

draft

Town of Vernon

Open Space Task Force



Minutes of Monthly Meeting December 13, 2010

Meeting Location: Vernon Police Station Community Room West Rd

Present: Tom Ouellette, Russ Kunz, Ginny Gingras (arriving 7:30pm), Ann Letendre, chairperson

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

1.0 Approval of Minutes

Approval deferred to arrival of G. Gingras for quorum.

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Priority Parcel Preservation:

Talcott Property – Talcottville Gorge

A. Letendre provided an update. The Town Council approved \$5,000 contribution to the NC Land Trust to help with closing costs. The closing was expected to be Dec. 14th. Culver Modisette of NCLT wants to set up a dedication in February and asked participation and help from OSTF.

Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm

R. Kunz reported that Nancy Strong will be taking time off from her job to focus on building the non-profit for the Strong Farm. We will ask her to come to the next meeting to keep us updated and to see where we might help.

Petrin property – No report

Tankerhoosen LLC Parcel Update –

A. Letendre provided an update. DEP has reached an agreement with Tancanhoosen LLC to purchase all four parcels in the property, total 450 acres. The Town Council approved the \$45,000 needed to clean up lead contamination on the police firing range site. DEP will be doing a boundary survey. Closing is expected Feb- March 2011.

Gunther Property – no report

Additional Open Space Parcel Evaluation – No additional considerations were raised.

2.2 Open Space & Farmland Preservation Funding - Update

2.2.1 **Local Funding** – no change

2.2.2 **State Funding** - no change

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
10 DEC 17 AM 10:15

2.3 Conservation Commission Activities – (Ouellette)

- 2.3.1 POCD** – The CC will comment on the Infrastructure Booklet from stormwater management and LID aspects. Tom will provide a copy of the comment to the OSTF.
- 2.3.2 Aquatic Invasives** – Tom reported that an initial meeting w/ Bruce Dinnie and George Knoeklein to scope out a Management Plan for Aquatic Invasives went very well. The followup survey of the ponds after the treatment showed no presence of the invasives. Tom will provide a written summary to the OSTF of the actions taken. A pond survey will be done again in two years.
- 2.3.3 Vernal Pools** – Tom reported that the CC will continue the vernal pool survey initiated by the CC in 2005. Former Chair, S. McMullen attended the last meeting and provided input on methods, approach used.

2.4 Update on 2009 Goals

- 2.4.1 OSTF Membership** – We are down to six members, including the liaison to the Town council. The Town Council Resolution establishing the OSTF had originally 9 members, plus the liaison to TC. There are four openings. A. Letendre noted that a memo regarding current member organization affiliation was sent to L. Tundermann, so there may be some appointments forthcoming.
- 2.4.2 Public Education – Town Council presentation, local access presentation, publication of booklet, articles for Horizon, RR** – Actions still pending. Letendre noted that we really need to publicize more what the OSTF does, especially in light of recent acquisition. Ann will pursue doing a piece for the local access cable station.
- 2.4.3 Support of Plan of Conservation & Development:** A copy of the PERT telephone survey results was provided to the OSTF. Results showed good support for open space: 8 out of 10 residents in favor.
- 2.4.4 Sponsorship – hikes, other?** None planned at this time.

3.0 New Business – Laurel Woods Subdivision – Joint Discussion and Review with Conservation Commission on Open Space Set-Aside Options

Conservation Commission members Ryan Goad and Scott Weiting joined the discussion. Chairman Letendre emphasized that the purpose of the discussion was solely to evaluate the two open space options, if the application is approved. The merits – or non-merits – of the application itself would not be part of the discussion.

Letendre summarized the open space calculations provided by the applicant:

- Per the regulations, there is a minimum of 15% set-aside of ‘like land’ required for the location of the parcel, defined as “Residential – Conservation Area” in the POCD. Total acreage is 60.5 acres; minimum open space required is 9.1 acres; of that at least 6.9 acres should be non-wetland. The proposed open space calculations provide at least that minimum.

- Two cul-de-sac configurations are proposed, one for 1500 feet, and one for 1800 feet. Each configuration proposed two options, one for town ownership, and one for conservation easement. The set-aside proposed for Town ownership is about 9.4 acres for

each configuration, and the set-aside proposed for easement is about 14.4 acres for each configuration.

Members reviewed the maps and the plans. Letendre noted that Lot #3, the 2.38 acre piece of the set-aside that resulted from the court settlement that could not be changed, and that the lot with the drainage basin could not be included in the set-aside.

Greg Pinto (Capstone) and Mark St. Germain (owner) responded to questions asked by members. These points were made during discussion:

- Owner St. Germain said he did not want to allow public access to the property for the easement option. He raised concerns with liability, and use by ATVs.
- A. Letendre asked why, then, was the map showing the conservation easement option noted for "Active and passive recreation". St. Germain responded that that was intended for the owner's active and passive recreation.
- A. Letendre asked what the annual tax loss would be with the approx 6 acres dedication to the Town. G. Pinto estimated about \$200 - \$300 per year since it was considered "excess land".
- A. Letendre said that she spoke earlier w/ Bruce Dinnie, and his preference was the easement option; also that there was 30 acres for Newhoca park property, he used only 10, and had enough for parking or structure expansion if needed. Possible use of the land for nature walks for summer campers and others was discussed. Fee dedication of 1.12 acres of a path between the stone walls could serve as a trail loop.
- The disconnection of the 1.14 acre piece labeled Conservation Easement #2 from the approx. 6-acre proposed town ownership was noted by S. Weiting. Pinto and St. Germain agreed to include the piece in the conservation easement option.
- T. Ouellette said that, because of the larger acreage, the conservation easement option would better meet wildlife habitat protection goals.
- R. Kunz reinforced the point that the 1800 ft cul-de-sac configuration was a preferred configuration rather than the 1500 foot cul-de-sac because it enabled access to Newhoca property, and to the detention basin.

Motion was made by T. Ouellette, second by R. Kunz:

The Open Space Task Force and the Conservation Commission recommend the conservation easement option for both the 1500 ft and the 1800 ft cul-de-sac configurations.

For the 1500 ft configuration, map labeled Open Space Plan Option '2', the acreage includes the 14.42 acres as listed under Open Space Calculations, plus the 1.14 acres of Lot 9 shown as Conservation Easement (2) on the Option "1" map, for a total of 15.56 acres for the open space set-aside.

For the 1800 ft configuration, map labeled Open Space Plan Option 'B', the acreage includes the 14.49 acres as listed under Open Space Calculations, plus the 1.14 acres of Lot 9 shown as Conservation Easement (2) on the Option 'A' map, for a total of 15.63

acres for the open space set-aside.

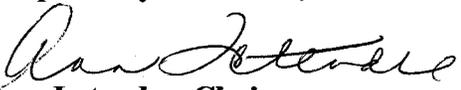
Motion carried unanimously.

R. Kunz asked that it be noted that the OSTF and CC preferred the 1800 ft. cul-de-sac configuration because of better access to Newhoca and the detention basin. Members concurred.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Ann Letendre, Chairperson