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Town of Vernon

Open Space Task Force

Minutes of Monthly Meeting January 10, 2011

Meeting Location: Vernon Police Station Community Room, West Rd

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

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

1.0 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of August 9, 2010 were approved, motion by Tom, second by Ginny. Minutes of November 15, 2010 were unanimously approved, motion by Russ, second by Ginny. Minutes of December 13, 2010 were unanimously approved, motion by Ginny, second by Tom. (Note - meetings of September and October 2010 were cancelled).

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Priority Parcel Preservation:

Talcott Property – Talcottville Gorge

Dedication date for the Talcottville Gorge acquisition is scheduled for February 14, 2011.

NCLT will contact with further details; OSTF will provide help.

Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm

Nancy Strong was not able to attend; she will attend next month. Russ will arrange.

Petrin property – No report

Tankerhoosen LLC Parcel Update – No new information.

Gunther Property – Ginny reported that discussions continue between the Tolland Agricultural Center, Inc. (TAC), and the Gunther family. Both parties are in agreement for the sale to TAC. Funding details still need to be worked out. CT Farmland Trust is providing assistance. It is possible that the CT Farm Bureau will build a building on the site also. A meeting will be held with Town Planners from Tolland and Vernon to advise them of the pending land sale. About 5 acres is in Vernon, and 18 acres in Tolland.

Additional Open Space Parcel Evaluation – Discussion on Valley Falls Rd parcels on the Tankerhoosen owned by Clark and Vaccaro. Ann will contact Lynda Morhardt, who is in regular contact with Mr. Clark, to see if he has had any further interest in preservation through open space grants. NCLT will follow up with Mr. Vaccaro.

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; input on LID for the Infrastructure booklet was transmitted to Planimetrics.

2.3.2 Aquatic Invasives – Ongoing discussion regarding a management plan with Bruce Dinnie, George Knoeklein. In addition to the 8 ponds that Mr. Knoeklein had looked at, consideration is being given to including small ponds on private property in future surveys. Property owners need to be advised of the importance of the issue.

2.3.3 Vernal Pools – Ongoing work – will continue to work on adding further info to the database.

2.4 Update on 2009 Goals

2.4.1 OSTF Membership – Letendre will contact Diane Wheelock to let her know of the vacancies.

2.4.2 Public Education – Town Council presentation, local access presentation, publication of booklet, etc – Actions still pending. Discussion of creating a website; need to find someone that can do. Discussion of mission, where focus should be; Ann will research old documents to see if any has been stated.

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

2.5 Laurel Woods Subdivision – status; Ann noted that she talked to Bruce Dinnie after the December meeting to let him know that the property owners (the St. Germaines) did not intend that the public would have access to the property included in the conservation easement option. On learning that trails would not be allowed on the property, Bruce then said he preferred the town ownership option. He sees the value of expansion of the trail system at Newhoca. Ann noted that George Arthur had also expressed support for this position. Bruce said he would send a note to Town Planner advising of his revised position.

3.0 New Business –

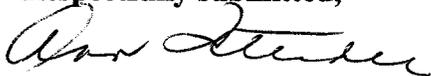
3.1 Dedication – Talcott Gorge – OSTF Participation. Discussed above. OSTF will assist with arrangements, whatever is needed.

3.2 POCD Survey Results – OSTF discussed results, very positive for open space. Eight out of 10 people surveyed supported open space, and 62% were willing to pay additional tax dollars. OSTF discussed that these results should be part of PR that the OSTF takes on.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Letendre, Chairperson

Signed copy sent to town clerk