

11 MAR 23 AM 8:32

draft

Town of Vernon

Open Space Task Force



Minutes of Monthly Meeting March 14, 2011

Meeting Location: Vernon Police Station Community Room, West Rd

Present: Tom Ouellette, Russ Kunz, Ginny Gingras, Ann Letendre, chairperson
Guest: Nancy Strong

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

1.0 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of January 10 , 2011 were approved, motion by Tom, second by Russ.
(Note – February meeting was cancelled).

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Priority Parcel Preservation:

Talcott Property – Talcottville Gorge

Dedication for the Talcottville Gorge was well attended. The NCLT is planning a survey walk to set bounds for the property. Ann will get the exact date. Project is complete!

Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm

Nancy Strong provided an update on the Strong Farm non-profit goals. She is working on applying for 501c3 non-profit status for the Strong Farm. Part of the program will include an education program for sustainable agriculture. The non-profit org. will cover the 8-acre parcel and the barns near the house. They have received two grants to date: 2008, \$4500 for a Feasibility Study; and 2009, \$5,000 to repair the roof. They have submitted a proposal for 2010 (\$5,000) for foundation and window restoration. Nancy says that the other two other parcels (about 50 acres) that is also part of the Open Space Plan preservation goals are being rented for hay and corn fields.

Petrin property – No report. Ann will ask George for his contacts. .

Tancanhoosen LLC Parcel Update – Ann reports that DEP is moving along with title search and other pre-purchase work. Some sections of the road need to be turned over to the Town, and will need Town Council approval.

Gunther Property – Ginny reported that discussions continue between the Tolland Agricultural Center, Inc.(TAC), and the Gunther family. She says that Elizabeth Moore, Ct Farmland Trust, is very positive about the funding possibilities.

Additional Open Space Parcel Evaluation – No further action. Need follow up with Mr. Clark and NCLT letter to Mr. Vacarro.

2.2 Open Space & Farmland Preservation Funding - Update

2.2.1 Local Funding – no change

2.2.2 State Funding - no change

2.3 Conservation Commission Activities – (Ouellette)

2.3.1 POCD – No new activity.

2.3.2 Aquatic Invasives –Tom reported good progress on the AI Management Plan. All small ponds and streams in Vernon were mapped by Aaron Nash. A planned approach for selection of ponds to be checked for invasives was developed.

2.3.3 Vernal Pools – The CC will contract with Ed Pawluk to do vernal pool assessment of potential vernal pools. Owners that previously denied access will be contacted again.

2.4 Update on 2009 Goals

2.4.1 OSTF Membership – No new action.

2.4.2 Public Education – Town Council presentation, local access presentation, publication of booklet, etc – The OSTF will have a section of the table set aside for the ‘green’ organizations at the Healthfest March 26-27.

2.4.3 Sponsorship – hikes, other? None planned at this time.

2.5 Laurel Woods Subdivision – Decision report. Ann will ask Len Tundermann about the final decision and details of the conservation easement agreement.

3.0 New Business –

3.1 Budget FY 2011-12 – Ann noted that budget hearings are coming up and budget details should be out in the coming week. The question of the open space reserve \$10,000 was discussed, and that we need to be sure it’s included in the budget for 2011-12. Apparently the funds were used recently in the 2010-2011 budget to repair girls soccer fields. However, when looking for a source of funds for the NCLT request in Nov, the OSTF had been told that the reserve funds were not available to use because there was still one year left of encumbrance for the \$100,000 the town contributed towards the purchase of Valley Falls Farm in 2001. Ann and Russ will review language of the ordinance regarding use of funds. Actions to be discussed next meeting if needed.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairperson