



# Winooski Valley Park District

Ethan Allen Homestead

Burlington, Vermont 05408

Tel: (802) 863-5744 Email: [info@wvpd.org](mailto:info@wvpd.org) [www.WVPD.org](http://www.WVPD.org) Fax: (802) 865-0647



Date: 12/11/18  
To: Williston Selectboard  
From: Nick Warner, WVPD Executive Director  
Re: Jacob Parcel

Over the past year, there has been significant discussion and research related to the Jacob parcel, and the potential for WVPD's ownership and management for permanent conservation and public access.

WVPD has conducted a Natural Resource Inventory, and finds that the conservation values of this site are ranked in the top echelon. Moreover the potential for recreational/educational use is high, given the proximity of the site to three neighborhoods and Rte. 2A. Please refer to the "Jacob Natural Resource Inventory" and "Draft Plan for Jacob Park development" for details.

The Williston Conservation Commission has formally recommended that the transfer move forward. For next steps, WVPD seeks to 1) ensure that the town is supportive of our FY20 funding request given concerns last year; 2) secure support from town leadership and residents for WVPD ownership; and 3) complete our due diligence.

It is important that Williston Selectboard and residents understand what the proposal is and what it would mean: permanent protection of the property from future development, free public access, and exemption from property taxes. Hunting would also not be allowed. As a point of reassurance, we would craft a reversionary clause to ensure that in certain circumstances (poor management, WVPD default), the property reverts back to the town (or another conservation agency as per the town's choice).

We have discussed next steps with Town staff, and propose the following:

- Williston Selectboard reaches a consensus to further pursue the transfer subject to successful public engagement, support, and final due diligence;
- Williston staff assists in circulating information about the proposal and encouraging the public to weigh in;
- Public hearing is held in early 2019 including a presentation and ample opportunity for public comment;
- Williston Selectboard then formally votes to pursue the land transfer and initiate the legal processes and additional steps required.