

**TOWN OF CHARLOTTE  
SELECTBOARD MEETINGS  
DECEMBER 11, 2006**

***APPROVED***

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Charles Russell, Acting Chairperson; Jenny Cole, Ed Stone, Frank Thornton (Absent: Eleanor Russell).

**ADMINISTRATION:** Dean Bloch, Selectboard Assistant.

**OTHERS:** David Marshall, John Owen, Robert Chutter, Brian Bast, Carrie Spear, Nigel Mucklow, Chris Davis, Ker Walker, Chris Ellis, Jeff McDonald, Carlie Korlick, M S Perkins, Andrew Broderick, Stephen Brooks, Gary Franklin, Sylvia Palmer Sprigg, Mary Perkins, Tom Mansfield, Robert Mack Jr, Mary Beth Freeman, John Hammer, Charlotte News, and others.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Russell, Interim Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

None.

**4. APPROVE MINUTES OF 11/13/2006**

**MOTION** by Ms. Cole, seconded by Mr. Stone, to approve the minutes of 11/13/2006 as written, with the following corrections:

Page 3, change "Oscar Road" to read "Roscoe Road";

Page 5, change "Valerie Grant" to read "Valerie Graham";

Page 8, correct the name "Paul Boisvart";

Page 9, correct the name "Gregg Beldock" and "Charlotte Children's Center."

**VOTE:** 3 ayes, 1 abstention (Mr. Thornton), 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.

**MOTION** by Mr. Stone, seconded by Ms. Cole, to approve the minutes of 11/27/2006 as written, with the following corrections:

Globally correct the name "Amy Demetrowitz";

Page 2, replace the name "Peter Mullins" with "Peter Richardson";

Under Thompson's Point Lease change to read: "...approve the lease as is for 20 years and consider changing to a shorter term for future leases to ten years.";

Page 4, change the word "my" to "his", and delete the sentence "Mr. Thornton questioned the validity of mapping."

**VOTE:** 4 ayes, 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.

**5. BURNS PROPERTY – WASTEWATER MASTER PLAN**

David Marshall, Civil Engineering Associates, reviewed a proposal to create a master plan for the Burns Property wastewater resources that could include mapping and maximizing the wastewater resources, such as providing capacity for affordable housing. In addition the plan would identify areas to be protected and delineate buffer areas. There were water supply issues as well. Mr. Marshall noted that there were “first in ground” rights related to water wells of surrounding properties that would need to be taken into account. A survey of existing wells would be mapped. The master plan is a planning tool.

Mr. Stone said that the affordable housing project would be presented to the voters at the March Town Meeting for a final approval, and asked if the Board was premature in spending \$1,800 now versus after the March vote.

Mr. Russell said that the plan was applicable to more than affordable housing. A portion of the scope would identify capacity to support affordable housing, minimize impacts, and how to protect resource areas. Mr. Stone said already have studies done. Mr. Russell said that we need to know what capacity could be used and what should be reserved. We need to know if there should be separate systems, or not and what impacts an affordable housing project would have on the Burns property resources.

Mr. Marshall reviewed that field work and some design work has been done by Steve Volk. A master plan would identify what additional uses could go into the resources.

Mr. Stone asked if the report would include what was in use now and a total capacity for the Town buildings. Mr. Marshall said that could be added to a final report. Mr. Bloch reviewed that the Otter Creek study had a grant and identified 2,200 gpd capacity. Mr. Marshall said that 2,000 gpd seems high.

Mr. Burns asked if the Town vote failed would the master plan work be of benefit later on. Mr. Marshall replied that three-fourths of the scope of work would identify areas needed to be protected, and areas with capacity.

**MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Ms. Cole, to allow Civil Engineering Associates to create a Septic Overview master Plan of the Burns Property in accordance with a Scope of Work as outlined in a letter, dated 12.07/2006, and to authorize the Interim Charlotte Chairperson to sign the document on behalf of the Town of Charlotte.**

**VOTE: 4 ayes, 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.**

## **6. THORP BARN - UPDATE**

Robert Chutter, Sylvia Sprigg, and Martha Perkins, Thorp Barn Committee members, reviewed a memo from Martha Perkins, dated 12/11/2006, regarding a proposal to name the Thorp Barn and Palmer Homestead collection as “The Thorp Barn Museum of the Working Land and the Palmer Homestead Collection.”

Mr. Stone asked where the funds came from to spend the money for the work on the barn. Ms. Perkins said the money came from the roof money. The roof was fixed and didn't

leak anymore. Mr. Stone expressed concern that the committee was spending money on small projects versus the major project that the \$9,500 was for.

Ms. Cole explained it was important to do smaller projects, such as the doors, removing the rock pile, etc., in order to improve fundraising efforts.

There was discussion regarding the committee's recommendations for the Thorp Barn as outlined in Ms. Perkins' memo; the Palmer donation of farm and agricultural implements to be known as "the Palmer Homestead Collection"; an electrical connection that would be undergrounded from a meter post to the barn; a list of activities that would take place at the proposed museum; and a proposed access to the Thorp Barn through the Varney Farm driveway. Ms. Perkins said the committee was seeking \$25,000 at the March Town Meeting for the Thorp Barn budget. There was no specific project at this time, but the funding would show Town support of the Thorp Barn.

Mr. Thornton asked the Thorp Barn Committee for map of the Thorp Barn property that would identify the barn location in relation to the property.

The Selectboard thanked Sylvia Palmer Sprigg for the donation of the Palmer family agricultural equipment for the Thorp Barn.

#### **7. HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS UPDATE**

Tim Davis, an independent provider, reviewed health insurance rates and options that included CIGNA plan available through the League of Cities and Towns, Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS), or a Health Savings Account (HSA).

There was discussion regarding the number of Town employees on the current insurance plan (3 single and 2 families); the Town share of 90 percent of the policy premium; comparison chart of premiums and deductibles (CIGNA premiums for a single person of \$477.07 versus BC/BS at \$502.62); potential impacts if coverage was switched to a different plan; and current premiums for a CIGNA plan of \$425 for a single, and \$1227 for family.

Mr. Davis said that the BC/BS Freedom Plan has a deductible. Employees were paying a ten percent of premium and a co-pay. There were seven different plans to choose from.

Mr. Stone asked Mr. Davis to provide a projection of deductibles if the Town continued with BS/BS.

Ms. Davis would return with a projection by next week.8

#### **8. BUDGET REVIE TRAILS COMMITTEE**

Gary Franklin, Trails Committee representative, reported that the Trails budget was level funded at \$5,000. The commission may need some funding to leverage state grants, or need to do trail construction. Expenditures were usually around \$1000 for photo-copying.

Mr. Franklins said that the Town Road Commissioner did some trail work on the Ploof trail, which came out of the Highway budget.

It was the consensus of the Board to level fund the Trails Committee budget.

#### TOWN CLERK

Mary Mead, Town Clerk, handed out a draft Town Clerk budget and reviewed revenues and expenses. Donation requests have been received that included a new request by Maple Leaf Farm. Special Investigations was increasing from \$6,728 to \$8,210.

#### RECREATION COMMISSION

Carlie Korlick, Recreation Commission representative, explained a proposal to require background checks on a Selectboard agenda. A policy was needed. And addition onto fees could be charged to offset costs for the background checks (\$8 per check). The Town would need to register as an entity with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns as a first step. A file could be created for multi-departmental use.

Mr. Stone said that an estimate versus a “guess-timate” was needed work repairs to the Town beach.

Ms. Korlick said there was interest in getting stairs and railings, as well as picnic tables. Mr. Stone said that handicap accessibility and parking were needed. Ms. Korlick said that the Recreation Commission would explore costs and estimates for the beach upgrades.

Mr. Stone asked the commission look at the increased costs for getting the dock(s) in and out.

It was noted that the beach security line item was doubled in error.

#### PLANNING AND ZONING

Jeff McDonald, Planning Commission Chairperson, reviewed the following items:

- Revenues projected for \$60,000 and actuals of \$74,000. Septic engineering costs would be recovered.
- A facilitator would be hired as a moderator of the East Charlotte Planning Charette versus hiring a consultant.
- A recommendation to place warned notices in Seven Days versus the Burlington Free Press, which would require Selectboard approval.
- A statewide Ground Water Study was using Planning consultants and would be a on-going item.

#### ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Tom Mansfield, Zoning Administrator, reviewed expenses for a scanner and a dedicated fire proof file(s) of \$11,000. Septic revenues were going up.

#### FIRE AND RESCUE

Ker Walker, Fire and Rescue President, and Chris Davis, Fire Chief, reviewed a written draft budget. A increase of 1.5 percent was proposed.

Mr. Stone asked for an accounting of expenditures. Mr. Walker said that quarterly reports were available. A monthly budget comparison was being done now.

Mr. Russell asked if the \$64,000 EMT payroll had an impact on volunteerism. Mr. Walker reported that there was an increase in volunteers.

There was discussion regarding the Fire and Rescue quarterly budget process (Mary explained that a Town check was cut for one quarter of each line item); a Selectboard suggestion to separate out payroll expenses so that a check would cover actual payroll); a need to know if the Fire Department was overspending line items, or not; and general operating expenses.

#### **9. AMENDMENTS OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDINANCE TO REDUCE SPEED LIMITS ON GREENBUSH ROAD AND MOUNT PHILO ROAD**

Mr. Bloch handed out a draft amendment of the Motor Vehicle and Traffic Regulation Ordinance crafted by the Town Attorney and a speed limit study for Board review.

**MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Ms. Cole, to approve a draft amendment to the Motor Vehicle and Traffic Regulation Ordinance to reduce speed limits on Greenbush Road from the Ferrisburgh town line to 0.4 miles south of Ferry Road at 45 mph, and the Mount Philo Road from the Ferrisburgh town line to 0.2 miles north of the State Park Road at 40 mph and 0.2 miles north of the State Park Road north to the Shelburne Town line at 40 mph.**

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Chris Ellis, Greenbush Road resident, said he spoke to Dave Roberts regarding on how the recommendations had been arrived at. The 85 percentile didn't support the reduction in speed. Mr. Roberts said he had considered cyclists and pedestrian use on Greenbush Road. When asked if 50 mph was a reasonable speed limit Mr. Roberts said yes, and 45 mph was reasonable as well. The current speed limit is not "broken"; there have been no accidents on a clear bit of road.**

**Mr. Stone said there have been numerous telephone calls regarding complaints over the last three years. It was impossible to guess what speed people were driving. The Selectboard felt that a slight change of speed limits would help slow people down.**

**Mr. Ellis said that state statutes spelled out the process to change speed limits. Have any complaints been received from the north part of Greenbush Road, asked Mr. Ellis. Mr. Stone replied that most complaints came from traffic off of Thompson's Point. There were more people walking or cycling there and we have to take them into consideration.**

Nigel Mucklow said when have slower speeds is potential for people to pass and could start creating accidents. Question who will enforce speed limits. Would this lead to a police force. The state indicated that towns shouldn't react to people asking for lower limits.

Mr. Russell said going from 50 to 45 mph won't set up a situation where people can still go 50, but 60 mph is where the problem is.

Mr. Thornton said that there was no reason to change the 50 mph limit.

**VOTE: 3 ayes, 1 nay (Mr. Thornton), 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.**

**10. MARY BETH FREEMAN – SHORELINE EROSION MITIGATION PLAN FOR NOTICE OF VIOLATION AT 843 HILLS POINT ROAD**

Mary Beth Freeman, owner, explained a revised Site Plan to replace three white cedars to mitigate a notice of violation. The recommended twelve cedars were excessive and could not be planted in the designated area. Five 3' high white cedars would be planted. There were oaks in the same area that she didn't want to disturb, said Ms. Freeman.

Mr. Russell noted that the Selectboard had done a site visit. There were areas on the lakeshore bank where leaves kept the bank from eroding. With the leaves gone the area was bare.

Ms. Freeman said that a winter erosion clothe was laid down. Ms. Freeman pointed to areas on the Site Map where Tree Works took down cedars and the one cedar that the Zoning Administer said was ok to cut. The landscaping plan included planting 21 low growing spreading sumacs. The Charlotte Tree Warden has asked for a cedar hedge. Three years ago Rosa Rugosa were planted.

Mr. Stone suggested that Ms. Freeman plant two or three cedars on Mary Tang's property as well, and asked for up to 12 cedars planted versus 5.

**MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. Thornton, to approve a Landscaping Plan by Mary Beth Freeman to plant five three-gallon White Cedars on the south side and 21 low-growing sumacs on the north side, and to waive a fine for mitigation of a Notice of Violation.**

**VOTE: 4 ayes, 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.**

**11. AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND**

John Owen and Randy Broderick, Affordable Housing Committee members, reviewed a November 2006 Town vote on an Advisory Motion regarding formation of an Affordable Housing Committee. The Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) was seeking support for a fund similar to the Burlington Affordable Housing fund.

Stephen Brooks, resident, asked for clarification of the purpose of the agenda item. Mr. Owen explained a potential revenue source of one cent on the tax rate, which would be

collected by the Town, and administered by the AHC. It would be a process similar to the Charlotte Conservation Commission (two cents on the tax rate).

There was discussion regarding a number for AHC members to be appointed by the Selectboard (currently there were six active members); proposed number of affordable housing units on the Burns property (Mr. Owens said the threshold number of units met the AHC criteria, were perpetually affordable, and met zoning regulations); provisions to provide a perpetual covenant, or in the title of the property; and how the Selectboard would present a funding recommendation to the votes in March (would be \$67,000 for one-cent on the tax rate).

Mr. Russell asked if the funding request was a one time request, or more. Mr. Broderick suggested a five-year commitment to see how many units could be constructed as a stated goal. The funds could be used to leverage grants. Mr. Bloch pointed out that if funds were leveraged then that brings in other organization's covenants and the Town could lose control of the project(s).

Mr. Stone asked if there was a way to fund renovations or expansions of existing residents in the Town as affordable rentals. Mr. Owen pointed out that there were Charlotte residents there were interested in renovating existing space as affordable rentals, such as the knitter's shop. Mr. Russell said that historic structures in Town could be targeted for rental units versus constructing a 10-20 unit block.

Robert Mack Jr, resident, said that the Burns property affordable housing project included the real estate in the proposed price of \$165-225,000. The Town needs to see the numbers, and to discuss replacement cost as well. Is the land cost a "cherry-picked" number, asked Mr. Mack. If the Burns property was thrown out then there would be a better chance of funding a proposal.

Mr. Owen said that a definition of affordable was needed.

Mr. Brooks spoke in support of the AHC, but they should think regionally. Red lines shouldn't be drawn as a region, such as agricultural and natural regional preserve. In sense of habitat , human habitation. Problem is possible other towns in the region might be better in supporting the affordable value. If so, then should try to limit development. Forget low income and high income. Ms. Cole said a concern was that people who would like to live in Charlotte and value the school system should have an opportunity to live here without forgetting the agricultural and natural habitat. Mr. Thornton pointed out that by changing the zoning regulations related to density and infill development then the cost of housing could be lowered.

The Selectboard asked the AHC to return in January with a revised proposal. Mr. Broderick said could come up with "real world" examples.

## **12 APPROVE FLEA MARKET LEASE AND MOBILE HOME LEASE**

Discussion regarding approval of the Flea Market Lease was tabled. It was noted that the mobile home lease was due in April, 2007.

**13 SELECTBOARD UPDATE:**

**VELCO PROPOSED PLANTING IN TOWN HIGHWAY ROW**

Discussion regarding proposed plantings in the Town highway right-of-way was tabled.

**SPEED TABLES IN THE TOWN LIBRARY DRIVEWAY**

It was noted that there was a problem with unaccompanied children rushing out the library doors could run into the library driveway, which was a year-round issue.

Mr. Stone expressed concern that by putting speed bumps in the roadway that the Town was admitting there was a danger. The Town could be sued. Enforcing a 5 mph speed limit might be a better solution, said Mr. Stone.

Mr. Russell suggested installing a railing, or planting a hedge between the sidewalk and street.

**INFILL DEVELOPMENT APPEAL**

Mr. Bloch reported that the Hancock property decision was under appeal in Environmental Court.

**TOWN HALL MECHANICAL CONTRACT**

Mr. Stone reported that Vermont Energy Contracting has estimated \$1925 to do the Town Hall mechanical diagnostic work to solve the variations in temperature issues. It was a two-step process: to improve the building comfort and reduce costs. Currently the air conditioner has been turned off for the winter and a valve has been replaced.

Mr. Russell asked for other estimates and to have the scope of work broken down.

**AUDITOR**

The Selectboard would meet with the Auditor 12/12/2006 at 7:30 p.m.

**14. BILLS AND WARRANTS**

The Selectboard signed Bills and Warrants.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. Thornton, to adjourn the meeting.**

**VOTE: 4 ayes, 1 absent (Ms. Russell); motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kathlyn Furr, Recording Secretary.

*These minutes are subject to correction by the Charlotte Selectboard. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.*

