

I never thought I would be this excited for something that is not happening!!

The Besides Cabin project, proposed for Pine Grove Road (and also bordering on Hartwood, and near Gabriel and orange Ave) on the South side of the Hamlet of Smallwood Community consisting of 57 single family homes and 47 Campground rental spots plus other amenities, will no longer be proceeding with the project at that location. My understanding is the property owner will not be extending their purchase contract, but they are looking in other locations for project sites. It could be Bethel or somewhere else (and I have no knowledge of where) but not there!

First, I would like to thank the Town board members: Lillian Hendrickson, Vicky Simpson, Billy Crumley and Bernie Cohen. Although no part of the project had officially reached the Town Board, they were all well versed on the details of the project, and they also heard the serious concerns raised by the community that have been shared with us so far in the approval process. I have complete faith in this Board who would have done their diligence, and most importantly they all would have done the right thing for the community and the Town.

I 'd like to thank the Civic Association President Jonathan Hyman and the entire Civic Board as well as the newly formed Smart group (Smallwood Aware Residents Team) who went above and beyond by providing details, information, expertise and public awareness of the project. I thank them all sincerely for their work.

I also want to thank the Planning Board, who I have complete confidence would have applied the Town code as required, and would have taken a hard look at all potential negative impacts and would have given the project a fair, open-minded, thorough, detailed and open and transparent review needed for the project. For example, for the first time ever the Planning Board requested an additional review of the submitted traffic study to another outside engineer to make sure it was properly reflecting the potential traffic pattern. I think it was a good sign of the seriousness of the review process that was begun.

I want to thank the developers of Besides for considering Bethel, as I am sure they realized the beauty and uniqueness of the Town and wanted to share in it, and be a part of it. I wish them well.

So I can assure our residents that you should have complete confidence in our elected and appointed leaders in the Town who would have had any part in the decision making process, that a proper review would have been fairly conducted. We would have considered the balance between the overall benefits of the project versus any potential negative environmental impacts, and would have acted in the community's best interest. We are still a very busy Town, we are still open for business, and we have a lot to look forward to by working together.