

Almost without exception, the landowners of the Point are anxious to purchase from the New Haven Railroad, sections of the roadbed which abut their property lines. We suspect that surveyors with their transits and barristers with their briefcases will be busy in the area for many moons to come . . . We are particularly anxious to see neighbor Joe Spillane do business with the New Haven . . . Joe has a tiny but thriving kitchen garden on his backlot, and we predict that the genial Irishman will grow blue ribbon tomatoes in the cinders of the railroad property . . . that is, if he can continue to dodge the heavy vehicular traffic of Route 6A as he shuttles back and forth across the macadam, armed with a garden hose.

August 17, 1961

Board Refuses R. R. Land Bid

Members of the Provincetown Planning Board, meeting last week with town officials refused to sign a paper needed by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad relative to the sale of a portion of land from the railroad right of way. Their refusal stemmed from their conviction that the railroad should wait until the Town can take action on acquiring the right of way for town purposes.

Eldred Mowery, Jr., acting chairman of the board, said that the board members feel the town should acquire the entire right of way of the railroad property within the town, now that the tracks have been taken up and the right of way abandoned for railroad purposes. There was an article in the warrant for the July 10 special town meeting on the acquisition of the railroad property, but the Selectmen felt that this question was important enough to be held over for action at a regular town meeting.

The piece of property the railroad wished to convey was that

part of the right-of-way on which Texaco gasoline and oil tanks are installed. Plans of the railroad right-of-way back as far as 1915 show the presence of these tanks on leased property. The railroad has sought to convey the title to the property on which the tanks are located to Charles Holway of North Truro, distributor of Texaco Marine products in this area for many years. The particular area is at the foot of Brewster Street.

According to Mr. Mowery, it is not known whether the refusal of the Planning Board members to sign the paper would have any delaying action on the conveyance of the property, but the board plans to notify the railroad that it believes the town should be allowed to take action at a regular town meeting before it takes any action in disposing of the property.

Members of the Planning Board also discussed the proposed marina in the West End of town and went on record, after studying various plans, as in favor of the project as extremely important to the future economy of the town.

Provincetown Is Pondering Acquisition of More Property

PROVINCETOWN — Proposals that the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad's right-of-way west of Howland Street be taken over by the town to provide a third street to the center of town, and thus open much back land for development, has been turned over to the planning board for its study.

Selectmen discussed possible acquisition of the right-of-way which the railroad is abandoning—already tracks have been taken up—when Town Manager Walter E. Lawrence recommended serious consideration be given to taking the property by eminent domain, lest the railroad sell its property to abutters.

Provincetown has been without rail service of any kind now for many months—train passenger service went out 25 years ago, and freight was by rail until last year. The town manager has said the railroad was asking \$46,000

for its property west of Howland Street, and considered that an "unheard of" amount. He asserted it represents a value nine times greater than the assessed value of the property.

Howland Street is in process of being constructed from Bradford Street to Route 6, to provide another access road from this section of town, and the railroad right-of-way from Howland Street west is the section the town has believed would assist to a great extent in opening up land back of Bradford Street. The Howland Street project is a Chapter 90 project, with the State contributing 50 percent of the cost, and the town and county each 25 percent.

Townspice would have the final say how the property should be acquired, and if it should be acquired, at a special town meeting. Mr. Lawrence said the general idea is to open up a main thoroughfare from Howland Street

to the west.

The acquisition would open up back land for development, with a potential business area of about 14 acres, provided the town wants it. Mr. Lawrence said there seems to be no opposition, and the State Department of Commerce has ex-

pressed an interest in helping the town get the right-of-way.

It had been felt that the railroad right-of-way east of the Howland Street project would be sold to abutters, because cost would be prohibitive to have the town acquire it.

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Sun, Wind, and Tide

by M.W.S.

The fix the New Haven Railroad is in affects more than just the Railroad; it concerns all of us, even though we don't ride on a train from one year to the next. We may think because we have our automobiles and can go anywhere at any time that suits our convenience, more or less, and because there are bus lines, and because trucks haul freight all over the lot, that the railroads are not important. We are so wrong.

It frightens me, ignoramus that I am, to think of a day when there are no more trains in this country. But it is something that could conceivably happen. For one thing, if you read the papers and news magazines, you doubtless know that passenger service is curtailed or stopped altogether when a railroad finds itself in difficulties. What is to prevent the railroads from throwing up their hands and giving up on freight, too?

Then no more railroads, no more trains.

And the trucking industry and the Teamsters would take over. The trucking industry is boastful enough now, and as for Mr. Hoffa - imagine, if you can what that perfectly horrible man would do in such a contingency.

There is no easy answer to this problem of the railroad. It is too big, too complicated, and has been allowed to go on for so long that any solution is bound to be hard to arrive at. But there is an answer to every question if we can but find it. Of course we might not like the answer, which could be nationalization of the railroads for example.

It is a national problem though. All transportation, by rail, by bus and truck, by water and in the air, is really one thing. How to get goods, including gigantic missiles too big to go under highway bridges, and people, from one place to another. Solving the problem of the railroads will have to be done in the context of the over-all picture of transportation as a whole.

Trucks and trains, buses and ships and airplanes may seem at first glance to be simply competing forms of transport. But, if they are studied more closely it becomes plain that they are, in fact, complementary and interdependent and we are all dependent on all of them.

All this may appear a long way off from the fix of one railroad, in this case the New Haven, but it is important to know that there is a connection. Let us hope that management, labor and government can see it too.