



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Wednesday, September 06, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

**TOWN HALL, 8 PARK STREET, ADAMS, MA 01220
1st Floor, Board of Selectmen Meeting Room**

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date, the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 6:00 PM at the Adams Town Hall. Chair Christine Hoyt opened the meeting. Present: Chairman Christine Hoyt, Vice-chairman Howard Rosenberg, and Member Joe Nowak were present. *Members Rick Blanchard and John Duval and Attorney Edmund St. John III were absent.* Also present were Jay Green, Town Administrator; Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary; Eammon Coughlin, Director of the Community Development Department; Rebecca Ferguson, Assistant Director of the Community Development Department; Kevin Rayner, Community Planner; Sten Spenella, Reporter for the Berkshire Eagle; Doug Mayger, Plant Manager of Specialty Minerals Incorporated; Kyle Ledbetter Occupational Engineer for Specialty Minerals; and residents of the Town of Adams.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

No minutes were presented at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *None*

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation and Updates from Specialty Minerals Incorporated, Doug Mayger, Plant Manager and Kyle Ledbetter, Occupational Engineer for Specialty Minerals

The plant has been active since the early 1900s. There are about 1400 acres across Adams and North Adams that mining happens in. There are a number of products that are produced at the plant. There are 4 Lyme Kilns. About 80,000 tons are Lyme are sold each year. About 250,000 tons of ground calcium carbonate are also produced each year. Chickens need the calcium carbonate to produce healthy eggs. Participated calcium carbonate (PPC) consists of captured CO₂, heat and water. It goes into paints and coatings, sealants, and noise deadening technologies. A lot of folks are moving into Adams. People are coming from all over the world to work here. Specialty minerals works to employ folks locally and is happy to employ second and third generation individuals.

Mr. Ledbetter stated that it is important that Specialty Minerals operate the plant in a way that is mindful of employee's health and safety. They are also aware of the environmental impact. We have gone 294 days without an injury and 894 days since a lost time injury. The plant is proud of their safety record.

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Environmentally speaking, there is an ongoing project to create a minerals landfill to restore the ecosystem of the landfill. It involves a lot a planting of native plants. This should help restore the bird population.

A significant amount of money, research, and time has been spent on their filtration system so as to have less of a dust impact. Sustainability is one of the other concerns. Year over year, the amount of water usages has been reduced by roughly 17%.

Member Nowak thanked the presenters for their time and expressed his pleasure with their dedication to the environment. *Member Nowak* asked about the frequency of audits at the plant. Mr. Mayger articulated a number of agencies, both state and federal that regularly perform audits at the plant. *Member Nowak* also inquired about the possibility of Specialty Minerals shifting their vehicles to electric vehicles. Mr. Ledbetter stated that there is not the appropriate technology in place at this point in time to support the larger commercial vehicles.

Vice-chair Rosenberg: Regarding housing, how is the plant dealing with the current housing shortage? Mr. Mayger stated that they are very fortunate to have a stable workforce. *Vice-chair Rosenberg* also asked how the community should contact Specialty Minerals with any questions or concerns. Mr. Mayger stated that the door is always open.

Chairman Hoyt stated that she has been fortunate enough to tour the plant several times. A number of years ago, there was a 40-60% retirement anticipated. Is that what is happening now and did COVID exacerbate that? Mr. Mayger stated that there is a pretty lengthy learning curve to learn how the plant works. There has been an exodus but staff is being on boarded and trained at a consistent rate. *Chairman Hoyt* stated that she moved here in 2006 after her spouse took a job in the area. There is a local group in Adams that has created brochures to welcome new residents. Town Administrator Green and his Administrative Assistant, are happy to get those to management at Specialty Minerals if that is something that they would find helpful.

Chairman Hoyt also stated that she has seen less dust and certainly received less calls about dust. Mr. Ledbetter stated that the mine is only active during the day. There is no drilling at night and the blasts only happen at mid-day. There are two shifts in the mine, with 10pm being when it shuts down. At night, the trucks use strobe lights instead of backup alarms.

Chairman Hoyt was thankful to hear that they are working with the students at McCann to help them secure jobs and internships. She hopes that these partnerships with local institutions will continue.

A community member, Sean Suttcliff addressed Mr. Ledbetter and noted that while they had a noise complaint, Mr. Ledbetter was nice to work with.

Licensing

One Day Sunday Entertainment License, Adams Theater, 27 Park Street, Adams for Sunday, September 17th after 1pm.

Vice-chair Rosenberg made a motion to issue the Adams Theater a One Day Sunday Entertainment License for Sunday, September 17th for after 1pm. The motion was seconded by Member Nowak. The motion passed unanimously.

One Day Public Entertainment License, Antonio Cardeno Scholarship Fund at the Adams Theater, 27 Park Street, Adams MA on Sunday, September 17th from 5pm-10pm

Vice-chair Rosenberg made a motion to issue the Adams Theater a One Entertainment License for the Anthony Cardino Scholarship Foundation for Sunday, September 17th. The motion was seconded by Member Nowak. The motion passed unanimously.

Facility Use Request, Thunderbolt Ski Runners, September 30th, 2023, Greylock Glen including Meadow Loop Trail and Greylock Glen Gazebo.

A motion was made by Vice-chair Rosenberg to approve the facility Use Request for the Thunderbolt Ski Runners for September 30th, 2023 at the Greylock Glen including the Meadow Loop Trail and Greylock Glen Gazebo. The motion was seconded by Member Nowak. The motion passed unanimously.

One Day Liquor License, Bright Ideas to Serve at the Thunderbolt Ski Runners' Bike Around Event, September 30th at the Greylock Glen Gazebo, 12pm-5pm

A motion was made by Vice-chair Rosenberg to approve the one Day liquor license for Bright Ideas to serve at the Greylock Glen Gazebo from 12pm-5pm on September 30th. The motion was seconded by Member Nowak. The motion passed unanimously.

Community Development Department Updates

Town Administrator Jay Green introduced the Community Development Department and the work that they are doing.

Northern Berkshire Digital Equity Plan, Kevin Rayner, Planner for the Adams Community Development Department

The Community Development Department is excited to take part in this grant opportunity with a number of our surrounding communities. The Digital Equity Plan is an opportunity for individuals who do not have access to certain technologies, reliable internet, or knowledge of how to use technology. Throughout the planning process the community development department is looking. Monthly planning meetings and stakeholder meetings have been happening.

The grant pays for all of the consultant charges as well as the planning process. The grant total scope of the work was for roughly \$120,000.

Member Nowak asked if the grant would cover the work that VHB was doing. Mr. Rayner clarified that it would.

Vice-chair Rosenberg asked for a scope of the work and the magnitude of the issue. During the pandemic there were massive outages as people all tried to get on Zoom at the same time. There is a bandwidth issue. There are still plenty of folks without access to the internet. An issue is also in how folks know to use technology. There is also a future funding investigation as a part of the study.

Chairman Hoyt thanks the State Representative's office for putting this forward.

Vice-chair Rosenberg asked if the business community has been addressed as part of the stakeholder conversation.

There is a public workshop at the Adams Visitor Center at 6pm on October 24th for interested parties to get more information about the process. By that time, there will have been three rounds of stakeholder conversations, so there should be some data available.

Cook Street Park Project, Rebecca Ferguson, Assistant Director of Community Development

Construction has started at the Cook Street Park already. The hired landscapers have begun clearing the space. There will be a variety of areas such as an off-leash dog area. There is a small barn that was originally hoped to be used, however an architect took a look at it and the recommendation is that it comes down. The foundation will remain but be covered by stones. The majority of the landscaping work is slated to be done by the end of the year and then they will return in the spring for some additional plantings. Plans include a small, fenced-in area for dogs to be off leash. There is a fence in the plans that will keep individuals away from the coal and grain building. If anyone would like to partner with the Town of Adams in order to help secure funding to save the Coal and Grain building, please feel free to come forward.

Park Street Rehabilitation Project, *Eammon Coughlin, Director of Community Development*

The last time that any work was done on Park Street was in 2014. In 2014 it was a pretty comprehensive program that was done. This project will not be nearly as invasive. We don't have much choice but to rehabilitate the road. If we don't rehabilitate it, the road will continue to deteriorate. Bids will be available for contractors starting tomorrow, and bid closing is September 28th. We are excited to get this project underway. This is essentially two projects rolled into one. Vehicle travel lanes will be repaired down to a depth of 6 inches. The funding is coming from capital appropriated by the last Town Meeting. The rest of the funding is coming from Chapter 90. Deep ruts have formed due to an unstable base under the preexisting roadway. There are trolley tracks, rock, brick, mud, and silt all under the road. The road is the most heavily trafficked road in town as it sees over 11,000 vehicles a day.

The Town of Adams received \$200,000 in Shared Streets grants to look at improving crosswalks and crossings on Columbia street (from Walgreens up to the roundabout). The crossings in those locations are outdated and this work will help to improve pedestrian safety. Mr. Coughlin and his staff will be working with contractors to ensure that the impact is as minimal as possible.

Vice-chair Rosenberg asked how long the work is expected to take. The Community Development Department is hopeful that the work will be done this fall.

A letter was sent out to abutters along the project corridor last week to notify individuals. We will see what concerns are brought up by the community at the public information session. If we do this at night, it is significantly more expensive. We are aware that it is unlikely that parking will be available during the length of the project. *Vice-chair Rosenberg* acknowledged the potential benefits of increasing the amount of product from Specialty Minerals being moved via railway as it will reduce the number of heavy trucks being sent down the road.

There is not quick enough switching from the switching railroad contractor because they have their own cost benefit analysis to how frequently they are in the area to switch.

SUBCOMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS:

Member Nowak: None

Vice-chair Rosenberg: None

Chairman Hoyt: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Public Information Session on Park Street Rehabilitation Project, September 13th, at 5:30pm in the Board of Selectmen's Room at the Adams Town Hall, 8 Park Street, Adams.

The Board is encouraged to attend this public information session. Please encourage folks to join if they may be impacted by the work on Park Street.

There is a bulky waste recycling day coming up in Lanesborough on September 16th from 8am-noon. There is a list of items that are accepted and the cost of those items available on the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District Website

Member Nowak: Would like to see people step up and maintain the Meadow Loop Trail.

The sign at Lime Street would does not look good and thinks that the DPW needs to step up.

Member Nowak was told that the Building where the Hoosac School Administration is located had all the electric work paid for by the school. Town Administrator Green stated that that could potentially be a provision of the commercial lease that they have.

Member Nowak stated that there is a sign in front of the Trail (the old Topia Inn). The sign cannot be seen.

Member Nowak stated that he read an article from Melissa Silverstein regarding the politics of the Susan B. Anthony Birth site Museum.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 20th at 6pm.

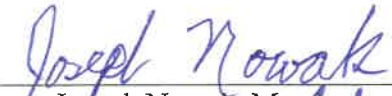
ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Vice-chair Rosenberg to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Member Nowak. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 pm.

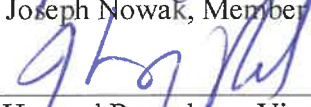
List of Materials Referenced:

- Specialty Minerals Adams Facility Overview
- Public Entertainment License Application, Antonio Cardeno Scholarship Foundation
- Facility Use Request, Thunderbolt Ski Runners
- One Day Liquor License Application, Bright Ideas Brewing
- Map of 9 Crosswalk locations for Columbia Street

Respectfully Submitted by Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.



Joseph Nowak, Member



Howard Rosenberg, Vice Chairman

Richard Blanchard, Member

John Duval, Member

Christine Hoyt, Chairman