

## CHARLOTTE CONSERVATION FUND - APPLICATION

Applicant: Vermont Land Trust / Charlotte Land Trust  
Address: P.O. Box 850, Richmond, VT 05477 (VLT)  
P.O.Box.43, Charlotte, VT 05445 (CLT)  
Contact Person: Kate Lampton (klampton@gmavt.net) (CLT)  
Allen Karnatz (allen@vlt.org) (VLT)  
Project Name: Bidinger  
Landowner: Patricia Bidinger  
Number of Acres: 73  
Date: April 7, 2014

Amount of Charlotte Conservation Fund money requested: \$60,000

Total conservation project cost: \$ 329,400

Percent of town contribution to total conservation purchase: 18%

Project Summary: Patricia Bidinger is selling her land to the Bean family who have farmed this acreage for over 40 years and who own the adjacent dairy farm. The Beans have had the land in a corn/pasture rotation and will add it to their 315 acre home farm. The land is entirely statewide and prime soils and the project is focused on the agricultural values of the property. Mrs. Bidinger and her late husband bought the land many years ago but spent their lives in India working for non-profits there. With an eye toward her retirement she feels the time has come to sell the land and she is very pleased that the conservation option will make it affordable for the Beans to acquire. Mrs. Bidinger is able to contribute a small bargain sale, but this project relies primarily on VHCB and local funding to make it possible.

### Nature of your Organization:

**The Charlotte Land Trust** is a private non-profit land conservation organization. Its mission is to protect and enhance the historic and rural beauty of the area by conserving important agricultural lands, forestlands, natural areas, scenic views and historic sites.

The primary focus of the **Vermont Land Trust** is on permanently conserving productive, recreational, and scenic lands vital to Vermont's and rural economy and environment.

Date Reviewed (attach comments):

Charlotte Conservation Commission – April 22, 2014

Charlotte Recreation Committee – April 30, 2014

Charlotte Trails Committee – April 8, 2014

Date Approved-

Charlotte Selectboard

### SUPPLEMENTAL CONSERVATION FUND APPLICATION

1. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION: Describe the property and attach any relevant site plans, photographs, deed restrictions, planning/zoning approvals, etc.

The property is 73 acres on the southwest corner of Bean and the Charlotte-Hinesburg Roads. The land is relatively flat and is almost entirely open, with only 4 acres wooded. The entire parcel is prime or statewide soils. There are 40 acres of tillable land and 25 acres of pasture. There are also 4 other unmanaged/incidental acres. There are no major watercourses. The Beans pasture 70-75 of their young stock on the land and have another 70 milkers that the land helps support.

The land is zoned Rural, which allows a density of 5 acres per lot. There are no structures on the property. There are no deed restrictions on the property. The appraised easement value is \$321,200.

2. RESOURCES: Describe – e.g. habitat, wetlands, scenic, streams, productive soils, historic sites, public access

The property is comprised of 6 acres of prime soils and 67 acres of statewide soils. There are no rare, endangered or uncommon plant or animal species. The Town wildlife habitat map shows portions of the property as linkage or aquatic habitat. There are no mapped wetlands or streams. There is a VAST trail that crosses the property but no other public access is appropriate or proposed. The property contributes to the rural scenic quality of this area and is highly visible from the heavily traveled Charlotte-Hinesburg Road.

3. PUBLIC BENEFIT: Describe the public benefit to be derived from this project and the future use of the land. This should include any proposed trail easements, agricultural uses, recreational uses, scenic preservation, municipal uses, etc.

The primary public benefit of the project is to secure good agricultural land for the future and to help with the transfer of the property to one of the core farms in East Charlotte. The Bean Farm is a third generation farm and this acreage is a key component of their farm operation. Scenic preservation is the other significant public benefit of the project. The land is highly visible to the many people who travel the adjacent roads and, because the land is so open, development without impacting those scenic qualities would be very difficult.

4. PROJECT STATUS: Describe the status of the project, including the timetable for completion and closing dates. Attach any relevant documents such as Purchase and Sale Agreement, appraisal etc

The project has received VHCB pre-app approval and is scheduled for a final application on May 16. If that and the grant request from the Town Conservation Fund are both successful a closing will be scheduled in the near future. Payment of the Conservation Fund grant would be requested 30-45 days prior to closing.

Funding Plan:

**Expenses**

Acquisition	305,000
Project Costs	-
Appraisal	4,000
Stewardship Endowment	-
<u>Value Donation</u>	<u>16,200</u>
Total	\$325,200

**Income**

VHCB	249,000
Town	60,000
Bargain Sale	16,200
<u>Landowner Funds</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	\$325,200

5. CONSERVATION FUND ASSISTANCE: What specific use will be made of an allocation from the Conservation Fund? Why is an allocation considered necessary for the project's viability? Is an allocation requested in one lump sum or over a period of years?

The allocation from the Conservation Fund will go directly to the easement purchase. The fund allocation is essential for the viability of the project. Local fundraising is not feasible for this project, particularly since other projects in process will need major fundraising efforts.

The fund allocation is requested in one lump sum.

\*\*To achieve community conservation goals through non-regulatory means, the Conservation Fund Advisory Board suggests funding standard projects at levels up to 20% of total project costs.

6. LEVERAGE: What is the value of any neighborhood or other matching contributions to the project?

The Conservation Fund contribution would be only 18% of the total project costs. There are no other feasible contribution sources for this project.