

Representative View

By MAXINE GRAD
Representative, D. Northfield Moretown, Roxbury

Hello Moretown, Northfield and Roxbury:

Here are some highlights of this year's session. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you. I look forward to seeing you over the summer and fall.

FISH HATCHERIES

Vermont's fish hatcheries contribute to the sterling reputation of Vermont's sports fishery by assuring a plentiful supply of valued species and by maintaining special brood stocks of popular sports fish species. During the budget process, when we found Vermont's financial resources stretched, much consideration was given to closing Vermont's fish hatcheries. The House argued against closure because of the value our hatcheries have. The vetoed budget kept hatcheries open.



INVESTING IN VERMONT

This year Vermont will invest in state and municipal infrastructure, provide jobs, and strengthen the economic development of the state through its Capital Bill. The legislation incorporates federal stimulus money with the annual bond so that the total infrastructure spending will be over \$109,000,000.

Vermont will construct an urgently needed forensics lab in Waterbury. We will complete the renovations of the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington. We will complete another phase of the construction of the archives facility in Middlesex. In addition to these specific building projects, major maintenance projects to state buildings will be undertaken across the state that will employ many Vermonters.

The federal stimulus money has allowed us to allocate over \$19 million to wastewater treatment projects, and another \$19 million to drinking water projects. Having access to this financing is critical as we will be able to assist so many towns with these improvements. Towns will be in a better position to undertake significant economic development with water and sewer infrastructure in place.

The Vermont Investment Package outlined in the Capital Bill targets infrastructure investment and job creation in an even

more specific way. About \$6 million will go to Forest & Parks for maintenance and expansion of facilities. A portion of the work will likely include summer jobs for young people - like a Vermont Civilian Conservation Corps. There will also be \$1 million for the standard Building Communities Grants and \$1 million to create transitional and affordable housing.

We continue to pay down the backlog of school construction funding owed to towns for past projects. This year we were able to make a total of \$10 million in payments. There is still a moratorium on new school construction project financing until we can catch up and plan for a sustainable method of school construction funding.

CREATING JOBS & STIMULATING VERMONT'S ECONOMY

The Legislature acted to create jobs and foster growth for Vermont's employers. By investing wisely and creating strategic and innovative policies, Vermont's employers stand to leverage small investments into \$175 to \$200 million worth of economic activity. Such a triumph is hard to come by, particularly when times are tight. But we did it by taking a variety of forward-thinking and strategic set of measures: More green jobs due to new investments from federal funds and a Vermont Green Jobs Corps. Seed capital that will enable small businesses to employ more workers and expand business. Buy local: A new Farm-to-Plate Investment Program helps farmers, employers, and consumers. More powerful co-ops: A new law allows limited co-ops to raise money from investors. Stronger car dealerships mean more choices for consumers. Bolstered tourism: Vermont will invest more in bringing tourism dollars to Vermont. New income for Vermont: Vermont will be at the cutting edge with e-corporations. Protection = commerce: insurance and trusts are big employers in Vermont. We've strengthened them with new safeguards for senior citizens, and more opportunities for these businesses.

DRUG MARKETING

One of the great contributors to rising health care costs is the amount spent on prescription drugs. S. 48 bans most gifts pharmaceutical companies give to doctors and increases transparency in the marketing of pharmaceuticals and other "prescribed products." Vermonters spent 52% more on drugs and non-durable medical supplies in 2007 than in 2002. And by many

accounts, almost a third of every dollar spent on prescription drugs now goes to marketing. This marketing occurs for prescription drugs, biologics and medical devices. The bill bans gifts—including free meals—from manufacturers to providers with some exceptions, and it requires disclosure of most of these exceptions.

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation budget will provide work for many Vermonters by repairing our roads and bridges. It is one area where stimulus money will be visibly helping Vermont's economy.

Besides the increased tax on gasoline and diesel fuel, motor vehicle registration fees will increase. We have maintained two license plates but will save money by requiring only one registration sticker (rear plate). The recession's effect on transportation revenues means that even with the increase in taxes and fees, the state revenue projected for 2010 is still \$10 million less than in 2009. The addition of stimulus dollars has helped us add projects and thus jobs.

Town highways will be level-funded for next year. Local towns will be able to access an additional \$10 million in stimulus money and a third round of enhancement grants.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

House Natural Resources and Energy passed legislation this year to help the state develop its renewable energy sector. H.446 has the public service board set long-term, stable contract prices for small renewable energy producers, ranging from solar to small wind and methane projects. 75 Vermont companies were involved in building just four of the most recent farm methane digesters. This legislation protects ratepayers through strict caps on sizes of projects and total percentage that will be eligible statewide. Larger consumers of electricity may be allotted special rates to protect them further. H.446 also directs federal stimulus funds intended for energy projects, aligns our building codes to make the state eligible for other federal funds, and offers programs for municipalities to build biomass projects and offer low-interest loans for residents' energy-saving projects if voters so choose.

MILITARY AFFAIRS & HONORING OUR TROOPS

The legislature held a public hearing on the upcoming deployment of our National Guard to Afghanistan. Approximately 1,800 Vermont Army Guard men and women will be

deployed starting in November or December. This is the largest call-up of our Guard since World War II. The hearing, as well as further communication with the Adjutant General, emphasized supporting state partnerships with the military to provide social services to the families of our Guard. Federal support for social service programs has been generous, and we will be monitoring the Guard and the state to make sure both active-duty soldiers and veterans receive the help to which they are entitled.

The Wilderness battlefield in Virginia, site of an important Civil War battle involving Vermont troops, is being threatened by large commercial development. In a joint resolution that passed the house on Lincoln's birthday, Vermont called on county officials and commercial developers to honor the Civil War site and protect it from encroaching development. The resolution has since been followed with correspondence from Rep. Peter Welch. While it remains unclear as to the effect this resolution will have, we felt honoring our Civil War dead by the purchase of park land and the erecting of a monument deserved our effort.

AGRICULTURE

Vermont is 78% forestland and 14% farmland. In order to keep rural resources productive and profitable remains, the House Agriculture Committee has continued its overall strategy: support the diversification of Vermont agriculture as well as our existing, largely dairy, base. We have also worked to expand opportunities for the forest and wood products sector.

The committee bills to support ongoing diversification:

- H.58: Dairy Goat Milk
- H.62: Working Farm
- H.125: Raw Milk
- H.152: Biomass Energy
- H.192: EBT- Electronic Benefit Transfer (credit card) machines at farmer's markets
- H.231/H.313: Farm to Plate-grown food
- S.94/H.93: Maple Sugaring on State Lands- This bill supports the further development of a small, current program that allows the state to license state-owned forests for maple sugaring. There is a good opportunity here, as maple sugar is at an all-time high on world markets, and Vermont maple sugar is perceived as a premium product.

The committee developed the following to support ongoing our existing dairy base:

- S.89: VMC and Milk Surety Bonding
- Emergency Loans for Spring Planting

Northfield May Get Sidewalks From The Falls to The Village & Through The Center

By MARY COMISKEY
The Northfield News

Another public hearing was held to provide input on the alternatives that have been developed for placing sidewalks along VT Route 12 from Vine Street north to Northfield Falls and from Terrace Drive north to Crescent Avenue.

If built, the town would only have to pay 10 to 20 per cent of the cost with grants from the federal government paying for the rest. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$1.3 million, said Roger Dickinson.

Mr. Dickinson, from the engineering firm Lamoureux & Dickinson, presented the conceptual analysis which was prepared for the Town and Village of Northfield and paid for by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission.

Residents of the Town and Village, landowners and business owners were invited to participate in the planning process along with the Board of Town Selectmen and the Board of Village Trustees.

Mr. Dickinson had prepared a number of large photographs of the parts of VT Route 12 which he used to lead the discussion which showed the people attending the meeting where the proposed sidewalks would be located. The project would start at Terrace Drive on the western side of VT Route 12.

At the intersection of 12 and 12A a crosswalk is proposed across 12A and a second crosswalk is proposed to bring the side walk to the eastern side of VT Route 12.

Jane Bryant voiced her concern about the dangerous intersection of VT Routes 12 and 12A.

After discussion, Don Wallace suggested that the sidewalk be placed on the western side of VT Route 12 until it meets the existing pedestrian crossing at the northern end of the Center Park. This new placement would eliminate some of the drainage problems that would exist on the eastern side of the road.

The sidewalk would continue to the Crescent on the eastern side of the road. The southern end of the Crescent would need to be reconfigured to accommodate the sidewalk and improve access to the area served by the feeder road. The slim sidewalk on the northern end of the Crescent would be improved.

Mark Richter, Federal Highway Administration Vermont Division Construction, Maintenance & Materials Engineer, had a list of concerns to share.

He reminded Mr. Dickinson that many storm drains would need to be upgraded to accommodate the water run off. Proper management of water run off is essential to the project. The problem of snow removal and winter sidewalk maintenance

has yet to be properly addressed. Other concerns included utilities, telephone poles, sewer lines and access, storm water discharge, and fire hydrants.

The second part of the project would be built north of the Village in Northfield Falls. There are already some existing sidewalks that were improved last year. There is a bike safety issue in this area which could be alleviated by building bike lanes and changing the existing parking patterns. There are still many issues to be resolved in this area. VT Route 12 becomes part of the state highway system north of Houston Street.

North of Doyon Road there is a steep drop from the road into the river. Repair to the embankment would have serious environmental impact. If the sidewalk is located on the eastern side of Route 12 it would need to be laid over the new waterline with little effect on the line itself. Retaining walls would be needed in front of the Orthodox Church. There are many unsolved drainage issues.

Many people are unaware that there is a 49.5-foot (three rod) right-of-way measured 24.75 feet from the center of the road in both directions. People will be surprised to see how much land the town actually owns. Nicky Hebert expressed her concern about finding her home and her front porch much closer to the road. Mr. Dickinson admitted that the planners would have to work closely with the property owners before the plans could be finalized. Others spoke of losing the visual charm of the Falls if the sidewalks are installed.

Sidewalk placement would be either next to the road as it is on Main Street or separated from the roadway by a 3 to 5 foot grassy strip. The sidewalks would be made of asphalt, which is more durable and suitable to our climate.

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission paid for the two phases of the study.

Mel Adams said that this was a good engineering analysis of our needs. We can look at it and see what we can afford. Safe Roads to School and other grants would pay the balance. Our next step is to review the final written report. It will then become a basis for our future efforts in finding safe places for people to walk.

Those who could not attend the meeting but would like to provide input on the proposed sidewalks are asked to contact Steve Gladczuk of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission at (802-229-0389 or Roger Dickinson of Lamoureux & Dickinson at (802)878-4450.

Letters to the Editor

It's a Free Country — Opinions Differ — All Count

The C.A.V.E. Persona

TO THE EDITOR: THE NORTHFIELD NEWS

OUR QUINTESSENTIAL C.A.V.E. man has taken on yet another cause. This Citizen Against Virtually Everything has proclaimed war against flowering crab trees and planter boxes. Visions of Don Quixote come to mind! These nuisance items can be found at the Old Freight Yard on Wall Street.

Since we purchased the ten acre Freight Yard a year ago, one particular citizen has attempted to thwart any change, which most people would undeniably deem as improvements. In this recent assault on planter boxes, this citizen alleged tractor trailer trucks could not navigate through them to get to his commercial property. Oddly, if this were actually true, we would be limiting our own access along with all the other businesses in the Freight Yard!

The fact that these allegations are not based on truth or reality and are being used to create an injustice, not correct an injustice, is the real issue. The several Town officials and at least one State official that were contacted by this citizen have no way of knowing whether a claim is fabricated or not, yet they have a duty to respond. This is an insidious problem that uses your tax dollars to abuse the machinery of the system.

Our permit to renovate the 150 year old brick Engine House was appealed by this citizen to the Environmental Court. Eight months later, after the court sorted through the citizen's 32 statements of concern, the court ruled in our favor. Now in his latest assault on trees and

shrubs, a lawsuit has been filed against me, the Town of Northfield, and another business. Your taxpayer dollars are being used to answer (yet another) 31 claims of impropriety and 21 requests for relief sought by this Citizen Against Virtually Everything, et al. The relief sought by the four plaintiffs appears to be in the range of 3.1 million depending on how you interpret their requests for relief.

Every citizen has the right to proclaim an injustice and to therefore look to the proper authorities to correct the injustice. But the real injustice is when the courts and others are intentionally misled with accusations purporting to be facts. Manufactured claims of impropriety are not to be confused with frivolous lawsuits. It is a deliberate and calculated means of getting a foothold in the door of our legal system in order to gain something that cannot be acquired through honest means.

When the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth cannot be told, then there can be no constructive dialogue. Meanwhile, these Citizens Against Virtually Everything will continue to drain the public coffers for an undetermined agenda, or just for kicks.

MARTHA J. MAHAN
Northfield

Missed opportunity

TO THE EDITOR: THE NORTHFIELD NEWS

I JUST READ the story by John Cruickshank about the Northfield Graduation. I was out of town so I missed the ceremony. However, since that evening and throughout the last week there is one thing I have heard numerous times and that is how wonderful and moving

Michael Alger's speech was. Everyone has talked about how he spoke honestly and from the heart about his troubles in the past and how he overcame them to be there that day. I have been told that he received a standing ovation.

Imagine my surprise and dismay when I read John's article and there was no mention at all of Michael. Not one line.

Why was any mention of Michael omitted from the story? He had trouble in the past but came through it to improve himself and to graduate. Isn't that the kind of story that people want to hear?

I look forward to a reasonable explanation for the failure to include Michael in the story.

Erica Holub
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
Vermont Department of Health

Editor's Response: Graduation day was a busy one for the News. We had to race to graduation, hopefully get a few good pictures and then run off to other assignments. For that reason, it was not possible to review all of the speeches by the many wonderful students who made up the graduating class, those who spoke that day and many others, who were very accomplished. The News is always interested in people like Michael who push ahead beyond all odds. It would make a great story for the paper if someone would like to submit it.

Constitutional Logic

TO THE EDITOR: THE NORTHFIELD NEWS

THANK YOU Mr. D'Amico for giving me credit for my logic. I am sorry that I cannot accept the credit. It is not my

logic. It is The Constitution of the United States.

The 2000 Presidential Election between Bush and Gore was not the only disputed election, and you are correct. Gore won the POPULAR vote by 543,895 votes, but LOST the electoral vote by five votes. According to the Constitution, the Electoral College elects our presidents.

In 1888, Grover Cleveland won the popular vote, but lost the electoral vote to Benjamin Harrison who became president. The Electoral College was established at the very beginning of the United States, when the Constitution was ratified. Again, it is not my logic, it is Article. II. Section. 1. of the Constitution. It is also referenced in Amendment XII., which was ratified June 15, 1804. In addition, Amendment XXIII. which was ratified March 29, 1961.

As to your comment regarding Iran and their election, I don't know how to respond. It is well noted the Iran is not a democracy like the United States. Also, they do not operate according to The Constitution of The United States. I find no relevance in your statement whatsoever.

ANTHONY J. VACH
Northfield

ATV USE

The time for the public to comment on the use of ATVs on public lands in Vermont has been extended to July 6.

Send your comments to ATVRule@state.vt.us or to Warren Coleman at Agency of Natural Resources, 103 N. Main St., Montpelier, VT 05671

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1 Air-to-air missile (abbr.)
- 4 Sluggish stat
- 7 Fellow
- 10 African (pref.)
- 11 Fruiting spike
- 12 Elbe tributary
- 14 Trolley
- 15 Insect
- 17 Horse
- 18 Baltic island
- 19 Air Force Base (abbr.)
- 20 Black measles
- 22 Corrode
- 24 Amass
- 27 Af. cattle breed
- 31 E. Indian lanning tree
- 32 Sup
- 34 Base-Normandie city
- 35 Natl Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People (abbr.)
- 37 Tidy
- 39 From. first day of the month
- 41 Feminine (suf.)
- 42 Aggregate
- 45 Woman's work basket
- 47 Pronoun contraction
- 50 Ascus (2 words)
- 52 Medieval warclub
- 53 Weaverbird
- 54 Former cloth measure
- 55 Venezuelan copper center
- 56 Weep
- 57 Female ruff
- 58 Trouble

DOWN

- 1 Haard
- 2 Strauss opera
- 3 Family member
- 4 Put back
- 5 Geological
- 6 Oily ketone
- 7 Legume
- 8 Irish sweetheart
- 9 Explorer
- 10 Air traffic control (abbr.)
- 13 Mortar mixer
- 16 Killer of Castor
- 18 First-rate
- 21 Slow
- 23 Musical direction
- 24 Canada (abbr.)
- 25 Tumor (suf.)
- 26 P. I. peasant
- 28 4th incarnation of Vishnu
- 29 Curved letter
- 30 Too
- 33 Molasses
- 36 Gail
- 38 Delirium tremens (abbr.)
- 40 Light
- 42 Fast jet
- 43 Tree
- 44 Honey-eater bird
- 46 Bundle
- 48 Ecology (abbr.)
- 49 Drug
- 51 Enforcement Admin (abbr.)
- 51 John brown's dog
- 52 Sheep's cry

