



The LAW Brief



Volume II Issue 1

LAND ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON

January, 2002

Upcoming Meetings

- Wednesday January 16, 7 pm, Planning Board Public Hearing on the Lane Application, Prescott School
- Tuesday, February 5, 2 pm, deadline for submitting materials for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Nominations
- Friday, March 22, Town Elections
- Saturday, March 23, Open Town Meeting
- LAW is looking for people to be road captains to inform your neighbors about important town issues. Please call 845-2648 to help.

The M-Word

Lane officials can't bring themselves to describe their proposed asphalt and concrete plants as "manufacturing," because our town doesn't allow manufacturing. But the federal government calls it that, and so does our town lawyer. At the last hearing, Lane acknowledged that the process involves bringing in raw materials and transforming them into a finished product that is sold to customers. What would you call it?

Sunny Side Down

How do you like your eggs? Town attorney Fred Newcomb came to the last public hearing armed with a kitchen timer, to make sure citizens wouldn't talk longer than three minutes. But you'd need a sundial to time Lane: the company's soft-boiled presentation has been bubbling away for an eternity—and we still don't know how its proposed plant would impact our water, our roads, our air, or our way of life.

Don't Let Lane Take Us For Granite

Nine months to the day after the first Planning Board meeting on the Lane application, citizens will finally get a hearing devoted to their own concerns about a granite mine and manufacturing plant in our town. We've heard Lane drone on for countless hours—evading questions, patronizing town officials and mincing our Land Use Ordinance into a gooey porridge to force down our throats.

But on January 16, we throw down the spoon! The 7:00 hearing at the Prescott School is where you can make a difference. And still to come is the testimony of our own experts—professionals in many fields who have evaluated Lane's application and can be expected

to ask tough questions.

Lane's true character was revealed in a Dec. 13 newspaper



Attorney Fred Newcomb announces another citizen's presentation has timed-out.

article. The story concerned the company's tentative agreement to reimburse Washington for the \$10,000 we taxpayers have spent trying to determine if the company's industrial site is appropriate. But Lane's lawyer said the payment is conditional: "The town takes the position that its ordinance allows them to request those fees," he said,

adding, "We disagree." The article said Lane "may challenge the fee after the town planners make their decision." Lane's implied threat—give us our plant or give us our money back—is the strategy of bullies who use cash as a weapon. The \$350 million company knows that our modest tax base cannot underwrite its application. But Lane doesn't care about our town budget, or our way of life.

LAW seeks to encourage smart, sustainable economic development in Washington—jobs and businesses that serve the modern world but preserve our rural heritage, while rooted in a spirit of cooperation and trust between neighbors. In this new year, let's resolve to get smart. Let's reject Lane and move on to a better future.

Paper Chase Adds Disgrace

At the December hearing, Lane produced a copy of an old permit for its asphalt plant and rock crusher on Route 220, surprising those of us who had been demanding evidence of such paperwork since August. It was another in-

dication of Lane's arrogance in dealing with our town. Surely it was no coincidence that the permit magically appeared on the day of the hearing; keeping it secret was obviously meant to rattle Lane's opponents. But in fact, withholding the evidence was

an insult to our Selectmen, who had requested the permit months ago. That permit, for an expansion of a nonconforming use, was a mistake. We can't change the past, but we can vow not to make the same mistake twice.

Now's the time to swing into action!

Have you sent support for LAW's efforts to protect our farm and forest land? We will be bringing our consultants to the hearings but this is only possible with your financial support. In order to make sure the tough questions get asked by professionals, LAW has hired engineers to review the Lane application and use their expertise to formulate the critical questions about



how this industrial operation will affect our community, our health, and our way of life. This has been possible only through the generosity of the community and supporters of our efforts. To date we have raised considerable sums but we have a long way to go. Please send whatever you can to LAW TODAY! Thank you.

Yes! I want to help LAW make sure our ordinances are enforced. Enclosed is my donation for:

\$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 \$50
 \$75 \$100 Other: _____

Please put me on LAW's contact list.
 I want a "Lane, Lane, Go Away!" sign for my lawn.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____
ZIP: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

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