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# Town of Vernon

## Open Space Task Force



Minutes of Monthly Meeting April 9, 2012

*Meeting Location: Vernon Police Station Community Room, West Rd*

**Present: Tom Ouellette, Russ Kunz, Ann Letendre, Chairman**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

### **1.0 Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting of January 9, 2012 were approved. Motion by Tom, second by Russ, motion carried. (Note, Feb and March meetings were cancelled).

### **2.0 Old Business**

#### **2.1 Priority Parcel Preservation:**

##### **Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm.**

Ann reported that she, Ginny and Brian met with the Mayor, and he is supportive of getting an appraisal for the Strong Farm. John Ward was also present. The Mayor will provide \$3,000 for an appraisal. Ann has contacted three appraisers, and all three quoted about the same cost. Tom Henry was hired. He was recommended by the NC Land Trust. He will be able to do the appraisal by May 18<sup>th</sup>. If the Strong family approves the figure, the next step is deciding who will take ownership, and provide matching funds, and do the grant application. The DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant deadline is June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Russ reported that Nancy Strong is moving forward with formation of a non-profit to manage the 8-acre parcel that has the house and barn. They are completing the 501c3 paperwork for non-profit status, and will be organizing a Board of Directors soon.

**Petrin property** – No new action.

**Tancohoosen LLC Parcel Update** – There has been no further word from DEEP other than the transaction was completed. OSTF would like to know final amount of acreage that was transferred, cost, and future stewardship plans. Ann called DEEP Beth Brothers, but call not returned.

**Gunther Property** – A grant application will be submitted by the CT Farmland Trust. Ginny reported that they need a letter of support from the Town. Ginny will work with Len Tundermann and the Mayor.

**Additional Open Space Parcel Evaluation** – No further action.

## **2.2 Open Space & Farmland Preservation Funding - Update**

**2.2.1 Local Funding** – no change

**2.2.2 State Funding** - Ann reported that there is \$5 M available in the OS Land Ac program, plus another \$4M through the Community Investment Act and the Farmland Preservation program.

## **2.3 Conservation Commission Activities Report – (Ouellette)**

**2.3.1 Aquatic Invasives** . Tom reported that George Knoecklein will re-look at some ponds in the Tankerhoosen watershed, also PaperMill Pond and Walker’s East. If fanwort and milfoil haven’t returned, he’ll transplant some plants from Walker’s West to Walker’s East. Knoecklein notes that no other town is taking the comprehensive, proactive approach that Vernon has been taking, a testament to the CC’s focus and co-operation of the Parks & Rec Department.

**2.3.2 Vernal Pools** – With the unusual warm weather, the deadline passed for the “window” to review the pools, according to Ed Pawluk, the scientist who was going to do the work.

## **3.0 New Business –**

### **3.1 Discussion – Melding of CC and OSTF. Considerations for a new structure, membership, meeting time / location, goals for 2012.**

The OSTF discussed the melding of the OSTF into the CC. The best structure was determined that the OSTF continue as the focal point for Vernon open space planning, but as a working subcommittee of the CC, and composed of members of the CC. Motion was by Ouellette, seconded by Letendre:

“Move to combine the Open Space Task Force with the Conservation Commission, that the duties of the OSTF continue as a subcommittee of the CC, comprised of members of the CC, and that the Mayor be contacted to begin discussion on enacting the change”. Motion carried unanimously.

The CC will have a similar discussion at their next meeting. Pending the discussion, Ann will prepare a draft letter to the Mayor outlining the proposed action, and will send to the OSTF members for review / input.

## **4.0 Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ann Letendre, Chairperson**