

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2015

*Approved*

Present: Selectboard members Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Denise Wheeler Toby Talbot; Donna Fitch, clerk; Road Commissioner Alfred Larrabee; , Conservation Commission members Matthew Barewicz, Stephanie Kaplan, Larry Bush; John Ramsey, VT Land Trust; Pete Johnson, Pete's Greens; Gus Seelig, VT Housing & Conservation Board; Planning Commission members John McCullough and Jan Ohlsson; Colleen Bloom, Noreen Bryan, Ginger Clammer, David Ellenbogen, Nick Emlen, Matt Faryniarz, Michael Gokey, Mary Hanrahan, Don and Bev Heise, Cathy Kashanski, Eric Sorenson, Heidi Thompson.

### Non-agenda Items

Carl Etinger, an East Montpelier selectboard member, has spoken with members of the Calais selectboard about applying jointly for a scoping grant to explore the possibility of a bike lane on the County Road. The grant due date is October 16, 2015. Toby will tell Carl that Calais is interested but needs more information. Rose pointed out that the cost of a scoping study is between to \$15,000 to \$25,000 and the town would pay half of the cost.

### Appointments

John made a motion to appoint Susan Weber to the Historic Preservation Committee. Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed, 5-0.

### Minutes

The minutes of 8/24/15 were unanimously approved with no changes.

### Road Commissioner Report

Singleton Road will be completed this week. This work is part of an ongoing project to eliminate erosion on several roads in town. To take advantage of the rented excavator, the road crew will move on to culverts on Worcester Road. While in that area, they will work on the intersection of West County Road and Worcester Road, removing the "triangle." Woodbury borrowed the town's grader in exchange for Calais using its wood chipper. The Selectboard requested, before the road crew uses the chipper, to put in writing that Calais will not be responsible for repairs if it breaks down. Rose asked for stone to be put in a ditch at the newly configured intersection of Adamant and Lightening Ridge Roads to provide a firmer base if someone slides into the ditch. Alfred said further delineation will take place at the intersection; barrels are there now until drivers get used to the new layout.

### Operations Manager Report

Engineering for Center Road culvert is being done at Redi Rock and the project will then be put out to bid. Project will most likely take place in the spring.

### Curtis Pond Overabundance of Water Lilies

David Ellenbogen passed out “Controlling Nuisance, Native Aquatic Plants & Algae” from the Vt Dept of Environmental Conservation along with a map showing where water lilies are on Curtis Pond. The water lilies are creating islands and are threatening swimming, boating and skating. The State of VT requires a permit if removal is done mechanically. The town is eligible for state grants and there is no charge. It is a town-wide resource, David said. Denise agreed it is a town resource and suggested that since there is no pond organization that the Conservation Commission be involved. John said it is a late stage pond and other than draining and dredging there isn’t much one can do. Don Heise reported he had talked with Aquatic Control Tech, a company in Massachusetts, that has worked in Vermont. They would dig up the rhizomes, haul to the fishing access and it would then be disposed of (possibly as fertilizer). If the rhizomes are adequately removed, Aquatic Control says, the lilies can then be removed by hand on an ongoing basis. The cost is \$10,000 to \$15,000 per acre. Don said the cove by his house is four acres and is 80% covered by lilies. Wearing rubber gloves and with pond lilies in a dishpan, Ginger Clammer presented a “show and tell” showing the rhizomes which she had picked. They have a woody root that looks like a small log. Ginger passed out a written summary of her conversation with Matthew Probasco, an aquatic nuisance control specialist with the Agency of Natural Resources. Denise asked: What do you want the Selectboard to do? How much will it cost? Who will do the paperwork? She said the first step is to look into the permitting process; the Selectboard will not fill out the application.

#### Sorenson/Kashanski ROW permit

Eric Sorenson and Cathy Kashanski requested a right-of-way permit to dig under Peck Hill Road to put in a new water pipe. The road will be closed for two to three hours on September 15. Alfred has signage and will view the end result. Toby made a motion to approve the permit with the condition that the work area be covered with gravel and compacted. John seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0. Eric thanked the Board for their quick attention to his request.

#### Faryniarz ROW Permit

The request is for three culverts on Sand Hill Road. Matt Faryniarz said that an engineer has reviewed his plan. Toby made a motion to approve the permit to include the installation of stone-lined plunge pools for each culvert, to coordinate with Alfred for periodic reviews of the ongoing and completed project. John seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. Matt was reminded that trucks need to get an overweight permit from the town to cross the bridge.

#### Conservation Easement Pete’s Greens (formerly Legare Farm)

The discussion of a conservation easement at 1502 Route 14 owned by Pete Johnson was continued from the last Selectboard meeting. Gus Seelig, VT Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), was in attendance along with John Ramsay, VT Land Trust, and Pete Johnson, Pete’s Greens. John Ramsay pointed out that the conservation easement proposed for the property is different than for other conserved properties in town. It contains an affordability covenant; if the land were ever sold it would go back to the VT Land Trust or the VT Dept of Agriculture in order to keep the land in agriculture. The goal is for the long-term use of the property for agriculture. In addition, the area along the river is protected. At the last meeting, the

Selectboard requested a business plan. John R. explained the Land Trust does not ask for a business plan from an established farmer and would not be asking Pete for one. "In 16 years," he said, "we've never asked for a business plan." Denise asked about the 48 acres that is not in the conservation easement. Pete explained it will be hay land for hay to mulch vegetables. He has no plans now to sell it. It is not prime agriculture land. He referred to the property as a satellite operation which he purchased for the soils. He plans to remodel the house and he may or may not open a store. John Brabant asked if there could be public access through the property. Pete said that was a possibility.

At the previous meeting, a payment from the town of \$1,000 in support of the project was mentioned. John R. said the Land Trust will not take a token fee; at the time that \$1,000 was mentioned, the Land Trust did not realize Calais has \$74,000 in its conservation fund. Gus Seelig, VHCB, stressed the importance of conservation of critical soils on the property, the management plan, the conservation of land around the waterways, Pete's management skills, and the property's visibility as a gateway to town. "It doesn't go well with the VHC Board to know the town has over \$70,000 and is not giving money toward this project," Gus said. It is appropriate for the town to support the project, he said, and pointed out that VHCB could not be expected to diminish its cash while the town gives nothing. The cost of the conservation easement is \$225,000 plus expenses, John R said. Gus suggested that one-fourth to one-third of the Calais conservation fund money would be the appropriate amount. John Brabant said the Selectboard is working on two other conservation projects, having committed \$42,000 to one. Donna pointed out this leaves \$32,000. Nick Emlen pointed out that the Pete's Greens' conservation easement covers many of the items in the Town Plan. Toby said it would bring jobs to town. Denise asked for the Conservation Commission to hold a special meeting to discuss the conservation easement and recommend an amount of money. The Land Trust is asking for a letter of support by September 29. The next Selectboard meeting is September 28 and the Conservation Commission would make its recommendation then. Stephanie Kaplan will call a special meeting of the Conservation Commission.

#### Sale of 40 Fellows Road Property

One sealed bid was received for the purchase of 40 Fellows Road. Michael Gokey bid \$18,500. He asked the Selectboard to hold his deposit check of \$1,850 (10% of the bid price) for two days. He will be financing the purchase himself. A deed will be written after full payment is received. Denise made a motion to accept the bid of \$18,500 with a deposit of \$1,850, check to be held for two days, and full payment to be received within 60 days. John seconded the motion. Motion passed, 5-0.

#### Town Plan

Denise read the following statement and asked that it be entered into the minutes. "This has been a long and difficult journey and not without its challenges – the Planning Commission has spent countless hours working to revise the Town Plan – others have spent countless hours trying to make it even better. Strong opinions and various points of view have been an interesting part of making the Town Plan even better. It's very clear that everyone involved

truly cares about our town and wants to do and preserve what we are so fortunate to have and to live in such an amazing place. I would personally apologize to anyone whom I have offended or whose feathers I have ruffled along the way – that was never my intent because I know how hard we all work. At times, patience has run short (even mine) but that’s what can happen with a task of this magnitude. Hopefully, we can all forgive and move on knowing that we are all truly putting forth our best efforts as volunteers. It’s clear that this was not easy and rightly so if we are to do a good job and we have all made compromises. I deeply respect you all for that. The Selectboard never seems to get thanked for the work they have done on this and the many other issues on our plate – so Thank You, Selectboard, you’re an amazing group of dedicated and committed individuals. So, the Town Plan is now in front of the Selectboard – if you choose to go forward given the recent changes, we will need to hold another public hearing which we could do at our meeting on September 28. After that, the document then goes back to the Planning Commission for the Report.”

The latest revisions to the Town Plan were reviewed by the Selectboard, Planning Commission members Jan Ohlsson and John McCullough, Conservation Commission members Larry Bush and Stephanie Kaplan. Nick Emlen also participated. Jan entered the final changes into the Town Plan document.

The Selectboard will hold a public meeting on the Town Plan on October 5, 2015, at 7 pm at the Town Hall.

#### Zoning Administrator Ad

The zoning administrator job description is finalized. The Planning Commission will write the advertisement for the position.

The meeting adjourned at 10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fitch, Clerk