

**MINUTES OF FRANKLIN LAND STUDY MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 29, 2009, AT 7:00 P. M.
FELCO ROOM - FRANKLIN HOMESTEAD**

PRESENT: Polly Gadbois, Bob Irish, Sue Clark, Johanna Godin, Hugh Gates, Kim Gates-Maynard and Jennifer Wright.

Polly called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

PROPERTY MAPS: Bob Irish provided each member with an aerial map of the town property and adjacent properties together with copies of deed information.

CHAIRMAN: Polly informed those present that she was asked by the Selectboard to reactivate this committee, however, if anybody else is interested in running the meetings, they should "jump right in". No one offered to act as Chair. Polly also advised that Barb Varin was joining the committee and offered to serve as Secretary if there was on one else interested in the position..

STUDY: Polly stated that at the last meeting there was discussion on having Connie Burns come up. She contacted Connie who suggested that we contact Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director, of Northwest Regional Planning.

It was noted that Northwest Regional Planning did the Grand Isle study and Polly advised that Lisa was unable to locate it and will request another copy. Sue stated she thinks she knows where to find it. Polly noted that it was an impressive study and included pertinent information regarding the property, town, residents, etc.

Polly contacted Northwest Regional Planning, but Mrs. Dimitruk was not able to attend tonight. Connie Burns feels we would be better served if both she and Mrs. Dimitruk came together. If we keep meetings on the same schedule, the last Monday of the month, the next meeting would be July 27th and Mrs. Dimitruk and Connie would both be able to attend that meeting. Polly asked if that date works for everyone and it was decided the next meeting would be July 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Polly noted the Grand Isle report should be available to us by then.

Hugh questioned if Connie would also be here and Polly responded they would both be here.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: Polly asked if everyone had received a copy of the minutes of the last meeting.

Kim commented that in the minutes, it was noted that it was believed the land behind the Town Hall belonged to the churches. Kim stated she thought it belonged with Jen Harig's house. Bob Irish stated at this point he is not sure to whom the property belongs. He has been doing research and it is a piece of land about 12 by 20 feet and he found from the records that it was

deeded to Alva Richards (Richardson ?) and William Riley, but has not yet found where it was deeded off to someone else.

Discussion then turned to property lines. Bob stated that both churches and Marsh Park go back to the stream. Hugh questioned whether Bob found that in writing and he did. Sue stated she believes that was resolved at some point. Hugh stated he suspected that was true even though the fence was constructed so that the Magnant's cattle could use it, it was not the boundary. It was noted that the Domina, Nash (?) and Westcott properties all go back to the brook. Hugh commented that without normal surveys and land record checks, it is difficult to get accurate information.

Johanna questioned if Bruce Maitland didn't do these checks and she was told that he didn't do any parcels under 10 acres.

Bob commented that you can't find the stream now. It was apparently a pond that filled in over the years.

Hugh advised that he has a color map of the properties which Kim took from the air in September, 1995 while flying with George Godin.

Bob informed members that he marked with a wider black lines two documented rights-of-way. One is between the Vaillancourt/Gates property and he explained this appears to be in two sections which do not actually line up. He stated that it would most likely require an agreement between the two property owners to settle this matter. This is a 25' deeded right-of-way. Hugh questioned if that right-of-way is on the Vaillancourt survey and was told it is. The second one is between the Maggio/Racine property and has been the subject of a dispute. He stated initial documents show that it is 12' wide. It would be adequate for a foot path. Bob gave members an old deed which shows the piece of property was deeded to the town in 1883.

It was noted at one time there was a bridge back there. Kim stated she never remembers seeing it and has lived in her home for 20 years. Polly stated Brenda Wright used to work for the Westcotts and she remembers it was there, but apparently it fell into disrepair. Bob suggested that should the committee want to look over this property, we should contact Mark Racine to let him know what is going on because of the dispute. Bob further noted that if it is a 50' right-of-way, it would empty out onto the Vaillancourt property.

Polly noted there is also a right-of-way to the property up at the town garage.

WETLANDS:

Bob Irish informed members that he spoke with Wetlands people and told them we might possibly want to reclaim some land. They will be coming to Franklin on Wednesday, July 8, 2009, and members are invited to participate. He stated he is not yet sure of the time as they need to work around their schedules, but he will let Polly know and she will inform members.

They will be able to tell us if there are permanent wetlands. He stated that Alan Quakenbush who handles Franklin County will be here. He further informed members that should we want to build a pathway, it can be done through wetlands as long as it is raised (for example on piers), but they will give us a better idea when they are here.

They stated that should we want to put in a parking area, as long as it is less than one acre, it would not require approval from ANR.

SUGGESTED LAND USE: Sue questioned the section of the last minutes which shows suggested uses for the property. Polly informed her these are not only the result of things discussed at last meeting, but suggestions that have been made by town residents and/or suggested at other meetings, etc.

Sue noted there was \$1,500 set aside in the 2008 budget for test pits and she asked if that money is still there. She was told it was not carried over. Brenda Wright volunteered to do the test pits and Justin contacted Ruggiano Engineering who agreed to do soil tests.

Sue stated that one suggestion was a walking path and she stated she has been using the walking path by the school and it is really nice and quiet with no traffic, etc. Polly noted that the walking path was suggested with residents of the Homestead/Carriage House in mind. Sue noted that the path by the school would probably not be suitable for them. Johanna noted that a walking path could be incorporated into almost any plan.

Johanna asked how much money is available for this project and was told there are no funds available. One of the things the Selectboard has asked is that the committee investigate possible funding sources/grants that might be out there. They want the committee to come up with ideas and how it can be funded. Hugh noted that it certainly would be a question to ask Catherine Dimitruk. Kim noted that for most grants, they ask for matching funds which can be up to 80 percent of the cost of the project. Polly noted that matching funds can also be in the form of in-kind services. If we can get people to volunteer/donate we basically would have the town's portion of the project funded.

Discussion was held on the present condition of sidewalks along lower main street by the churches and town hall. It was noted that Enosburg's were completed through a grant. Sue noted that when if the study is done like the Grand Isle study, they look at the whole community - residents, needs, land, etc.

Discussion was held on sending a questionnaire out to residents for input as to what they would like. It was suggested it could be placed on the website, town clerk's office and the store. Sue noted that tax bills would be going out in August and it could be included with them to ensure that every resident gets to have input. It was felt they may come up with some pretty good ideas. It was decided that this matter would wait until after Catherine Dimitruk comes up.

Johanna noted that she recently came through Montgomery and their recreation area is being

fully utilized. It was noted that it would be a waste to duplicate things which are already available in town (for example, the ball fields behind the school).

Hugh suggested some winter snowmobile events. He stated he also had a request from one resident for a tennis court, however, with preparation of the land, drainage, grading, sub-grading, etc., it is estimated it would cost about \$50,000 to build. He stated a tennis court could be flooded for hockey during the winter. Hugh stated we have the right people coming and we need to let them know that we are looking for sources of funding. Hugh further noted that before any grants are applied for, we would have to come up with a complete plan for the project. He stated that along that line, he happened to speak with Peter Cross of Cross Consulting and asked how much it would cost for a preliminary site plan and he stated it could be done for between \$1,000 and \$1,500. This would be a GPS type survey and include any contours, etc. Sue stated she believes that is included in the study like the one done in Grand Isle.

Kim questioned the cost of that study and Polly stated that to the best of her knowledge, it is done at no cost to us other than our regular dues to Northwest Regional Planning.

Barbara stated it would be nice if a piece of the land could be left undeveloped so horse carriage and sleigh rides could be given to the residents of the Homestead/Carriage House. She stated they have given carriage rides through the town and now have a sleigh which was designed for easy entry for older people and they would like to be able to share it with these people. Polly noted that the residents really enjoy the carriage rides and that might be one idea to be considered.

MEMBERS:

Polly advised that Mike Lawyer wants to be part of this committee, although he could not attend tonight as they are setting up for the barbecue. He has suggested that before we start we might want to consider coming up with a capital plan for the town.

Hugh noted that he spoke with Maureen Sodaro who stated she is no longer interested in serving on this committee. Polly will remove her from the mailing matrix.

TOWN PROPERTY:

Bob pointed out that one of the first things that needs to be done is getting a definite location for the town sand pile. Kim noted that to the north there is a spot that would be perfect as it dips down and hasn't been hayed in years.

Discussion was held on mowing of the land. Committee feels there are people who might be willing to hay the land and fertilize it as well. Kim questioned the quality of the hay. Members

asked who determined who would cut the hay. Polly stated that she thought it just hadn't been cut and someone offered to do it and was given permission. Selling the hay might be one means of raising some money.

Polly asked if there was anything else to be discussed and there was nothing. The next meeting will be July 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. with Catherine Dimitruk and Connie Burns in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June 30, 2009

Barbara M. Varin