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Town of Vernon

Open Space Task Force



Minutes of Monthly Meeting May 9, 2011

Meeting Location: Vernon Police Station Community Room, West Rd

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

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

1.0 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of March 14, 2011 were approved, with amendments, motion by Tom, second by Russ. (Note – April meeting was cancelled).

2.0 Old Business

2.1 Priority Parcel Preservation:

Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm - No new activity.

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

Tancanhoosen LLC Parcel Update – Ann reported that she spoke with Beth Brothers, DEP. The Town approved taking on maintenance of the roads in question. A second issue has come up with the well of an abutting property owner which is on the property to be purchased by DEP. She expects resolution in the next week, and is hopeful for a closing in June.

Gunther Property – Ann reported that an ERT was conducted on the property, as a precursor to the search for funding for the purchase.

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** – Tom reported no new activity by the CC.

Ann noted that Discussion Booklet #6 on infrastructure is on the town website. Of concern to OSTF is the sewer plan, and whether or not recommended areas to be sewerred will result in a water deficit to the Tankerhoosen watershed, a concern expressed to PZC POCD committee in previous comments. Ann noted that Booklet #6 cites a potential issue in that the state now requires sewer expansions to be consistent with the State POCD. Some areas around exits 66 and 67 are labeled as conservation and preservation areas in the State POCD, but Vernon

cites them as a 'desired sewer area' in the Sewer Service Plan. Consensus by OSTF members to review most recent draft, attend POCD committee meetings and provide input on the topic.

2.3.2 Aquatic Invasives –Tom reported that the Management Plan will call for the river and stream surveys to be done first. Ponds will be done after that, but only the 15 ponds in the Tankerhoosen watershed. The larger ones – about 8 – will be done by George Knoecklein, and the smaller ones by trained volunteers. Tom said that \$20,000 has been budgeted for this effort, most of which was to be spent on Bolton Lake. However, the plan is still being worked out.

2.3.3 Vernal Pools – No pools will be surveyed this year. The CC sent letters to about 8 property owners with potential pools for permission to test them. They received, one OK, 1 refusal, and no response from others.

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 – Karl Hasel reported via email that Healthfest OSTF exhibits went very well.

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

3.0 New Business – Some initial discussion regarding water rights along rivers, and the value that they add to the Town in offsetting sewer upgrade costs. OSTF will look into DEP water diversion issues to get a better understanding of water rights questions and regulations.

4.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairperson