

LAKE PLACID NEWS

North Elba adopts stormwater management plan

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SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

LAKE PLACID — Tuesday the North Elba Town Board adopted a stormwater management plan for the town of North Elba and village of Lake Placid — the same plan the village board approved in a unanimous vote last week.

The plan mandates that landowners in the village or town obtain permits from the building inspector's office before creating any "new impervious surfaces" measuring more than 1,000 square feet on their properties. The plan will monitor the construction of new driveways and roofs, but will exclude re-paving or re-roofing work. The permits, which will cost landowners \$25 each, are intended to ensure that stormwater management techniques are used wherever possible.

"We want to create an aware-

ness that water that runs off your property does have an impact on municipal systems and does have an impact on neighbors," said Lake Placid/North Elba Joint Review Board Chairman Bill Billerman, who attended Tuesday's meeting. "It's going to save the municipalities money and having to do repairs for projects that did not get a permit when they should have."

The board reached a consensus on the need for such a plan. Councilman Jerry Strack, however, repeatedly objected to the 1,000 square foot limit.

"I'd like to see it be 5,000 square feet," he said. "I feel individual homeowners are being penalized (by the permit process.)" Strack was the only councilor to vote against the ordinance. He noted that the state and county transportation departments disregard stormwater management concerns when doing roadwork.

Councilman Jay Rand was among those in favor of the 1,000-foot stipulation, and he noted that the state's disregard for stormwater control should not affect local policies.

"Water is a precious commodity up here," he said. "If it's an inconvenience to people here, so be it."

"It's not set in stone," he added. The ordinance, which is a now a component of the joint land use management code, can be amended at any time.

Town Supervisor Shirley Seney said her vote to approve the plan was contingent on the idea that the ordinance could be amended at a later date.

According to Councilwoman Sally Warner, who voiced strong approval of the ordinance, the town and village boards' recent actions are a jump-start on a movement that will soon be state-mandated.

Referring to the ordinance as a

"21st-century concept," Warner explained that in March 2003 every municipality in the state will be required to implement a stormwater management plan.

"Why not get a jump on it," she said.

The Town Board held a public hearing on the ordinance in March. Members of the Review Board as well as volunteers from the community have been working the plan since 1997.

Last week, Village Board members expressed concern as to whether the ordinance and permit system could be effectively enforced by the building inspector's office. But Tuesday, building inspector Jim Morganson said he is capable of enforcing the system.

In addition, both Morganson and Billerman stressed that the education of homeowners and landowners about responsible stormwater management is a main focus of the plan.