

Town of Fletcher – ATV Ordinance Public Meeting
Fletcher Town Clerk's Office
Monday, May 6, 2019, 7:00pm
Meeting Notes

Jesse Wiens facilitated this meeting and began by explaining the proposal from the North West Vermont Wheelers ATV Club (NWVW). Jesse stated that the meeting was for information only, and the board would not be voting this evening. Jesse explained that there were representative from the NWVW, VT State Police, Game Warden, Fairfax Fire Chief and Fairfax Rescue. Jesse asked that the NWVW start the meeting off by explaining their proposal to the town and the meeting would last 1 hour.

The NWVW would like the town of Fletcher to revise the ATV Ordinance to allow ATVs on Kinsley Road. The original proposal included opening the following roads for ATV use: Fairfax Road, Fletcher-Fairfield Road, Kinsley Road, North Road, and Pond Road. In addition, they would like to repair an impassable and currently closed section of Kinsley Road to allow for ATV use.

Approximately 37 people were present for the meeting.

NWVW representative present: Jeff Curtis (president), Tim Joyal (Vice President/Trail Coordinator), Cathy Keller (Treasurer)

- The Club explained they would like to use Kinsley Road as a connector road to the VASA trails. The club can bring enforcement (by setting up a contract with the Game Warden and Sherriff's Office) to do patrols. Club members would have trail access decals on their machines.

2 Representatives from VT State Police were present and provided the following information:

- State Police are limited on ATV enforcement and follow a "do not pursue" policy with ATVs and stated that they would likely not patrol Kinsley Road. The State Police explained, in their experience enforcing laws with ATVs, the person most often takes off into the woods and the State Police do not pursue.

Warden Dustin Snyder was present and provided the following information:

- If the club contracted with the Game Warden, Warden Snyder would set up a checkpoint on Kinsley Road. Though Warden's don't have a "do not pursue" policy, for safety reasons they will not pursue someone on an ATV. Warden Snyder stated that opening up Kinsley Road would bring ATV riders from surrounding towns into Fletcher, and this would make enforcement difficult. Currently, if Warden Snyder sees someone violating the ATV Ordinance in Fletcher, he likely knows who the person is and can follow up without having to pull them over. If the roads are open to ATVs and allow riders from surrounding towns, Warden Snyder will likely not know who they are- making enforcement difficult. Warden Snyder also stated that when he has pulled over someone on an ATV and they do not flee, he does not ticket them.

Representatives from Fairfax Rescue provided the following information:

- Fairfax rescue explained that there are safety concerns with ATVs and that helmets are only required when using VASA trails. If there were any medical emergencies from ATVs on Kinsley Road Fairfax Rescue would respond.

Cambridge Fire Chief provided the following information:

- In the event that there was an accident or emergency on Kinsley Road and an ambulance could not get through, Cambridge Fire Company has an ATV to use to access the trails.

Cathy Keller from NWVW provided the following information:

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- VASA fixes class 4 roads to make them trails. Cannot say how much money VASA would put into fixing the road- it is a process- VASA evaluates and repairs the road.
- If the town allows ATVs on Kinsley Road, they could set up an ordinance/guidelines with fines for violations. Cathy can provide the select board with an example from another town.
- When VASA contracts for enforcement it is a limited contract. For example: 3 years ago there was a contract for 60 hours, split between 9 Wardens, this resulted in 8 hours for Warden Snyder. There was an unlimited contract in September once. NWVW spent \$6000 on a contract in Newport last year.
- Speed limit for VASA trails is 15MPH, but the town can set a speed limit through an ordinance.
- VASA offers a safety course for riders as young as 12 years old.
- NWVW requires members to have a VASA sticker, plate, helmet and other safety measures.
- NWVW stated they want to start by opening Kinsley Road in the hopes the town will agree to opening more roads to ATVs.

Jesse suggested that we start at the front of the room and allow each person to voice their opinion about lifting the ordinance.

Approximate Tally	
Yes- allow ATVs on Kinsley Rd	No- keep the current ordinance
7	19
Snow mobiles have the VAST trails, ATVs have no where to go. ATV riders need trails to ride.	Since the gate was put up at the end of Kinsley Road, no one has been riding on the road drunk, or starting fires.
Need somewhere to ride	The Class 4 section of Kinsley Road that is just a streambed now.
I think all roads in Fletcher should be open to ATVs	ATVs come through on occasion now, then turn around at the gate- the number of ATVs will increase significantly if the road is opened.
Not a problem if there is respect	Concerned about noise, dust, and it being miserable late at night for people who live on Kinsley Road.
	Concerned about damage to the road, safety, and property values going down
	With just opening Kinsley Road, there is no where to go unless more roads are opened.
	Can't compare snow mobiles to ATVs because snow mobiles are not year round.
	People already ride ATVs on roads in Fletcher illegally and trespass.
	Has called law enforcement before on ATVs violating the ordinance and by the time law enforcement gets there, the ATV has driven off.
	See it in town now, and it would just be worse if it was allowed.
	Safety concerns- No respect now, road laws aren't followed, Has seen people die, open gates, and

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	trespass.
	Doesn't make sense to open one road, would be afraid of a domino effect.
	Kinsley Road has one of the most dangerous corners in town.
	Class 4 roads are a problem, and traffic is a problem now, let alone adding 4-wheelers
	Worried about divide and conquer tactic being used- Be cautious when "this is what is planned for now"
	There is a noise statute for 4 wheelers, but Warden would have to carry decibel readers to enforce. Currently, decibel readers are not carried.
	Email- Safety concerns, afraid for more deadly accidents occurring, concerns for the land itself- have seen devastation to wooded trails in the Adirondacks.
	Email- Having the road closed has made it safer for children and pets who live on the road.

Once everyone in the room had a chance to comment, and all questions were addressed, the Select Board explained what their decision process would be.

- There will not be a decision tonight
- In the next Select Board meeting the Select Board will discuss the information gathered from tonight's meeting.
- The Select Board wants to take the time to think consider what is good or bad for the town, and will record these considerations in the meeting minutes.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8pm