

*draft*

RECEIVED  
VERNON TOWN CLERK

09 DEC 16 AM 8:20



# Town of Vernon

## Open Space Task Force

Minutes of Monthly Meeting December 14, 2009

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

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Present:** George Arthur, Ann Letendre, Russ Kunz, Tom Ouelette; George Arthur presiding

### **1.0 Approval of Minutes –**

Minutes of November 9, 2009 were approved; motion by Letendre, second by Ouelette

### **2.0 Old Business**

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

**Talcott Property - Talcottville Gorge** – no further activity

**Farmland Preservation – Strong Farm**

Russ Kunz reported that Nancy Strong is working on a lease arrangement with Creative Living Community. They are looking for a farm manager.

**Petrin Property** – no new activity. George is still waiting to hear from Malcolm Barlow

**Tankerhoosen LLC parcel** – Ann reported that she had not received the information from John Ward, Town Administrator, on the equestrian center as had been promised. Ann had sent two emails to remind him but there was no response. See below item 3.1 on meeting with Tom Mason.

**Gunther Property** – no new activity

**Additional Open Space Parcel Evaluation** - none

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

2.2.1 Local funding – no new initiatives; the group briefly noted that the economic conditions were not favorable for seeking open space funding.

2.2.2 State funding – Most of these funds have been tapped to address the state budget crisis.

#### **2.3 Conservation Commission Activities**

2.3.1 Variable Leaf Milfoil – Tom reported that the Knoecklein study will be completed by the end of December. The CC will ask for a presentation of results.

2.3.2 Other – no other points of discussion

#### **2.4 Update on 2009 Goals**

2.4.1 OSTF Membership – Nothing new.

2.4.1.1 Resolution of OSTF status w/ Town, fill vacancies – Nothing new.

2.4.2 Public Education – Members discussed updating the Town Council on the status of the open space plan. It was decided to wait until a potential acquisition arises. Instead, and given the fact that there is a lull with available open space funds, that a focus on getting information to the public about activities that happen on open space lands could be done instead. Members also noted that there is a lot of volunteer activity happening on the open space parcels by the organizations represented on the OSTF. (The CC, HRLP, NCLT and Friends of VF), but that the public is unaware of them. The suggestion was made to have a point person in each organization to write an article when an event occurs.

2.4.3 Support of Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) – Members noted that at the Nov 12 Charette that Open Space received a top priority from residents in attendance. The next public meeting is Jan 14<sup>th</sup>.

2.4.4 Sponsorship – hikes, other – nothing new

### 3.0 New Business

#### 3.1 Meeting w/ Tom Mason -

George, Russ and Ann met with Tom Mason to get any updates on the DEP acquisition, to walk the property, and to get his feedback on the possible equestrian center. Tom is co-manager of the LLC, which has 18 members. The DEP acquisition of three of the four parcels was ready to be signed, but the Bond Commission did not pass the funds. Regarding the equestrian center, the LLC members would like to get market value from the property, no matter the source of funds. Tom's personal preference would be to preserve it as open space and to continue to pursue that path. Ann suggested that Amy Paterson, who now works for the Trust for Public Land, might be able to do something. A meeting will be arranged with Amy..

3.0 **Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ann Letendre, Co-chairperson**