THE Hardwick Gazette

INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1889

$1.00

Wednesday, July 26, 2017 | Hardwick · Cabot · Calais · Craftsbury · Greensboro · Marshfield · Plainfield · Starksboro · Walden · Wolcott · Woodbury | Volume 130 Number 29

Photo by Vanessa Fournier

Rose Friedman and Punch, AKA Justin Lander, of Modern Times Theater, perform their musical puppet show on space travel at Caspian Beach July 19. The program was attended by 130 people and sponsored by the Greensboro Free Library.

Cutler Memorial Library Has Big Plans for Expansion

by Michael Sherkenbach

PLAINFIELD – The Cutler Memorial Library is a cozy spot, quiet for working on computers, hanging out, checking out books and more. Now the Board of Trustees is working on a plan to double its size and expand its offerings.

Director Lorene Brogan explained that the planning process started about three and a half years ago when the trustees determined that the current space of roughly 1,000 square feet was no longer sufficient. They first considered buying another building or building a facility from scratch, but now they are going to double the current building's size and double its parking, too.

She said that the role of libraries is evolving. "We're serving a lot of different tastes and a lot of different needs. There are different audiences now, and there are different subgenres of publishing," Brogan said. "We need more space to have the same amount of stuff, because we need it to move more media opened and those who don't.

"I am confused about what to present," Urie said. "If you are bring in 50 faces that are new, otherwise it's wasting time."

Urie urged, "I don't want to have a rehash. We have written it [with interest]. If you [residents] are concerned, come read it and look

See ATV, 4

This sketch shows the latest proposal for an expansion of the Cutler Memorial Library. It would roughly double its size to 2,000 square feet and add another apartment above.

ATV Informational Meeting Planned

by Jane Pickel Cook

CRAFTSBURY – After a lengthy meeting last week with several residents, the Craftsbury Select Board has scheduled an ATV informational meeting for Tuesday, August 8, in the Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. The board is seeking a strong facilitator to keep the planned informational meeting on track and not become a debate.

The purpose is to help people make an informed choice on the Australian ballot vote to be held Tuesday, August 15, on the temporary ATV Ordinance. The ballot question is confusing as it had to be stated in the negative according to attorney Sarah Devine-Cox's interpretation of the state statutes.

The Australian ballot has a single question: "Shall the Temporary All Terrain Vehicle Ordinance be adopted by the Select Board on May 7, 2018, be disapproved?"

It includes an explanation: "A 'yes' vote means the ordinance is defeated and thus disapproved. A 'no' vote means the ordinance is passed.

If the temporary May 7 ordinance regulating ATVs is approved, it becomes effective immediately and expires on November 30, 2018.

Board Chair Bruce Urie explained that the board meeting on August 8 is to clarify questions about the temporary ATV ordinance; it is not to debate pros and cons of the ordinance. He expressed an intent for Brogan to monitor the meeting if it drew the ire of opponents and proponents who had attended previous numerous meetings.

"The frustration for me is I [am] see a public meeting turning into the same as we had before," Urie said.

He questioned how it was possible to get people to an informational meeting and not have the meeting degenerate into an exchange between those who want

See ATV, 4

Hardwick and Craftsbury Collaborate

by Bennett Avery

CRAFTSBURY – Cooperation is the name of the game these days between the student bodies of Hazen Union and Craftsbury Academy July 18, the two boards met in Craftsbury for their second combined meeting to find areas where the schools can cooperate to widen the educational opportunities for their students.

Over lackluster vanilla provided by Harry Miller, chair of the Craftsbury Academy board, the boards discussed a range of issues in an informal, wide-ranging style. At the beginning of the meeting, Miller said that he would like to have the meeting with a concrete action to be taken by the boards. "It is nice to have Act 46 behind us," said Miller. He motivated by saying that it will be nice to "spend some time in our board meetings talking about education and collaboration, and stuff like that. I think the potential for us is really cool."

Miller then suggested an action that could be taken immediately. There is a student, according to Miller, who became so restless in Hardwick, one not attend Craftsbury Academy. The student is specifically interested in access to the Craftsbury Outdoor Sports Academy (COSA), which is a pilot program between the Craftsbury Academy and the Craftsbury Outdoor Center (COC). The program allows students who meet the requirements to train for specific competitions with the COCs coaching programs while being given academic flexibility by their schools to allow for full engagement in the training schedule.

According to Miller, a couple of candidates have been identified who may be interested in transferring to Hazen. Miller suggested that the boards could help facilitate a student trade and that not only would it be "best for the student, but also for the whole community at large that we are beginning to work together."

There was much discussion on the subject. Miller said that he thought it should be "easy." He explained that the Academy has been dealing with similar issues with the Walcott school. Hazen

See COLLABORATE, 4

Contentious Wolcott Select Board Meeting

by Doug McClure

WOLCOTT – The Wolcott Select Board meeting once again proved contentious on July 17 as the health insurance issue was raised again. In other matters, the Selectboard met with the Recreation Committee but members from a second bidder for the board on estimated costs of a planned renovation of the building. Unidentified committees and boards came up as a serious issue and, once more, the select board complained several times the necessity of having a Town Administrator.

Chad Roy of the Schoolhouse Restoration Committee had a second bid for renovation work, which he said was a "more accurate" proposal than the earlier proposal from DeBible, Steven's Mowday Engineering Group. It considerably more expensive bid. Mowday's proposal came to $9,800, compared to $5,000. DeBible's bid was $6,000. The Mowday proposal, Roy said, involved more thorough work to get a look at what was going on beneath the surface. The select board said it would review the material, but could not discuss the matter right then because it had not had time to look it over. The select board also suggested working with the Historical Society and its resources.

See CONTENTIOUS, 2

Community Visit Process Kicks Off in Greensboro

by Bennett Avery

GREENSBORO – The diving bell at Bethel Church of Christ in Greensboro was nearly full on July 17. Throughout the afternoon and evening, people packed in a series of forums to discuss issues facing the town and to help guide the direction the town might like to go. This collection of forums was the first in a series of events facilitated by the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD).

VCRD travels around the state putting on what is known as the Community Visit Program, which they have taken to over 65 towns across the state. This is a process undertaken over four months, in which three phases of dialogue occur.

The first meeting with the public is essentially a fact-finding process, in which various focus groups with topics such as infrastructure and telecommunication, housing for all and the future of the working landscape are held. The topics were identified by a steering committee made up of a cross-section of the community. In these forums, which are facilitated by a VCRD representative, people are encouraged to say on what issues the town faces and eventually to ideas of what can be done to improve the perceived challenges.

At the forum entitled Shifting Demographics: Aging in Place, Arts & Aging in Place, assets such as Lake Caspian, the Senior's Store and the Ladys's Walking Club were named. Issues facing the town such as the aging of the population, lack of high speed internet and cell services, as well as trouble with rural transportation were discussed. Several state officials were sitting in at the first phase of the Community Visit program, as well as representatives from Senators Sanders' and Leahy's offices.

The VCRD will now compile the notes produced by the day's meetings and return to Greensboro on August 22 for the second round of community meetings. At this time, residents will decide which issues will take priority for the town, and from there will sign up for task forces to start working on the issues identified.

The final step of the Community Visit Program will be another meeting, this time for the task forces to create action plans and meet with representatives from pertinent regional, state or federal organizations. VCRD will bring in these experts to help connect

Photo by Vanessa Fournier

Richard Amore (left) from the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development facilitates the forum on infrastructure and telecommunications during a community meeting for Greensboro July 17 held at the Greensboro Bible Church.

Task Force to Consider Pedestrian Safety

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – On July 18, at its first regular meeting in almost a month, the Hardwick Select Board took decisive steps to deal with village traffic and pedestrian issues, heard from the Hardwick Electric Department (HED) about a situation, and got news from Road Foreman Tim Fuller about intense paving operations all over town. The board also got status updates on outstanding projects such as the Green Lantern Village Trail sections, the Yellow Barn, and Bridgman Reservoir, which are on schedule even though the reservoir's drawdown is causing everyone nervous about more due to its scheduled December 15 completion date.

Multiple studies have been done in the past to address the pedestrian issues plaguing residents and motorists trying to get through Hardwick Village. There are reasons to care about going where they shouldn't; to care about going where they shouldn't, the problems are only getting worse. Select Board Member Shari Cornish spoke for the entire board when she said, "I'm so sick of the topic."

Select Board Chair Eric Resnick waved off trying to talk through work already done and in other any debate about whether more study is were needed. "It's time that we move toward not just looking at studies. Let's do something about our crazy intersection," he said, almost as soon as the agenda item came up.

Cornish said the intersection was not the only problem in need of attention. She said she has been hit multiple times trying to walk across South Main, and "it's part of the Town Plan. I don't see why we can't find a task force and figure out phases and proposals and take some action."

Almost on cue, Dave Gross of the Planning Commission, who was in attendance, agreed and said that as the commission is currently wrapping up its work on the 2018 Town Plan, it would soon have hundreds in pile from with the extent need to create the issues. Darcy Hale agreed and said he thought that the task force "is a good idea."

When Gross indicated September would probably be the earliest that the commission would be involved, Cornish said, "I'm not waiting 'til September." The select board proceeded to discuss forming a task force with board members Elizabeth Dow and Shari Cornish to see Cornish put in "serious downtown pedestrian and whatever other issues."

Subsequent to that motion, the board tasked Paddock road crew with putting an end to exit through traffic at the town parking lot by the Village Restaurant

See SAFETY, 2

hardwickgazette.com