

North Country Scenic Byways Public Highways July 2, 2018

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Rozek, Theberge, Remillard, Gentili; Councilors Higbee, Morgan Allain and Berthiaume were not present.

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Pam Laflamme and Carl Martland, North Country Council

Mayor Grenier called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Martland stated that the NHDOT requires public hearings for any changes in the scenic byways.

Mr. Martland started a PowerPoint presentation. He introduced North Country Council and reviewed their responsibilities regarding scenic byways. The change, as explained by Mr. Martland, is the discontinuation of Route 110 from Berlin to Milan from the Woodlands Heritage Route. Instead of Route 110 being used, Route 16 from Berlin to Milan to Route 110A over Milan Hill back onto Route 110 is the new scenic portion of the Woodlands Heritage Route.

North Country Council is looking for minutes from the public hearing along with a letter of support or non-support from the City.

Mayor Grenier stated that he does not agree with de-designating Route 110. There are more moose sightings on this route than on Route 16.

Mr. Martland suggested starting a process to market Route 110, Routes 110A and 16 back to Berlin as a loop.

Again Mayor Grenier expressed not being in favor of this move. There are business people investing monies in the city along Route 110 who will not be in favor of this move as well. Mr. Martland said that he was at a meeting for improvements on byways. NHDOT is currently setting their priorities on pedestrians and cycling.

Councilor Remillard stated that she is not in favor of this move either. She asked how this change came about. Mr. Martland stated that corridor management plans need to be developed for the byways. In order to complete this task, a member of every town would need to be involved in the process, which equates to several people. NHDOT is also in the process of simplifying. As such, DOT has essentially threatened to decrease the amount of funding being provided to NCC. At this time, the change has already been completed. The only option available would be to request changes to the scenic byways routes to include Route 110.

Councilor Rozek stated that he is not interested in providing a letter of support. The City recently rebuilt a portion of Route 16 and spent a sum of approximately \$6 million dollars with absolutely no help from the State. The City has a beautiful road in a residential area as well as a school, and he does not feel that it would be advantageous to encourage additional traffic.

Further discussion took place regarding the change and possibly a new route to encompass Route 110. Council agreed to provide NCC with two separate communications. The first will be a request for a new scenic byways route that would possibly begin at Jericho State Park to Route 110 to Milan, Route 110A from West Milan to Milan and Route 16 back into Berlin. The second will be a letter of support for the re-designation of the Woodlands Heritage Route.

The public hearing closed at approximately 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elaine Riendeau
City Clerk

Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the City Council by motion.