

**TOWN OF WARREN
CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
AUGUST 28, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robin Bennett, Jim Edgcomb, Tara Hamilton, Susan Hemmeter, Margo Wade, Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Alec Newcomb

AGENDA:

- 1) 7:00 PM – Call to Order at the Municipal Building
- 2) 7:30 Check in with the Selectboard – Town Hall
- 3) Newcomb Subdivision – update
- 4) Kingsbury Farm Project – update
- 5) Project Updates (as time allows):
 - Ancient Roads (Susan/Robin)
 - Mad River Path Summit (Robin)
 - Trails Inventory (Jim)
 - Brownfields (Robin)
 - Management Plans (Tara)
 - Natural Heritage Assessment (Margo)
 - Review August task list items not covered above
- 6) Executive Session – discussion of real estate matters (if needed)
- 7) Other Business:
 - a. Approval of invoices (Arrowwood)
 - b. Approve meeting minutes
- 8) Adjourn – 10:30 PM

1) CALL TO ORDER

Margo Wade called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2) 7:15 CHECK IN WITH THE SELECTBOARD – TOWN HALL

Items discussed with the Selectboard included Kingsbury Farm project, Brownfields, Newcomb, and Ancient Roads. See details contained below.

3) NEWCOMB SUBDIVISION – UPDATE

The Commission still has considerable concern with the project as approved. Specifically the process in which the application was reviewed and the process in which the plan was developed. The Warren Land Use and Development Regulations clearing out line the process in which a plan “shall” be developed (See Table 7.1). The Applicant did not draft the site plan in the order in which the regulation stipulate therefore we believe less sensitivity was given the primary and secondary conservation areas. It is also our position that the DRB erred in not appropriately applying Table 7.1 to the review process. Little consideration was given to the deer yard (critical habitat), which is located on a significant position of the parcel. To date this area has not been mapped.

Alec Newcomb joined the meeting to brief the members on progress of items discussed at a meeting between himself, Don Swain, Margo Wade and Susan Hemeter in July. At that time the CC continued to convey concerns with the lack of mapping of conservation areas. The applicant agreed to have their biologist visit the site for a second time to reconsider the habitat and flag it for

surveying and inclusion on the final plat. The biologist (Hirth) had also submitted an updated narrative.

Alec voiced his displeasure with the process and being caught between the two boards, as he and his family believe the submittal material reflects everything the DRB had required. He feels he has been agreeable to the CC's requests and wishes to continue to work with the town towards a positive outcome.

Next Steps:

- get a copy of the updated Hirth report
- review the updated map
- discuss additional feedback with applicant, if needed.

4) KINGSBURY FARM PROJECT – UPDATE

Tara shared with the group that the Kingsbury Community Farm project is moving forward. An LLC is in the process of being formed that will hold the parcel. Several community groups are actively work on the project to move it along. The Warren Conservation Commission, Mad River Valley Planning District, Friends of the Mad River, Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership, MR Localvourse, Open Hearth Community Center and Yestermorrow are all involved at this time.

A 30-day contract has been entered into between Linda Lloyd for the Kingsbury Community Farm LLC and Janice Kingsbury the property owner. Potential funding for the purchase is coming from several different areas. These areas may include the Warren Conservation Reserve Fund, Mad River Watershed Conservation Partnership via the Vermont Land Trust, VT Housing and Conservation Board, and private donations.

The MRVPD formally submitted a letter to the Warren Conservation Commission requesting \$150,000 be contributed to the project. After discussion of the project and the request, the following motion was made.

MOTION by Robin Bennett, seconded by Jim Edgcomb, to support the Kingsbury Community Farm Project and recommend to the Warren Selectboard a contribution of up to \$125,000.00 from the Warren Conservation Reserve Fund. Those funds would be specifically earmarked for the purchase of a conservation easement, which protects the conservation values of the property and meets the priorities identified in the Warren Conservation Plan. The value of the conservation easement shall be determined by a qualified appraiser. Should the contribution be needed prior to the results of the easement appraisal, the Warren Conservation Commission would support contributing up to \$125,000.00 towards the easement purchase with the understanding that moneys paid above the appraised value would be returned to the town and placed back in the Warren Conservation Reserve Fund.
VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.

The following out lines the reasoning for our recommendation:

- conservation of the Kingsbury Farm meets many of the priorities out lined in the Warren Conservation Plan, including protection of out door recreation resources, enhancement of water quality and riparian zones, protection of farm land, protection of open spaces and scenic values
- by charter, the CRF can only be used for conservation and is not meant for funding of affordable housing, thou we would support an affordable housing component that would maintain the rural agricultural integrity of the property
- we are working on other projects, which we anticipate needing to tap into the CRF to move forward
- the Warren Conservation Reserve Fun value is a little less than \$200K right now, therefore a contribution of up to \$125K leave \$75K for future projects

5) **PROJECT UPDATES (AS TIME ALLOWS):**

Ancient Roads (Susan/Robin)

Kirstin Reilly, Selectboard member, will review and sign the Ancient Roads grant agreement recently awarded through the Dept of Housing & Community Affairs. The \$5,000 grant moneys will be used to research the priority roads identified by the ancient roads committee. Susan and Robin will continue to represent the CC on the ancient roads committee.

To be discussed further at on 9/4/2007.

Mad River Path Summit (Robin)

Nothing further to report at this time.

Trails Inventory (Jim)

To be discussed at on 9/4/2007.

Brownfields (Robin)

The Phase I environmental assessment is underway. Funding for the Phase I is coming through CVRPC. Once the report is complete the group will discuss next steps. Additional funding from the EPA to cover the cost associated with surveying the Dump parcel has been approved.

Management Plans (Tara)

Tara and Margo will develop a contract for the selected consultant and will up date the work plan to take advantage of the additional information that will be available once the natural heritage assessment is complete.

Natural Heritage Assessment (Margo)

Parcel permissions are still being gathered and the consultant has been conducting summer specific data gathering.

Review August task list items not covered above

The task list was not specifically discussed.

Because time did not allow for all agenda items to be discussed and because the members did not wish to wait until the September meeting to do so, a special meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 4th from 5PM to 7PM to discuss ancient roads and the trails mapping project.

6) EXECUTIVE SESSION – DISCUSSION OF REAL ESTATE MATTERS (IF NEEDED)

The commission did not enter into executive session.

7) OTHER BUSINESS

a. Approval of invoices (Arrowwood)

MOTION by Jim Edgcomb, seconded by Tara Hamilton, to approve Arrowwood Environmental natural heritage assessment invoice #4 dated 8/2/2007 in the amount of \$1,120.00. **VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

MOTION by Tara Hamilton, seconded by Robin Bennett, to ratify the Brett Engstrom natural communities inventory invoice dated July 30, 2007 for \$800.00. **VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

b. Approve meeting minutes

MOTION by Tara Hamilton, seconded by Jim Edgcomb, to approve the minutes from April 24, 2007, May 22, 2007 and July 24, 2007 as amended and/or submitted. **VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

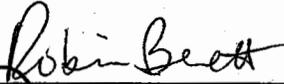
8) ADJOURNMENT

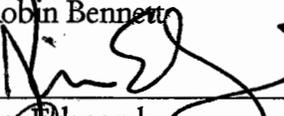
MOTION by Tara Hamilton, seconded by Robin Bennett, to adjourn the meeting. **VOTE: unanimous; motion carried.**

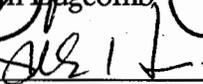
The meeting adjourned at 11:35 PM (ugh).

Respectfully submitted,
Margo Wade

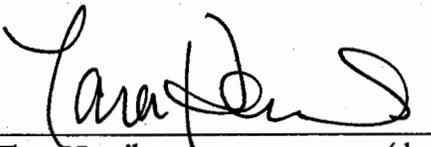
Conservation Committee

 9/4/07

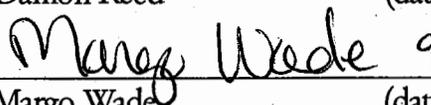
Robin Bennett (date)
 9/4/07

Jim Edgcomb (date)
 09/04/07

Susan Hemmeter (date)

 9/4/07

Tara Hamilton (date)

Damon Reed (date)
 9/4/07

Margo Wade (date)