

Select Board Members
 Peter Hood, Chair
 Mary Just Skinner,
Vice Chair
 William Callnan
 Steve Martin
 Liz Scharf

MIDDLESEX SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, May 12, 2015
5:00 PM
Middlesex Town Clerk's Office
5 Church Street
Middlesex, Vermont 05602
(802) 223-5915

MINUTES

Present: Chair Peter Hood, Members Bill Callnan, Steve Martin, Liz Scharf and Vice Chair Mary Skinner by speaker phone. Also, Carl Dupont, MVFD Chief Doug Hanson, President Jeff Koonz; Town Forest Liaison Bill Rossmassler; Bryan Redmond, Listers Dick Alderman and Eric Young; Dejung Gewissler, Charlie Merriman and Select Board Assistant Sarah Merriman

Call to Order/Welcoming of Guests/Agenda Amendments

Peter called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. The agenda was amended to continue discussion about offering Rich Lewis a contract for town-wide reappraisal and Dejung Gewissler's request that the town administer a VTRANS grant to improve drainage on East Culver Drive.

Colby/DuPont request to Discontinue Part of TH34

In response to an April 17, 2015, letter from Jim Colby, Carl Dupont and a guardian for Phoebe Dupont asking the town to discontinue a portion of what was formerly known as TH34 which ran from the southeast corner of Charles Dupont's one-acre life estate southward to I-89, the Board addressed whether this met the definition of an Unidentifiable Corridor per 19 V.S.A. §302 (6) (A) which would automatically discontinue the road on July 1, 2015 per 19 V.S.A. §302 (6) (G). The board found that (i) TH 34 was once laid out as Middlesex Highway, (ii) did not appear on the town highway map as of July 1, 2010 (and has not appeared on any town highway map since 1959) and (iv) was not a legal trail. The question was whether it was "otherwise clearly observable by physical evidence of their use as a highway or trail" (iii). After inspecting the remnants of TH34, Steve and Peter agreed it was not observable as a highway or trail. Therefore, the Board decided it was not necessary to proceed with the process of throwing up the road as it would automatically become defunct on July 1. Peter requested that the minutes of this meeting be noted on an index of Jim Colby's property and be included in the Historical Society's Ancient Road File on TH34.

Middlesex Fire Department Updates

Referring to Paul Cerminara's resignation letter, Jeff said two people on the fire department "with agendas" had resigned so morale was improving. The MVFD was down to ten members and has been actively recruiting new volunteers at Town Meeting, an annual summer picnic, and by coordinating with the Town Bandstand Committee which is in talks to hold rained-out concerts at the Welch Park Fire Station. Jeff said people don't want to go through the training and mandatory business meetings and that stipends do not entice new members.

Peter raised the question of whether other towns in the Capital West system would be loath to respond to Middlesex if it can't respond to fires in other towns due to lack of staffing. Doug said that would never happen as long as the town pays for Capital West dispatching. Jeff said the FAST squad has a 95% response rate. Bill said the board wanted to support the MVFD any way possible. Doug and Jeff had to leave for an emergency call.

Using the Shady Rill Fire Station for a May 30, 2015 Car Wash

The Board considered Martin Kemple's request to use the area outside the Shady Rill Fire Station for a Rumney fundraiser/car wash on the same day as the school fair. The Board agreed with the road foreman's assessment that the area right by the town shed with its heavy equipment, fuel and scrap metal was not safe for young children. The Board said the car wash could be held by the Shady Rill Fire Station provided that they didn't block the doors in case a fire truck had to leave, hooked a hose to the Town Shed since there was no water at the fire station and received permission from the MVFD.

Middlesex Town Field Updates

Since Recreation Committee Chair Jason Merrill could not attend, Sarah relayed his updates, including the following: bore holes revealed only boulders, no ledge below the soccer field and the playing fields could be used by Rumney School as long as they stayed off the baseball area until the season ended in June.

Town Forest Update: Steed Property

Bill Rossmassler said the Conservation Commission was interested in acquiring all or part of Cynthia Steed's property which abuts the Town Forest. He told the board that she wants to retain nine acres and sell 30 acres to the town for perhaps \$30,000 which might be doable since there is already \$22,400 in the Conservation Fund. The issue was whether she was willing to grant the town access around her camp once she sold. Peter said his concern was public access. He didn't want people to have to seek Cynthia's permission whenever they crossed her land. Bill Callnan said he would consider this because of the low price and that Steed's property would provide access to the Town Forest.

The problem would be meeting the final price point, whatever that might be, since the current Conservation Fund balance was not sufficient. Mary suggested a Kickstarter campaign on Front Porch Forum. Bill said one idea was to purchase the entire 39-acre parcel and grant a life estate to Cynthia and her son on at least a portion.

Bill said he would talk with Zoning Administrator Cindy Carlson about what would be required to potentially subdivide the property.

The Board encouraged Bill and the Conservation Committee to continue exploring a possible purchase.

Milford Leonard Update

Liz, the Board's designee to the Milford Leonard Scholarship Committee, said she and Rumney School Board Member Julie Moore decided to award \$500 to Austin Weed to attend VTC and \$300 to Kallel Picard to attend the North Branch Nature Center summer camp. There were only two applicants.

Rich Lewis's Response to \$75/parcel Reappraisal Contract

Dick said appraiser Rich Lewis was willing to agree to appraise all 900 parcels in town for the Board's request of \$75/parcel, but he wasn't happy about it. Dick encouraged the Board to revert to Rich's initial offer of \$80. Steve noted Rich approached

the town and was fitting the appraisals into his schedule of two years. Therefore the Board affirmed the \$75 rate and agreed to vote on the contract at its May 26, 2015 regularly scheduled meeting.

VTRANS Grant for Drainage on East Culver Drive

Dejung Gewissler of East Culver Drive asked the Board to administer a VTRANS Vermont Better Backroads Grant that would award \$9,940 to a group of neighbors along East Culver Drive so they could correct failing culverts and abate erosion. The deadline for the application was Friday, May 15, 2015, and Gewissler said the group, which just discovered the grant, could not form a non-profit association in time. Therefore, he was approaching the Select Board at the last minute.

Dejung spoke to Road Foreman Paul Cerminara who said the town could offer 18 truckloads of unwanted fill as a possible “matching grant” worth \$8,514 and that the total project would cost \$18,454 in total.

Bill questioned using a town-administered grant to improve private driveways. Dejung said no town money would be involved, any homeowner in Middlesex could apply and the project would benefit Culver Hill Road and neighbors along it.

Since the item was actionable and had not been warned, the Board agreed to hold a Special Meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Town Clerk’s Office at 9:30 a.m., Friday, May 15, to vote on the matter. Liz recused herself from the vote because she lives on East Culver Drive.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Mary left the meeting.
- **MOTION: Steve moved and Bill seconded approving the April 28, 2015 Select Board minutes. The motion passed.**
- All Orders were signed.
- The Board reviewed a May 11, 2015 letter from Tom Anderson of VTAOT awarding Middlesex a 2016 paving grant.
- Doug Lombard’s letter of resignation from the Zoning Board of Adjustment was read into the record. The Board said the opening should be posted in Front Porch Forum and the Times Argus.

Peter adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Merriman, Select Board Assistant

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