



Historically Speaking

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ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY AND POWER PROJECT UNDERSTANDING MORE OF WHAT THE COMMUNITY WAS FACING

This is the fourth in a series of newsletters that have revisited the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway more than 70 years ago and the changes the village and town of Waddington experienced as a result. Previous articles discussed how the overall changes would affect the school system, the Ogden Mansion on Ogden Island, and the re-routing of Route 37. This newsletter will share the forum that citizens held to discuss how the community would handle the changes that were expected, the housing project that was proposed, and the planning and zoning commission appointed by the Village Board to prepare for housing developments and the expected influx of residents. You'll also read about possible Village tax problems and concerns about where residents would move to when their farm land was taken.

WADDINGTON HOLDS FORUM ON EFFECTS OF SEAWAY

Ogdensburg Journal, May 24, 1954

Ten St. Lawrence University students of community organization and their professor, Dr. Myles Rodenhaver, took part in a public forum Thursday at 8 p.m. in the Community Rooms, with 17 local residents selected to represent a cross section of the village. The effect of the Seaway and Power Project on the community was the topic of discussion.

Dallas K. Martin, Principal of the Waddington High School was chairman of the meeting and introduced Dr. Rodenhaver. Students and panel members were introduced. Dr. Rodenhaver said that he was interested in having the class meet persons in the small communities, how they organized and got things underway. They found that process came after the people sat down and talked things over and made plans: a close approach to the old-time town meeting.

C.B.Olds was called on to give a brief talk on the history of Waddington. The first settlement in Waddington was in 1797 he said. The site was chosen because of St. Lawrence River power, which promised a bright future for the area. At that time the power was used to operate small industries, carding and woolen mills, tanneries and lumber mills which flourished for years. After the advent of the railroad in 1909, the Waddington Milk Company and the St. Regis Paper Company joined the industrial life. Also, many of the village and town people are employed at Alcoa, Massena. Olds concluded by saying, "We are on the eve of a development of which we know very little but we think that it will eventually be a great thing for the whole North Country."

Roy B. Pike was asked if a chamber of commerce might not be a very helpful organization at the present time. Pike said he thought such an organization would be most helpful at this period in the growth of the Village. Continued on Page 2...



The Seaway would forever change the waterfront area of the town and village of Waddington. These aerial photos by Dwight Church show how big Ogden Island was and how it was connected to the village prior to Seaway construction. On the left you can see the Waddington shoreline and along with some of the Canadian side from the Pine Street area all the way to the area near the Iroquois Dam. The photo on the right shows a close up of the causeway that connected Ogden Island to the bridge as well as the Main Street area and the power dam that once went all the way to the Island.

FORUM ON EFFECTS OF THE SEAWAY Cont'd

Industries looking for sites and to locate near to the new power and waterway development would like such an organization to answer inquiries, he said, and people planning vacations might also like information about boating, fishing, hunting, and housing. There was a chamber of commerce functioning in the past but not recently.

Joel M. Howard asked the question, does Waddington want parks or industries? He spoke at some length on the State Park Board not having a member from St. Lawrence County until last year. Situated centrally on the St. Lawrence River, Waddington might be considered a very likely spot for a State Park, Howard stated. He added that the Town of Waddington contained 50 square miles and that 28 percent of it would be relocated acreage. He mentioned that at least two farmers had plans for trailer court and were waiting for the relocation of Route 37, he said. There is a possibility of the Village being bypassed by the relocation, he said.

Dr. Ludwig Auerbach spoke from the point of view of a health officer. He said the State sanitary code had to be complied with, all new comers locating here with children would have to comply with immunization and vaccination plans, whether in school or preschool, and the rules pertaining to camps would have to be followed closely.

Dallas K. Martin and William P. Yolton covered the school situation, the reduction of tax base with the possible discontinuance of our present industries, and the effect of relocation of industries. They said the present school is taxed to capacity and according to state law, Waddington cannot centralize. It might be necessary to put children on a half time schedule, they said. The question was asked, what could be done to prevent juvenile delinquency. It was agreed that some definite steps should be taken for prevention rather than to cope with it when it gets into courts and jail.

Donald F. Hanson spoke about something being accomplished about locating Waddington on the Power Project and Seaway maps that are being put out by the newspapers. The Fish and Game Club, of which he is a member, was asked by Hanson to do something concrete about it. The volunteer firemen were represented by Stanley Henderson, who stated that the present equipment was adequate for present purposes for use in the Village and Town of Waddington.

Linda Porteous and Francis Zagrobelny were asked as members of the student council, to express their opinions about better recreational facilities, for winter and summer and all year use. Wendell R. Strait spoke briefly as chairman of the Zoning committee, about the new zoning ordinance.

WADDINGTON TAX PROBLEM FORESEEN

Ogdensburg Journal, March 6, 1956

The Waddington Chamber of Commerce foresees a time when the village will be faced with a severe tax problem unless the State of New York assumes its responsibility in helping to bear the cost.

At a meeting of the Directors on Feb. 27, 1956, they went on record to the effect that Waddington village must receive generous aid in bringing about whatever changes are necessary to make its sewage system satisfactory after the St. Lawrence project is completed. It is likely that the present sewage system will become ineffective, and perhaps a menace with the elevation of the river, the directors felt. Present day thought seems to be that sewage should no longer be dumped into the river. It may be that the artesian well water supply will be cut off necessitating a new well at a higher elevation.

A late brochure features a park along the river parallel to St. Lawrence Avenue. Such a development with playgrounds, lawns, walks, trees and shrubs, should be most attractive but will necessitate adequate maintenance and pose a sizable annual expenditure, according to the directors. Most residents will welcome this project if the state will assume the cost of maintenance, they said, but the assessed valuation in the village cannot support such an expenditure.

Some difficulties have arisen over the building of new homes in and around the village. Water and sewers are not provided by the village in the new areas, and people are urged to build on lots where these services already exist. In most cases the long established lots do not conform to the new regulations. Some way should be found to encourage persons desirous of building and remaining in Waddington. Small families do not need large homes nor do they want large lawns and gardens to care for. A modern attractive house, even though small, would be an improvement over a vacant lot, and would avoid the eye sore of unkept brush, high grass and litter and would increase assessed valuation. An appeal board exists for those who wish to avail themselves of its service.

Waddington offers many advantages to tourists and vacationists, and these features are being emphasized. Superior industrial sites with ample docking possibilities and railroad facilities in the area have been brought to the attention of interested concerns. A most important advantage in Waddington and vicinity will be fine home sites adjacent to the creek inlets which will offer safe harbors for pleasure craft.

DID YOU MISS IT?

"GONE WITH THE WIND"

COLONIAL THEATER, Waddington

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY

MAY 18, 19 and 20

One Show Nightly at 7 p. m.

Admission - - - - - 25c and 50c

Positively your last chance to see this picture.

REALTOR PLANS TO BUILD HOMES IN WADDINGTON*Ogdensburg Journal, April 23, 1953 and April 14, 1954*

Plans for a housing project which will start with 15 homes and could develop as many as 300, have been revealed by Harold G. House, local real estate man. The project is being planned in connection with the expected influx of people to construct the St. Lawrence River power project. Waddington will be one of the main centers of employment as well as the only community on this side of the river to be hit by flooding from the project.

House said he plans to erect 15 homes in the \$9500 and up class on part of 30 acres he owns between the Ogdensburg road (Lincoln Avenue) and St. Lawrence Ave. and Maple Street. Some, at least, will be prefabricated, he said. Plans hinge on the willingness of the village to extend sewer and water lines to the section, the realtor added. The tract is marked off into 95 lots, but House said as many as 300 homes could be built if demand warrants. Some of the lots, however, may fall within the line to be flooded by the power project.

Luther A. Nelson, chief landscape architect for Sargent, Webster, Crenshaw and Folley, consultants to the State Power Authority, told the Waddington Study Club last week, that housing should be the primary concern of the village. The village was the first community outside of Massena to form a Planning Commission for orderly development of any expansion. Both permanent and temporary housing will be needed, Nelson told the group, as a result, carefully drawn local ordinances and zoning regulations will be needed, he said, to insure that unsightly and unsanitary "Shanty villages" do not spring up. The announced policy of the state is that such sub-standard facilities should not be permitted to develop.

Nelson told the Study Club, however, that it is very probable that substantial trailer camps may be established in the area. The power authority and the consulting architects are anxious that such facilities be "decent, although temporary," that water-tight sanitary facilities exist, that lighting be available and that some type of street system be set up.

The power authority itself is not empowered to make housing regulations. The state public health department can regulate sanitary conditions to a large degree, but other regulatory matters will be the concern of local governing bodies. Nelson emphasized his hope the village and town boards of Waddington would consider the problem seriously. Housing in the project area, as well as other features supplementary to the power development, will not be undertaken by the state, Governor Dewey has repeatedly emphasized.

Waddington, between Ogdensburg and Massena, is the only population center on this side of the St. Lawrence which will lose a substantial slice of property by flooding or other use when the vast hydroelectric project becomes a reality. Some persons will be dispossessed of home sites (for which, of course, they will be compensated) and the village will have to relocate its water supply and sewage disposal plants. The latter are now situated between the river and St. Lawrence Avenue, and will eventually be under water. The higher water level created by the damming of the river downstream from Waddington may come at least up to the northern side of St. Lawrence Avenue.

One of the questions confronting the New York State Power Authority is whether it will be cheaper to erect dikes between the thoroughfare and the river or to allow the water to seek its own level and reimburse property owners flooded out.



These two photos show the Pump Station that had to be relocated as did the water supply plant



WADDINGTON BOARD PLANS TO CREATE PLANNING COMMISSION WILL STUDY PROJECT IMPACT

The following article appeared in August 10, 1953 edition of the Massena Observer

Waddington has taken the first steps toward the creation of a Planning and Zoning Board which would have as its objective "to improve and protect the interests of the Village in its public health safety and general welfare."

Last week a crowded public session at which planning and zoning was discussed, Mayor Dale A. Harper was given permission to appoint a five-man Planning and Zoning Board to examine zoning, to plan in terms of the eventual impact of the St. Lawrence Seaway Power Project and other developments upon the community welfare.

Two officials of the municipality and three persons who do not hold such office, shall be appointed by Mayor Harper, with no payment for service. Their terms shall terminate with that of the appointing mayor.

Under the state laws, the powers of the Zoning Board are broad, touching upon the laying out of plans for housing development, the zoning off of areas for industry, and traffic planning. Several traffic control ordinances were also discussed and approved at the session which had been scheduled to be held in the Village Clerk's office. The large turnout for the meeting made necessary an adjournment to the more spacious Community Rooms of the Village.

Passed were ordinances covering speed controls, prohibition of all-night parking, parallel parking, stop streets, with penalties listed for speed and other violations. Several village ordinances were repealed.

As concerns all-night parking, the village has passed an ordinance which states that no vehicle shall be parked on any public highway within the corporate limits of the village of Waddington between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., during a period beginning Dec. 1, 1953, and ending Mar. 1, each year. The snow removal problem it was said, necessitated the ban.

Parallel parking was approved. From now on, no vehicle can park on Route 37, from the westerly boundary of the village, continuing easterly on Lincoln Ave., and then northerly on Maple St., and easterly on Lincoln Ave., to the easterly boundary of Waddington.

Furthermore, an ordinance said that "no vehicle shall be parked on Main St., also known as LaGrasse Str., from the intersection of said Main St., with St. Lawrence Ave., south to the southerly boundary of the village other than parallel with the edge of the street headed in the direction of traffic and with the front and rear wheel not more than six inches from the curb."

Main St. was designated a "main artery" of travel and made a stop street. "All vehicles following streets, shall before entry, come to a complete stop, unless otherwise directed, either by a police officer or by a signal." Listed as entry points were Maiden Lane, Lincoln Ave. and Linden St.

Another street slated as a stop street was St. Lawrence Ave., with vehicles approaching it from the already mentioned routes to come to a full stop before entering it, unless otherwise designated.

Ordinances or parts of ordinances of the village that are inconsistent with the provision of those passed were repealed.

An excess speed ruling approved was that "no person shall operate a motor vehicle upon any public highway within the corporate limits of Waddington at a rate of speed in excess of 30 m.p.h." The section was made to apply to ambulances, fire vehicles, and police cars, unless on emergency trips. Violations of the speeding ordinance provide for, as with the violation of the Vehicle and Traffic Law of the State of New York, fines and a term of imprisonment.



'WHERE WILL WE GO AS THE SEAWAY COMES?' ASK WADDINGTONIANS

*Many in That Town in St. Lawrence County Will Be Dispossessed by the St. Lawrence Project.
By Howard G. Barrow, Watertown Daily Times Reporter*

All along the St. Lawrence River in the town of Waddington - from the Louisville-Waddington town line to Point Rockaway - people are wondering. They have a lot to wonder about. Many say they are not certain just what is going to happen to their property in the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project.

Others who have no doubts that they will have to move are wondering about their future. Will they live along the new shoreline or will they have to move out of the area entirely? In their new location, will they fare as well financially as now? Sentimentally they definitely expect a loss. There are big farms, small farms, business places and homes along the shoreline as well as cottages.

CENTURY FARMS

Here again are farms that have been in the same families more than a century. And here again are farms and businesses that were bought in recent years, their new owners hardly dreaming that the St. Lawrence project would go through after being bootlegged about for a half-century. They all are proud of their land - "every inch of it tillable" - as one put it.

Leslie Clark owns the 140-acre farm west of Waddington village right at Point Rockaway where the Iroquois dam is to connect with the American shore. Mr. Clark's father, grandfather and great-grandfather ran the farm before him. The Clarks gave the name to Point Rockaway.

"Of course, we just can't make any definite plans yet," said Mrs. Clark. "It is going to be quite a change for us." One plan which they have in mind is moving to Binghamton where their daughter lives. If they do go there, they would like to raise berries. The Clarks are in their 60's. Right now, they are milking 35 head of cattle besides harvesting extensive acreages of hay and grain. This spring they picked 400 quarts of strawberries and before the season is over, they may get 300 quarts of raspberries. "The end of the dam will be right out there behind the granary," said Mrs. Clark. "If you go out back, you can see where they were drilling. They couldn't get the drill out, so they had to leave it there."

THERE 150 YEARS

Along the road to the west is the Daniel McMahon farm of 100 acres. Mrs. McMahon was born on the place. She was a Burlingame. "Our family has been here between 150 and 160 years," she remarked. She said she was a descendant of Judge Edsall who surveyed the town of Waddington. "It is good land," said Mrs. McMahon. "We are going to miss it. It won't feel like home anywhere else."

In the fall of 1946, Austin B. Martin of Lisbon bought and moved into the 154-acre farm near the McMahons and Clarks. (Continued on Page 6)



This map, drawn by St. Lawrence Seaway contractors, shows property lines from the Leslie Clark farm near the Iroquois Dam, toward the current Waddington Beach.



Aerial photo of the same area showing some of the farms and large tracts of tillable farm land that disappeared with Seaway construction.



The caption written on the top of this photo says, "First shovel of dirt taken from St. Lawrence Seaway by Lester Greene at Leslie Clark's farm."

'WHERE WILL WE GO AS THE SEAWAY COMES?'**Continued from Page 5**

Besides putting the farm into production, he immediately got to work making the landscape more attractive, remodeling the house and clearing up the shoreline. Mr. Martin now believes he will have to move. "They have started staking out for the seaway back of the house and according to the present picture, that canal will go right through the big barn," he said. "We never will be able to replace this property. You just don't find many farms like it. And we figure that by the time they get around to tell us, it will be more difficult than ever to find another farm."

Another recent arrival along the road is Edgar M. McGinnis with 325 acres of "work land". He bought the place eleven years ago. Mr. McGinnis has more than 70 head of cattle. "We never will find a place as nice as this one," says Mrs. McGinnis. "When I first saw it, I said nothing could be as nice as this. We both love the river. My husband wanted a big farm so he could raise a lot of cattle. He is wondering now where he will go."



The Leslie Clark home at Point Rockaway near the Iroquois Dam area.



Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Clark celebrate their anniversary at their home at Point Rockaway.



Helen & Daniel McMahon farm located next to the Austin Martin farm.



Home of Mr. and Mrs. Austin Martin located between the Leslie Clark and Daniel McMahon farms.



The Mitchell farm was located between the Kenneth Castle and Harry Carnal farms.

"Historically Speaking" is the Waddington Historical Association's way of sharing information about Waddington's rich history with those who support us with annual memberships. In addition to quarterly newsletters, members also receive early notice of upcoming events and an invitation to our "Celebration of History" in October.

WHA's MISSION:

"To be the caretakers of our community's history for present and future generations"

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WHA Meetings:

4th Tuesdays - 6:30 PM

Town Hall Museum

on Main Street

All are welcome

Waddington Historical Association's "SHARE YOUR STORY" Project

So many of us who have been fortunate enough to live in Waddington, whether we were born and raised here or moved here from somewhere else, have experienced that "hometown" feeling our little community has provided. The memories you have made while living here are important to leave for the next generations, particularly those that include pre and post Seaway days. Whether it was 60 or 30 years ago, there are lots of stories waiting to be written down and/or recorded. Everyday memories of everyday people have historical importance. Gathering and preserving those memories and stories is important to do now before they disappear forever.

To help make this happen, the WHA started the "SHARE YOUR STORY" Project. Over time we have been attempting to interest people in recording and contributing their memories. We want to hear your stories and, with your permission, we would like to record them for our archives. We are very flexible with our approach to recording your memories. You are in charge and we want you to feel comfortable with how it is done. We encourage family members to become involved, as sometimes it's easier to talk with someone you know. If you would like our help, we can make arrangements with project volunteers: Sue (Hunter) Parisian, Historian Kathy (Badlam) Putney, or Mary (Badlam) Hamilton. They are very happy to discuss the process in detail. There is absolutely no charge to you for this project.

"SHARE YOUR STORY"

If you or someone you know may be
interested in participating in our
"SHARE YOUR STORY PROJECT"

please email us at:

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WADDINGTON



THE "LITTLE" TOWN WITH A "BIG" HISTORY

Waddington has a rich and amazing history that dates back to the late 1700's.

"Keeping that history alive" is a goal of the **WADDINGTON HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (WHA)**.

OUR MISSION IS:

"To be the 'Caretakers' of our Community's History for Present and Future Generations"

YOUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION CAN HELP US:

"Support the Waddington Historian and Public Museum, to sponsor and develop programs and events, acquire and organize collections, preserve museum properties, and produce educational materials and exhibits that promote our community's heritage."

Help us keep history alive! Become a **SUPPORTER** of the **WHA** by purchasing an annual membership. There is no obligation to attend meetings. Your donation includes a copy of our newsletter "Historically Speaking", advance notice of upcoming events, and an invitation to our annual Fall Celebration of History. If you are interested in helping out, there are many opportunities where we could use an extra pair of hands. Let us now if you want to be included on our 'helper' list.

TWO Ways to Pay: 1) Send a check with the completed form below

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