

**MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD MEETING
&
JOINT MEETING WITH TRUSTEES OF
THE VILLAGE OF SWANTON
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Tuesday, October 18, 2022
Site Visit of LVRT Trailhead – 5:00 p.m.
In-Person & By Zoom – 6:00 p.m.**

Present: James Guilmette, Chair; Earl Fournier, Vice Chair; Nicole Draper, Ed White, Steve Bourgeois, Members; Lisa Meunier; Sue Day; Jeff Day; Cindy Choiniere; Peg Root; Wayne Root; Aaron Hoague; Reg Beliveau, Village Manager; Neal Speer, Board of Village Trustees President; Adam Paxman, Eugene LaBombard, Village Trustee Members; Brian Savage, Town Administrator; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; Ed Daniel, Planning Commission Chair; Joel Clark; Brian Rohen, Revise Web Services (ZOOM User); Josh Ellenbrock (ZOOM User); Paul Hansen (ZOOM User)

*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

I. Site Visit at the Proposed LVRT Trailhead location on Robin Hood Drive 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Clark began the site visit by distributing a map of the proposed site plan before walking the site. Mr. Hoague asked about the location of the proposed parking lot? Mr. Clark answered that the location of the parking lot was based upon wetlands in the area. These areas are characterized by purple tape outlining the wetland buffer required by the State of Vermont. Continuing, Mr. Clark added that the State took samples to confirm the existing wetlands. Mr. Day asked about the management plan for the property? Ms. Draper responded that the Agency of Transportation would be managing the trail and associated trail amenities. Continuing, Ms. Draper stressed the importance of the working relationship between the State and the Selectboard to make decisions on a local level.

Mr. Hoague asked about grading and water management? Mr. Clark responded that the clearing of the area would allow for greater storm water management. The land on which the LVRT is located is currently being leased from the State of Vermont. Mr. Clark drew attention to the tree line describing the trees that would remain and those that would be removed. Mr. Fournier asked about man made screening like fencing and natural screening including addition plantings? Mr. Clark described that the existing plan utilizes a large portion of the site, but is already recommending withdrawing parking spaces for a buffer of the parking lot and surrounding neighbors. Ms. Meunier asked if these proposed changes would give the neighboring development more privacy and security. Mr. Clark said it is definitely a possibility. Ms. Meunier added that the parking lot should be gated and locked in the evening to prevent negative uses of the property. Mr. Hoague pointed out his property and expressed a concern over privacy. Mr. Fournier responded that proposed revisions would create a bigger buffer between the parking lot and neighboring properties. Mr. Clark explained site constraints associated with the property, but expressed his commitment to respecting neighboring opinions with site constraints. A concern was raised about policing the area. Ms. Draper responded that it would be addressed at a later time. Mr. Hoague asked about a privacy fence to shield the area? Mr. Clark responded that it would be a consideration, but it would all come down to the cost and what the grant amount would cover and which options would be cost prohibitive.

Ms. Meunier again expressed the need for a gate to prohibit negative activities in the parking lot like parties. Continuing, Ms. Meunier expressed concerns over this project becoming a homeless transient community using the bathrooms and woods for their own end. Mr. White expressed that there aren't any bathrooms along the trail currently, and these facilities would prevent people from defecating in front of people's yards.

Continuing Mr. White said the point is to create a happy medium for all. Ms. Meunier recommended portable bathrooms in lieu of permanent structures to discourage sleeping in them overnight. Mr. Clark said that was a really good idea and reminded participants at the site visit that this is a 20% matching grant.

Mr. Guilmette asked if there were any additional questions. Mr. Hoague asked when they could expect to see a revised site plan. Mr. Clark said the grant package is due in November, but it could be as late as spring 2023 to get an engineer on board to finalize the plans. Mr. Clark also stressed that the existing and proposed plans are scoping only and should not be treated as a finalized plan. There are also federal rules in place governing the project. The scoping map could be changed as early as next week. Mr. Hoague expressed the compromise that is needed between neighboring property owners and the Town Selectboard.

II. Regular and Zoom Meeting at Town Offices – 6:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order – Mr. Guilmette called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Guilmette led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

D. Meeting Topics:

1. Minutes

a) September 26, 2022, Joint Board Meeting, tabled from previous meeting.

Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the 9/26/22 Joint Board meeting, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

b) October 4, 2022, Regular and Zoom Selectboard Meeting

Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the 10/4/22 Selectboard meeting, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments - None

3. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Animal Control Officer Monthly Report

Members of the Selectboard briefly reviewed the Animal Control Officer's monthly report.

4. Old Town Business

a) Champlain Housing Loan Forgiveness

No additional business to discuss at this time.

b) Swanton Public Library Roof Issues

Mr. Guilmette described how the issues with the roof has caused water damage. Mr. Guilmette recommended contracting a property maintenance/management firm to address these long-term difficulties. Ms. Draper concurred adding that buildings like the library are community assets. Mr. Bourgeois recommended putting together a job description/expectation of what the Selectboard is seeking from a property manager. Mr. White recommended collecting bids on the furnace.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve and authorize Mr. Savage to draft and execute a contract, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

5. New Town Business

a) Letter of Support for Proposed LVRT Trailhead

Mr. Savage reminded members of the Selectboard about the letter of support Mr. Clark was seeking for the proposed LVRT trailhead terminus. Mr. Guilmette read through the letter of support for the public. After finished, Mr. Clark added edits about mowing/snow plowing that there will be limited green space for maintenance. Mr. Fournier added that the town already maintains greenspaces and snow plowing and the impact to the budget would be minimal. Mr. Clark recommended the Town assist with tree clearing and placing of gravel to reduce costs. Mr. Bourgeois asked about the utilization and distribution of the ARPA funds? Mr. Guilmette described that the board has sole discretion over the distribution of the ARPA funds. Mr. Clark recommended cutting the bathrooms for now and installing pads for temporary bathrooms. In regard to screening, Mr. Guilmette recommended physical screening like a fence with additional vegetative screening.

Mr. Fournier made a motion for Mr. Clark to:

- Eliminate two lots on the southeast corner associated with LVRT terminus
- Move the proposed pavilion to the westside of the property
- Reduce the amount of truck/trailer parking available
- Drop bathrooms and install concrete slabs for temporary bathrooms
- Commit up to \$80,000 not to exceed a total project cost of \$400,000
- Authorize Brian Savage to sign grant package,

Seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

b) AARP Winter Place Making

Ms. Draper raised the point of a winter place making grant to create more outdoor activities for the recreation fields including an ice-skating rink, warming stations, and seating to promote healthier outdoor lifestyles.

Mr. White made a motion for Mr. Savage to authorize a grant through AARP for Winter Place Making, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

c) Country Club Estates Storm Water Permit

Mr. Savage said that the secretary for the Country Club Estates Homeowners Association has noted that through a title search that the existing storm water permit has expired. Mr. Guilmette asked for clarification on the Town's responsibility in this matter. Mr. Savage stated it is on the Town since they maintain the roads out there, and it would fall to the Town to obtain the necessary permitting. Mr. Savage said an engineer would be needed and there is an 18-month grace period before Country Club Estates is out of compliance. Ms. Draper added that the previous engineers were bought out by TCE Engineers of Burlington, VT.

6. Community & Economic Development

a) Report from Elizabeth Nance

Members of the Selectboard briefly reviewed Ms. Nance's community and economic development report. Mr. Fournier asked if other members have received the same email about potential planning grant opportunities for the Southern Growth district. Mr. Savage responded yes.

7. Highway Department

a) Paving Update

Mr. Guilmette updated the Selectboard saying that the remainder of the Beebe Rd. paving should be completed tomorrow, 10/19/22.

b) Maquam Shore Road Culvert Update

Mr. Savage stated that the remainder of the easements needed for the culvert replacement have been signed.

c) Mower

Mr. Guilmette said the existing mower is on its last leg and recommended using rollover money to purchase a new mower at a cost of \$11,599.00 with the remainder of funds amounting to \$5,000.00 coming from equipment and rental replacements fund.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to purchase a new mower not to exceed \$11,599.00, seconded by Mr. White. Mr. Guilmette, Ms. Draper, Mr. White, and Mr. Bourgeois voted aye, Mr. Fournier abstained from vote. Motion carried.

8. Expenditures

a) General Orders (9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022)

Mr. White made a motion to approve the General Orders of 9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders (9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022)

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

c) Library Orders (9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022)

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

d) Payroll Orders (9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022)

Mr. White made a motion to approve the Payroll Orders of 9/21/2022 through 10/18/2022, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

9. Public Hearings

Mr. Guilmette motioned to enter the public hearing at 7:11 p.m.

a) Proposed Changes to Swanton Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Regulations

Ms. Giroux went through explaining the proposed changes on Hog Island from the R3/Moderate-Density Residential district to the SR/Shoreland/Recreation district. Ms. Giroux continued explaining that

this would improve administrative procedure for permit approval, so it wouldn't require DRB approval for all those properties.

Continuing, Ms. Giroux recommended changing the 15% setback to 20% to align with the state's requirement.

Mr. Guilmette motioned to exit the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Mr. White motioned to approve and adopt the recommended bylaw changes, seconded by Mr. Fournier.

b) Final Public Hearing – Loan to Leader Evaporator

Mr. Guilmette motioned to open the public hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Mr. Savage gave a brief update on Leader Evaporator and what its continued business means for Swanton.

No motions taken.

Mr. Guilmette motioned to close the public hearing at 7:21 p.m.

10. Joint Meeting with the Swanton Village Trustees

a) Presentation of Mr. Brian Rohen of Revise Web Services

Mr. Rohen gave a presentation on various components of previous website designs including friendlier accessibility from mobile devices. Mr. Beliveau asked about accessibility for paying bills online? Mr. Rohen stated that the website could be linked with the payment processor. Mr. Paxman asked if there would be an added charge for this service? Mr. Rohen responded that this would be included in the package. Mr. Beliveau followed up by asking about customer assistance and support. Mr. Rohen responded that consumers are an integral part of website design. Mr. Fournier asked about using the website to market a community? Mr. Savage added that beyond local community events, tourism and economic development are also a large part of designing this new website. Mr. Rohen stated that this is also possible as part of the package for a new website design.

Continuing, Mr. Rohen talked about the editing function of the webpage. Mr. Savage asked about having multiple editors since this is a joint website? Mr. Rohen responded that this is possible and there are a variety of different ways to present both the Town and Village. Mr. Savage asked about the price including setup and annual maintenance? Mr. Rohen said that cost would be about \$3.00 per page that is transferred from the old website to the new website. This excludes the design fee of \$5,500.00 for designing a new website. The fact that the Town and Village are consolidating webpages does provide some leverage for the design fee. Fee notification also adds in an additional \$500.00. Annual website maintenance comes to \$900.00-1,800.00 per year depending on website features including e-notices.

Mr. Guilmette asked how long this process would take if they started to move forward with this? Mr. Rohen stated it would be four to six months.

b) Declaration of Inclusion

Mr. Fournier raised a point for the next joint meeting to discuss a declaration of inclusion. Mr. Bourgeois expressed litigation concerns and recommended consulting with the Town and Village attorneys.

c) Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate

Mr. Fournier made a motion to enter executive session at 7:58 p.m., seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to exit executive session at 9:06 p.m., seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

The joint boards have agreed that the proposed location for the Swanton Community Center will be leased to the Town for 99 years if the financials for the project work out.

11. Correspondence - None

12. Public Comments (Reprise)

The Vermont Community Youth Project will have a meeting at MVU on 10/20/22 between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

13. Upcoming Events

- a) Town Clerk's Office – CLOSSES 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Wednesday, October 26, 2022 – Due to Computer Conversion
- b) Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. – Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street
- c) DRB Meeting – Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. – Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street
- d) Regular and Zoom Selectboard Meeting – Tuesday, November 1, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. – Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street

14. Executive Session (If Needed) - None

E. Adjournment – Mr. White made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m., seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava
Administrative Assistant

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date