saturday night shopping trips into Barre and Montpelier. A wild time it was!


By the early part of the 20th century, East Barre was fully equipped with an opera house, blacksmith shops, grocery stores, a doctor's office, a furniture shop, stables,

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Lawn Waste Site Closed

 The lawn waste site was closed for the season on Saturday, November 18. The site will be re-opened in April, probably again with Saturday-only hours.

Staff are researching security camera systems for the 2007-08 budget. If cost beneficial, cameras would be installed, and the site would remain open during daylight hours 7 days per week. The cameras would record violators. It is hoped the security cameras would reduce the frequency of illegal dumping that creates an extraordinary clean-up expense. ■

OFFICES CLOSED

Thursday, November 23
Friday, November 24
Monday, December 25
Monday, January 1

Opening: Deputy Health Officer

Barre Town Health Officer Sam Hutchins pointed out several years ago that the Town should have a Deputy Health Officer (DHO) in case he is away or otherwise unavailable. The position was filled, but the former DHO stepped down late last year. The State is now suggesting every town plan for successors in every town officer position. Sounds like Sam was ahead of his time!

Despite realizing the importance of having a DHO,

Barre Town hasn't been able to fill the post since last fall. Any resident interested could email the Town Manager at crogers@barretown.org or mail a letter to Town Manager's Office, PO Box 116, Websterville, VT 05678.

The DHO would fill in when the Health Officer is not available, which is not a frequent occurrence. The Health Officer primarily enforces the State's rental housing code. The Health Officer responds to tenants' complaints, inspects their apartment or house for violations and, if needed, orders the property owner to take corrective action. Orientation and guidance will be provided, of course.

To learn more, write to the email address or call 479-9331. ■



No Rink

Since 2001, Barre Town offered an outdoor ice skating rink. A new liner would have been needed for the upcoming winter skating season. The Recreation Board recommended the Town discontinue offering the outdoor skating facility due to lack of volunteer maintenance help. This fall, the Selectboard voted to accept the Recreation Board's recommendation. A new liner will not be purchased, and the rink will not be set up.

As of this writing, the Bambini (garden tractor attachment used to finish ice), the half-pipe (used to border the rink), and the warming shed are for sale. Contact management intern Joe Colangelo at 479-9331, ext. 1264, or at jcolangelo@barretown.org for information. ■

Budget Committee

In December, the Selectboard will begin announcing it is seeking letters of interest from Town voters willing to serve on the 2007 Budget Committee. Letters, via postal mail or email, will be due in late December. The Selectboard will name its 2 appointees in early January.

The Budget Committee has 5 members: 2 appointed by the Selectboard, 1 appointed by the Town Clerk-Treasurer, and 2 selected by the 3 people named by the elected officials. All 5 members must be registered Town voters. Beyond that, there are no other requirements; however, members should be available to meet every Tuesday night from late January to the end of March.

The Budget Committee, technically, consists of the Selectboard and the 5 citizens. Together they review all 10 of the Town Manager's proposed budgets. The 10-member committee makes its recommendations to the Selectboard, which has the final say on the budgets. The General Fund and Highway Fund budgets are presented to the voters for approval in May.

Committee members offer constructive suggestions and opinions based on their work experience or good judgment. Residents who are registered voters and would like to be considered for the committee need to submit a letter of interest to the Town Manager, PO Box 116, Websterville, VT 05678 or to crogers@barretown.org by December 28. Questions about the committee will be accepted gladly. ■

Changes In East Barre *(cont'd. from p. 1)*

a barber shop, drug stores and, of course, a number of businesses revolving around granite. A granite strike in the early part of the 20th century in the Barre City area also affected East Barre. Because East Barre was outside of the strike zone, local businesses were able to employ many of the talented and hardworking granite workers who were without a job. By all accounts, East Barre was a self-contained, self-reliant village made up of hardworking people. Residents were able to work close to home in the quarries and attend to all of their needs at local businesses.

With the granite industry already showing some signs of retracting, and the Great Depression knocking at the door of Vermont and all of America, the '27 flood proved to be a forever changing event for East Barre. The raging waters washed out the single road that connected East Barre to Barre and destroyed the railbed that was never restored.

Between 1933-1935, Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (made up of WWI veterans) constructed the East Barre dam. Local residents often engaged in sporting events and socialized with the CCC workers. In the late 50s, improvements were made to the dam, and it is still standing proud today.

In the 1950s, the new section of VT 302 was built on the north side of the Jail Branch River which caused traffic to bypass on the outside of the village. Also, in order to facilitate the construction of the new 302, a number of old buildings (including a blacksmith shop and a bar) had to be torn down.

Today, East Barre serves mostly as a bedroom community to the greater Barre-Montpelier area. However, it has still been able to retain its proud tradition of local businesses. The East Barre shopping center has a branch of the Aldrich Library, the East Barre Antique Mall, the Original Vermont Flannel Company, the Greenbriar Daycare Academy, two gas stations, an auto body shop, a nicely renovated playground, and a post office. Plans to build a new sidewalk are also being worked on to improve the neighborhood's already charming character.

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus held onto the belief that the nature of the universe is unity through constant change. He noted that you could never step into the same river twice because the waters are constantly changing -- and only because the waters flow is the river able to be eternal.

Through floods, the ebb and flow of the mill and mighty granite industry, and the natural tide in the world outside her boundaries, East Barre has been changed by the currents of the past 100 years. However, as stated by W.E. Poole in 1897, "East Barre is high, dry, and

healthy, its people energetic. The stranger is always welcome and every effort will put forth to make his stay a pleasant one."

The spirit of East Barre has, in fact, remained eternal. ■

Cross-Country Ski Trail

Cross-country skiing is excellent exercise. In fact, cross-country skiing works all the major muscle groups (most especially the heart), and it can be performed continuously and rhythmically for a long period of time. Through the fluid motion created by the skis on the snow, cross-country skiing does not cause strain to the body's joints like running on pavement. The average person can expect to burn as much as 800 calories per hour while on their skis! Cross-country skiing develops balance and coordination, and is one of the best all-around aerobic sports out there.



The new Barre Town bike path will provide a great trail for cross-country skiers of all ages and ability levels once the snow hits this winter. However, please be mindful of a few safety precautions that are special to the bike path. Close to the mid-point of the trail (just past the bridge in the woods), the snowmobile trail will cross the bike path for approximately 75 feet. The Town plans on using a gate to discourage snowmobilers from using any other part of the bike path. The gate will also make it necessary for skiers to slow down and ease around the obstruction in a single file line. Also, a local access snowmobile trail will cross the bike path at the Graniteville picnic area. Snowmobiles are not allowed on any other part of the bike path for any reason, and the local snowmobile clubs will be made aware of this restriction.

For these reasons skiing should only be done during daylight hours when there is good visibility. The use of an ear piece (whether it be for a cell phone hookup or an iPod) is strongly discouraged while cross-country skiing. Keep those ears and eyes open at all times for potential obstructions on the trail.

Please, have lots of fun out there on the bike path with your skis. And remember: the more calories you burn on your skis, the more holiday food you can enjoy!

- Joe Colangelo, Management Intern ■

Better Back Roads: Sterling Hill Road Project

The Town's Public Works Department recently completed work on a 1/4 mile stretch of Sterling Hill Road. A \$7,000 grant from the Northern VT Resource Conservation & Development Council had been awarded to assist the Town in stopping erosion along unpaved roads and reduce maintenance costs.

The work was coordinated with Linda Boudette, of the Better Back Roads Program, and Pat Ross, of the VT Agency of Natural Resources Stream Protection Division. The work effort was joined by a team from the Vermont Youth Conservation Corp (VYCC). The project involved clearing brush, wood and other debris from the stream channel, along with rip-rap stone and bank stabilization. The road surface was also re-graded to minimize gravel runoff to the brook.

The Town's work force consisted of 3-4 crew persons, an excavator, backhoe, grader, and trucks to work with the stone placement and road work. The VYCC team consisted of 4-5 people with a crew leader (Matt Brantner) and hand tools and saws for brush and trim work.

The VYCC team began their work on September 25 after first notifying neighbors in the area. Brush and other lawn waste were pulled back from the stream banks in the lower reaches of the brook. Tires, metal, and other debris were also removed and placed in a Town dump truck for removal. There were several trees that had blown down into the brook in early August. These trees were limbed and tops and major branches removed from the stream channel by the VYCC crew.

There is still work to be done, and I envision yet another grant application to complete this project.

- Harry Hinrichsen, Town Engineer ■

CO Detectors



I would like to offer Barre Town residents a quick reminder on the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning now that heating season has begun. CO, a by-product of incomplete fuel combustion, is tasteless and odorless. The inhalation of CO causes an interference with the delivery of oxygen in the bloodstream to the rest of the body. Because of this, it is important to have a CO detector as well as a smoke detector in your home. The early warning of CO in your home can truly mean the difference between life and death. If your CO detector activates, it is important to get everybody out of the

house and to a safe place. Call the fire department. We will respond along with an ambulance. It is important not to ventilate your house until we get there. We will check your house with our special meters to see if in fact there are elevated levels of CO. If there are levels of CO beyond acceptable limits, we will try to find out what the cause is. We will likely suggest you contact a repair person for whatever could potentially be causing the CO. You will also be checked out by the ambulance crew and, if no symptoms are present, no further medical attention is likely. There is no cost for this service, unless the ambulance takes someone to the hospital.

- Chris Violette, Fire Chief ■

❄ Winter Parking Ban ❄

The Town of Barre has a winter parking ban that takes effect on November 1 of every year and lasts until April 15. The ordinance requires all vehicles be parked off the roadway and out of the right-of-way between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. The ordinance is enforced, and violations constitute a ticket and possibly towing of the vehicle.

You may say, "But it is not snowing now. Why should I move my vehicle?" Again, remember the ordinance is a legal order to do so, even if it is not snowing. Another reason is that if the snowplow drivers get called in at 2 a.m. because it is snowing, they cannot provide the necessary service that we all want and expect because the vehicles are not moved to allow for the safe removal of snow. The snowplow driver has to call the police officer to have him remove the car. The police department does not like to give out tickets or tow people's cars. So I am writing this to remind all people to park your vehicles (and those of your guests) out of the right-of-way.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

- Michael Stevens, Chief of Police ■

❄ Winter Sand Rules ❄

Sand will be available in front of the DPW garage at 129 Websterville Road for walks and driveways. The sand is for Barre Town residents only -- no businesses or commercial trade. Please limit yourself to three 5-gallon buckets; no pickup truck loads. Your cooperation is appreciated.

P.S. Remember that all-season tires are not the same as winter tires. So change over and keep yourself and others safe.

- Steve Blondin, Public Works Supt. ■

Multi-Purpose Fire Truck



Have you seen this truck and wondered what it is used for? Well, earlier this year, the Fire Department took delivery of a 1997 American General Hummer that was designed and built as a fire truck by Danko Company in Nebraska. This truck was used by American General and Danko as a demonstration vehicle driven around by a representative of AM General. The Kansas City International Airport purchased the Hummer for fighting vehicle fires in their parking garages. The airport decided in the end there was not a need and sold the truck. We purchased it for \$48,000 from the company that acquired the vehicle from the airport.

The purposes of this truck are simple -- fight fire and be a multi-use year-round vehicle. We identified a need many years ago that our 4 w.d. vehicles which we use for fighting wildland fires were fast becoming obsolete. The worst was our 1952 Dodge power wagon located in the South Barre station. East Barre's pickup truck is not much better, but the power wagon was very old and difficult to drive. Steering and braking had become real issues; however, it was an amazing off-road vehicle. What could we replace the power wagon with that would equal its ability to go just about anywhere? Knowing that there are many Hummers in the fire service around the country (doing exactly what we were looking for), we looked in that direction. Hummers are expensive, so we looked and looked; eventually, we found this one.

After identifying our need to replace the old power wagon and deciding a Hummer would give us equal or better capabilities, it was still hard to justify that one would only be used as a brush truck. Our goal was to find a truck that could be a service to our department year round and be used to replace another aging truck in the fleet -- a light-duty rescue truck. Ultimately, the Hummer we found was able to do just that. It replaces the old power wagon used as a wildland "brush truck" and the old light-duty rescue truck. It carries all of our wildland firefighting equipment and a set of "Jaws Of Life" rescue tools. But there is more.

The Hummer is a full-fledged fire truck as well. It carries 250 gallons of water with a compressed air foam system (CAFS) that when used extends the water capacity 10:1. When using the CAFS, this truck technically has more water capacity than most fire engines in the area. This Hummer has the capability to "pump and go" which no other fire truck (that I am aware of) can do. The importance of its ability to fight all kinds of fire is significant given some of the locations we respond to.

In October, we invited the former marketing director for American General (he actually trains Special Forces in the military) to come and provide us with important driver training. It is truly impressive what this vehicle can do. We feel the purchase of this truck was an extremely cost-effective way to replace two aging trucks and increase abilities all at the same time. If anybody would like to see this new piece of equipment, please feel free to contact me.

- Chris Violette, Fire Chief ■

Roy Wescom Retires After 30 Years



Roy Wescom, Jr. served the Town of Barre honorably from 1976 - 2006. Thanks to his dedicated service, roads were plowed during the winters and built during the summers. On October 24, 2006, the Selectboard adopted Resolution #9-06 extending appreciation to Roy upon his retirement. Also note that Roy is irreplaceable -- literally; there is not a job opening in the Public Works Department at this time.



Christmas Tree Collection Schedule

The Public Works Department will provide curbside collection of Christmas trees between January 2-12, 2007. The town will be split into two collection areas. If you want your tree collected, place it along the road before the first day of collection in your area. Be sure the tree is free of wire and plastic because the trees will be mulched. The areas and dates are:

- Tues.-Fri., January 2-5 - North of Route 302 (includes Beckley Hill, Richardson Road, Aljen Acres, Camp Street, Trow Hill, East Hill, Cobble Hill)
- Mon.-Fri., January 8-12 - South of Route 302 (includes East Barre, Websterville, Graniteville, Quarry Hill, Sterling Hill, Middle Road, South Barre, West Hill)

Collection will be delayed in the event of snow or ice storms.

EMS Explorer Of The Year



15-year old Robert Gowans (left), a member of the Barre Town EMS Explorer Post, was recognized as the EMS Explorer of the Year for his leadership skills, training abilities, and volunteer community service at the Green Mountain Council's (BSA) Annual Meeting this year. Gowans also maintained an A-B average in high school. On the right is Explorer Adviser Lynn Doney.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

. . . the Barre Town Clerk's Office processes passport applications? Turnaround time is 5-6 weeks. Children under the age of 14 require both parents' signatures. Fees: Under 16 yrs. old = \$82.00; 16 yrs. old and over = \$97.00. For more information or an application, call the Town Clerk's Office at 479-9391 or visit our web site.

Authorization Required For Cemetery Work

Cemeteries are tangible links to our past and places that are both significant and sacred. They are an important part of our individual and collective histories. Maplewood, Wilson, and West Hill cemeteries are well kept and inviting thanks to the dedication of the Barre Town Cemetery Commission, Sexton, and grounds crew.

If you have a family member or loved one resting in one of Barre Town's cemeteries, and you would like to make an adjustment or improvement to their plot, please be mindful of the following rules and regulations of the Town of Barre cemeteries.

Rule 37 states that any landscaping improvements to individual plots (including planting flowers) must be done with the approval of the Sexton. Rule 85 says you must get a permit from the Sexton before you can clean a monument. Rule 86 notes that erecting a monument must be done under the permission of the Cemetery Commission. And Rule 100 says that no monument may be removed without the permission of the Commission. Most importantly, no alterations can be done until proof of ownership; or if an heir is seeking to make adjustments, they must be appointed Administrator of the Estate of the plot owner by Probate Court.

The Barre Town Cemetery Commission meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month between April and October. For more information, or to obtain a copy of the "Rules & Regulations of the Town of Barre Cemeteries", please call 479-9331.

- Joe Colangelo, Management Intern ■

PROJECT UPDATES

- Graniteville & Websterville Sidewalks:** At a neighborhood meeting to re-evaluate the Websterville Road sidewalk, residents spoke in favor of building the walk on the south side (the school side) of Websterville Road. The matter of cost came up, and residents suggested eliminating the expensive curbing. The new design/plan was forwarded to the Selectboard in September. The Board directed DuBois & King to prepare new conceptual plans for a 5' wide concrete sidewalk, with no curbing, located a minimum of 5' off of the edge of pavement. The walk would start at the school's eastern driveway and stretch along the south side of Websterville Road to a point across from Bolster Road. A crosswalk would be painted across the street, and the sidewalk would continue along the north side of Websterville Road to the Municipal Building. DuBois & King prepared conceptual plans as directed. At the westerly side of Hebert Drive, a short section of curbed sidewalk will be needed because the steep bank pushes the walk closer than 5' to the road. Minor drainage improvements will be needed at and near the Hebert Drive intersection. DuBois & King estimated the new plan/design would reduce construction costs by \$160,000. The Selectboard approved the conceptual plan on October 24. Project Manager Kevin Russell has property owner information and is starting the right-of-way acquisition phase. News about the Town's supplemental funding grant should be received in January. Everyone is hopeful for construction in 2007.
- Pike Quarry - Road Improvements:** The VT Agency of Transportation (AOT) moved quickly since mid-August. The AOT completed the new business access road except final paving which will be applied next year. Pike is paving the new street at no cost. On November 14, the Selectboard conditionally accepted the road as a Town highway. AOT has not yet decided what changes are to be made at the Rt. 63/Miller Road intersection. Permit approval is still needed for the South Barre sidewalk resurfacing that Pike Industries is obligated to provide. ■

❄ Winter Driving Safety ❄

Winter and driving brings unpredictable results.

Here are a few safety tips:

- Remember to leave earlier; you never know if you'll be held up due to congested traffic or slippery roads. Detours can also be expected.
- When driving in inclement weather, put your

headlights on to make it easier for other cars to see you.

- Ice can be unpredictable. Black ice occurs from condensation when a warm day turns into a cold night. The only way to know if you are on it is to test the traction. If you see a patch of ice ahead, brake before you get to it, not while on it. When freezing rain occurs, stay home until the roads have been sanded and salted.
- Don't make sudden or abrupt changes in directions, and avoid slamming on your brakes. Slow down to give more room between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Have adequate tires on your vehicle. All-season tires are not the same as winter tires and should be replaced with winter tires.

Drive slower and follow these safety ideas. It just might lessen your chances of becoming another accident statistic.

- Michael Stevens, Chief of Police ■

Hazardous Products



The Central VT Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) offers household hazardous waste (HHW) collections in the spring and fall. In 2006, two collections were held at the Barre Town DPW yard.

There are many months between the fall and spring collections. Proper handling of HHW is necessary to protect people and the environment in the interim. The CVSWMD advises hazardous materials should never be mixed. The chemical reaction could explode or create poisonous gas. Leftover liquid hazardous products should not be poured down a sink, into a catch basin (storm drain), or onto the ground. Containers of HHW must be taken to a HHW collection.

Empty hazardous product containers (such as a motor oil jug or a paint can) can be placed in the trash. For guidance on disposal of empty containers, refer to the District's A-Z Guide, available on-line at www.cvswmd.org/member_towns/a-z_municipal_guide.php.

Residents have a year-round disposal option for one HHW -- fluorescent bulbs. The CVSWMD has set up free fluorescent bulb recycling with 10 stores throughout the District. Nelson's True Value in Barre City is participating.

Paint is a common HHW. The District accepts latex and oil-based paint at its collections. The latex paint is re-used. The oil-based paint, if not re-used, is properly discarded. Store paint where it will not freeze and where it is safe from children. Next spring, take that unused paint on a ride to a HHW collection and give it a new life. ■

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS - SUMMARY REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION (M. Nicholson, H. Miller, C. Thygesen, C. Sanborn, T. Ackerman, E. Bancroft, Jr., M. Day)

September 2006: Approved requests by D. Stonecliffe for 2-lot subdivision on Sunset Rd.; M. & D. Willett for 2-lot subdivision on Phelps Rd.; Berg Living Trust for 6-lot subdivision on Sierra Lavin Rd.; L. Delano for 2-lot subdivision on Jensen Rd.; J. & L. Pizzo for 2-lot subdivision on Sierra Lavin and Phelps Rd.; P. Beede for allowed use on So. Barre Rd.

October 2006: Approved request by J. Hull for second curb cut on Cassie St.

November 2006: Approved requests by S. Keene for 2-lot subdivision on Camire Hill; L. & R. Valliere for revised final -- plat not filed in timely manner on Deerfield Ave.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (P. Malone, P. Badger, R. Jensen, M. Reaves, M. Gallo)

August 2006: Approved request by E. Gallo for conditional use on Conti Circle.

September 2006: Approved requests by J. Lyon, et al, for conditional use on So. Barre Rd.; G. & N. Shute for variance from side yard setback on Partridge Rd.; L. Menard for conditional use on Middle Rd.; L. & K. Fitzpatrick for conditional use on Phelps Rd.; P. Beede for conditional use on So. Barre Rd.; denied request by D. & R. Gritsavage for side yard setback.

October 2006: Approved request by J. & K. Crumbaker for conditional use on Wilson St.

TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (D. Newhall, P. White, J. Blow, D. Allen, C. Liese)

September 2006: Recommended installing hidden drive advisory sign on Plainfield Brook Rd., 2 handicap signs at Graniteville church parking lot, 2 double-sided signs for bike path parking (1 adjacent to church and 1 at picnic area), and reduced speed ahead sign on Middle Rd.; recommended center and edge line striping on Sierra Lavin Rd.

October 2006: Recommended brush clearing on north side of Lepage Rd., installing signs for vehicles traveling on Mecklesen to warn Lepage Rd. intersection, and contacting Green Mt. Power to possibly relocate pole to improve sight distance. Public hearing items: recommended reducing speed from 40 to 35 mph on Averill Rd. and from 40 to 35 mph on Little John Rd.

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