

This is a Letter to the editor, published in the issue of July 31, 2007 in the Southbridge Evening News.

Taxpayers may finance another lawsuit

The elections are over, reelected Earl Johnson “vindicated,” and life in Holland back to “normal.”

Did you ever buy a new car? Smell the distinctive scent of formaldehyde and new leather characteristic of cars fresh from the assembly line? You may noticed among the new cars of several town officials and departments roaming the streets of Holland a brand new red Ford F350 truck, a post election purchase by the three selectmen for Brian Johnson’s Highway Department. Even so the unique feeling driving a new car provides wears of, Brian Johnson and his people made the best of it. In search of a safety hazard they roamed the 19 miles of Holland’s streets and roads, taking turns on the controls. The quest was, finding the weakest link, or better, the most dangerous missing link in a relict from the great depression. I’m talking about the concrete posts lining the sides of the streets and roads throughout the Northeast, erected through a government program during the depression to create needed jobs and to enhance road safety.

Some of the posts are still in place; here and there you can even spot remnant rusty steel cables in-between meant to prevent cars from getting off the road. Other towns like Union replace the ineffective and outdated system with guard rails out of steel, but not so in Holland.

This past Tuesday, Brian Johnson and his crew removed three of the concrete posts opposite to the Holland Pizza Parlor where they were standing for more than 70 years and placed them opposite PJ’s bar and three hundred feet towards the causeway, blocking access to the beachfront property owned by Chad Brigham and Mike LaMountain where Farmer James LaMountain stores firewood he harvests off of the hillside property.

As a citizen of Holland I’m sleeping better at night knowing how much our local government is concerned about safety of its citizens. However, as a friend of Brigham and the LaMountain’s and one of many regular visitors of said beachfront property I can not see even a remote connection between the safety hazard the concrete posts allegedly eliminate, but see a connection between the fact that Brigham, Mike LaMountain and two of their friends challenged the Johnson’s and other officials, and that selectman Wetlaufer’s contention James LaMountain would not be a farmer was rejected by Judge Fein in a recent housing court decision. The latest prank by the three stooges unfortunately is no laughing matter and the next lawsuit a certainty, another lawsuit financed by Holland’s taxpayers.

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