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## North Country representatives want APA curbed

By NATHAN BROWN, Enterprise Staff Writer

SARANAC LAKE - The Tri-Lakes area's three representatives in Albany said they think the state Adirondack Park Agency has strayed much too far from its original role, but they stopped short of calling for its abolition.

Speaking after a Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce breakfast in North Country Community College's cafeteria, they said the APA has gone too far in passing regulations unrelated to why it was created in 1971.

"I can't see how the heck a roof on your boathouse is detrimental to the environment," said state Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward, R-Willsboro.

Sayward said she believes planning is important but that the state Department of Environmental Conservation could offer many of the services the APA is supposed to offer. She stopped short of calling for the APA to be abolished, but "the agency that we know today? Long overdue for reform."

Glens Falls Post-Star Projects Editor Will Doolittle wrote two stories that the paper published earlier this week about the experiences of two landowners, who alleged the agency was conspiring with The Nature Conservancy and the Adirondack Council. The paper then published an editorial calling for the APA to be stripped of its enforcement powers.

Assemblywoman Janet Duprey, R-Peru, said the agency had overextended its original mandate and "swung too far to the environmentalists," and the state needs to rein it in. However, Duprey said she would oppose abolishing the APA, and that it plays a role in helping preserve the environment.

"We have such a pristine area," Duprey said.

While speaking at the breakfast, state Sen. Betty Little, R-Queensbury, said improving cell phone coverage in the Adirondacks is important for safety reasons and will be one of her priorities this year. Little criticized the APA's height limits on towers, saying fewer and taller towers would be better, both for the environment and for cell phone coverage. After the meeting, she also criticized the current policy that doesn't allow tree cutting within a 200-foot circumference of a tower.

Little said she thinks the APA has a role in working with towns on planning and shouldn't be abolished, but has gotten too involved in regulation.

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