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Board needs to listen to town residents

By **ROBERT & NONA LYONS**

Lower Village, Kennebunk

There was too much of the bully pulpit on display and not enough careful listening at the Kennebunk Board of Selectmen's meeting, July 17th.

The chairman admonished Lower Village residents: "It seems it doesn't matter what we do now ... every direction we go in Lower Village is the wrong direction. That's the impression for over a month now."

Perhaps it was the heat and humidity of the night that caused such a petulant outburst, but the message heard was: You ungrateful residents should stop bringing all these unsolved issues to this board: chronic parking and traffic conditions on Chase Hill Road — business patrons competing with shop employees for limited parking — delivery trucks blocking the road — lack of enforcement of parking regulations — 25 cars daily using a private driveway to turn around — critique of the staff review process etc.

The board's code of ethics instructs selectmen to view their service "as an opportunity to serve

the public ... to promote the Town of Kennebunk and its citizens ... to listen to all citizens ... to make decisions only after all the facts bearing on a question have been presented and discussed."

We salute our neighbors David and Sue Plass, Pat Foley and Harry Falcone for their steadfast commitment and hundreds of hours invested to make Lower Village Kennebunk a decent place to live, and for reminding the Kennebunk Board of Selectmen of its mission.

David Plass summarized it well: "Your time and commitment is well appreciated. You say: 'Please speak publicly; get up and say what you think', and in other instances we've heard: 'It's the same old faces.' Then, when we get your reaction tonight, it throws me back to when I was a little kid, and my dad was scolding me. It's unpleasant and unwanted."

Pat Foley reminded board members of why they were elected: "to listen," she said.

After a recent visit to a medical center, this card was presented to us: "Please tell us what you think. Your feedback on how we are doing is important to us. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts on your recent visit by

completing an anonymous online patient survey."

What would happen if the Kennebunk Board of Selectmen instituted this state-of-the-art practice for residents after their participation in a Board meeting?