

Farnham Taskforce II Committee

Minutes

Monday, September 11, 2017

Members Present:

Will Stevens, Karen Shackett, Linda Oaks, Ruth Bernstein, Sandy Witherell

Absent: Ben Haigh

Guest: Al Karnatz, Vermont Land Trust

1. Called to Order at 7p.m.
2. Al Karnatz joined us to discuss possible strategies the Vermont Land Trust uses in farm projects. He puts together the funding for farmland projects which have permanent restrictions. Bob Heiser, his colleague, Regional Director for the Champlain Valley, he explained, puts together farmland projects that do not have money involved.
3. Board reviewed the map with Al describing the different zoning and soil types. He identified the 62 acre parcel as one the VLT would look at if sold to a farmer. The farmer/buyer would then work with VLT to purchase the land and sell the development rights siting an example of the town selling for \$1,000 per acre or the farmer buying for \$100/acre. Most of their funds come from VHCB (Vermont Housing Conservation Board), which is federally funded. These farmland projects are for individuals not non-profits.
4. Linda and Sandy shared their information gleaned from their visit with Elise Shanbacker at the Addison County Community Trust. The issue is capitalizing on the housing tax credit. The Town of Shoreham would have to do a lot of work to do this and we currently do not have the infrastructure to take this step.
5. Al suggested that we look into Habitat for Humanity.
6. Also discussed the swamp as a town forest and how to manage that parcel, i.e. by selling wood from it. He suggested that we contact Middlebury College to possibly have them inventory the swamp. We talked about open space agreements that can't be undone that VLT could hold. We discussed other land agencies that hold easements like the Middlebury Land Trust, which led to the mechanics of starting our own non-profit to steward the land and the infrastructure that would be needed.
7. Al offered that the VLT is willing to help us brainstorm further on our idea of ag, forest and park (public access permanent).
8. Sustainable energy was mentioned too – 1 percent of entire parcel is allowed. Net metering might be allowed for residential.
9. In a hypothetical situation Al speculated how to approach this parcel:
 - (1) Habitat for Humanity
 - (2) maintain the ag fields,
 - (3) park
 - (4) conserve ag land
 - (5) cedar swamp connected to Waste Water Plan – we would just own that piece.
10. He mentioned Karen Freeman, Conservation Director (828-5067) and Nancy Everhart, Ag Director (828-5066) VHCB.
11. Next steps:
 - Linda to contact T.Tall (462-2003) or Margaret Caruthers about Habitat for Humanity (<https://addisonhabitat.org/>) 388-0400.
 - Reach out to VHCB (Karen & Nancy) to see how it benefits us.
 - Ruth to research community land trust by reaching out to MALT or Charlotte Land

Trust. Is there potential for them to expand out to Shoreham or help to manage?

12. Linda reported that she did speak Green Mountain Power. More to be discussed at upcoming September 19th Planning Commission meeting where they will speak about survey and commercial district overlay with some guidance from Robin Conway.
13. Minutes from July 10th were reviewed. Ruth MOVED and Linda SECONDED to accept the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, October 9th at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Shackett