

Town of Williston Conservation Commission (WCC)
Minutes of September 26, 2012

Members Present: Marie-Claude Beaudette, Eric Howe, Mike Harris, Carl Runge, Jean Kissner, Jude Hersey

Members Absent: Gary Hawley

Staff Present: Jessica Andreoletti

Others Present: None

Call to Order: 7:15 AM

1. Approval of Minutes:

Jean MOTIONED to approve the minutes of the September 12th WCC meeting as drafted by Jessica with a few corrections. Jude SECONDED the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Environmental Reserve Fund Discussion

The group discussed the case they will make to the Selectboard regarding the FY14 annual ERF allotment. They concluded that a \$55,000 ERF allotment, with a plan to increase incrementally every 5-10 years, plus a \$5000 allotment to the WCC operating budget to support the establishment of a proactive ERF spending program would be ideal. The WCC felt that because of all the growth and development in town, taking a proactive approach to conserving land is the appropriate next step. They noted that the Selectboard also would need to approve funding half of the upcoming farmland appraisal.

3. Potential to Accept Strip of Land Along

Jessica explained that she walked the subject land (tax parcel # 07:105:109.000) along the Muddy Brook and found no visible signs of dumping, hazardous waste, or pollution. She also noted that the presence of wetlands and steep slopes through the property made the potential for agricultural or silvicultural use unlikely. While the WCC didn't feel strongly either way they agreed that accepting land along rivers is good policy and so the town should accept the donation.

4. Staff Report

• **New Items**

- i. **Siple Farm Dumpsite Update** – Jessica shared how the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) was preparing to address the dumpsite. Overall the WCC agreed that VLT's approach was not firm enough nor clear enough. The WCC recommended that a letter to the Siples identify state and local regulations related to storing waste and dumping along stream banks. They also agreed that the Siples should be responsible for cleaning up as much of the site as possible with farm equipment as well as by hand. The WCC stressed that a letter should make clear the expectations of the cleanup.
- ii. **Wildlife Habitat District Overlay** – Jessica updated the group on the status of the project and explained that she has had a few meetings with the Planning Commission who had made some decisions regarding the scope of the proposed regulations. Those decisions include revising the bylaw to lump wildlife habitat protection regulations along with protection regulations for other sensitive landscapes including viewsheds, archeological sites, prime farmland, rare/threatened/endangered species, etc. The regulations regarding these conservation areas are proposed to apply to all zoning districts and to all projects that require an Administrative or Discretionary permit.
- iii. **Buffer letter update** - *tabled*

• **Follow-up Items**

- i. **Update the proposed trails map after P&Z work plan is complete** – No progress.
- ii. **Review new easement language for the Siple Farm as drafted by VLT** – No progress.

5. Other Business

6. Adjournment: 9:10 AM

Minutes Submitted by Jessica Andreoletti: 10/5/12

Approved by WCC: 10/10/12