

Meeting Notes:

Location: Stockbridge Town Office – December 19th, 2018 (7:00 pm – 8:30 pm)

Attendees:

Bill Edgerton

Marilyn Edgerton

Beth Dawley

Chris Lillie

Matthew Lillie

Joanne Green Mills

Pam Lyman

Chuck Lyman

Bow Thayer

Janie Feinberg

Christian Pelletier – White River Partnership

Mary Russ – White River Partnership

1. White River Partnership (Mary Russ) Presentation

- a. FEMA Buyout Program - ~19 post-Irene buyout locations in Stockbridge funded through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) including the former Gaysville Campground property:
 - i. Town owns former Gaysville Campground property
 - ii. Permanent deed restrictions guide future use
 - iii. FEMA and Vermont Emergency Management provide oversight
 1. **Always** FEMA review of plans for property
 2. **THERE WILL BE NO FEMA MONEY FOR ANY DAMAGE ON PROPERTY FROM FUTURE STORMS**
 - iv. There was no cost to town in the “buyout” process
- b. FEMA Allowable/Non Allowable Uses
 - i. Allowed uses include Picnic Tables, non-walled small foundation buildings, signs, bike paths, packed gravel trails, and more
 - ii. Non-allowed uses include walled building (except bathrooms), fences, paved areas, and more
 - iii. Full list of allowable and non-allowable uses can be found at this link (pages 13-15): https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1424983165449-38f5dfc69c0bd4ea8a161e8bb7b79553/HMA_Addendum_022715_508.pdf

2. The Property

- a. Former Gaysville Campground is ~20 acres; 3 other properties occupy the floodplain downstream of the Gaysville Bridge (old store property, Lyman property along Rte 107, and Hull property at downstream end of campground property)
- b. Hull Property: 9 acres – would like to donate to town. Selectboard has been notified. If donated, the parcel can be included in plans for the campground site improvements
 - i. Hull property protected by a River Corridor Easement held by state of Vermont and Vermont River Conservancy
 - ii. River Corridor Easement means that property owner has sold their rights to develop the property (temporary structures without foundations are allowable in some circumstances), gravel mine the river and/or actively manage the channel (no riprap etc.), and cut native vegetation within a 50-foot riparian buffer from the “top of bank” (Ordinary High Water Mark)

3. Funding Opportunities

- a. Post-Irene recovery funds are no longer available for improvements to buyout properties
- b. Potential River Corridor Easement on campground property valued at \$25,000
 - i. River Corridor Easement would mean that the property is now subject to the same restrictions as Hull property **AS WELL AS** the FEMA allowable and non-allowable uses.
 - ii. \$25,000 could be used to fund improvements on buyout site (subject to Selectboard approval)
- c. Other funding options:
 - i. Local community fundraising efforts
 - ii. Local and regional grants – White River Partnership can help raise funds for on-the-ground site improvements

4. Permits/Approvals

- a. All plans will require FEMA approval before any work can happen
- b. Certain activities may require state permit – particularly any activity below Ordinary High Water Mark
- c. Addition of materials below the Ordinary High Water Mark will likely trigger Army Corps of Engineers permit
- d. Plans can be created to avoid all permits and will only be subject to FEMA review
- e. Work on property cannot start until plan is submitted for FEMA review
 - i. Plan do not need to be completed by an engineer, but must be detailed enough for FEMA to understand what will be constructed
- f. Work on property can be done by contractors and heavy machinery (likely involving permits) but also could be done as a community effort

List of site improvement ideas:

- 1) Clean Up Site – remove downed trees, thorny brush, and trash
- 2) Create Pavilion – particularly one that can function as a concert venue
- 3) Create 1-2 River Access trails
 - a. Consider making 1 access trail accessible for strollers, wheel chairs, etc
 - b. Consider making 1 access trail accessible for kayaks, canoes, fishing, etc
- 4) Walking Paths – both for recreation and for “peaceful” reflection
- 5) Parking Lot – would prefer parking lot to be visible from road to discourage illegal activity
- 6) Beach Area – established beach area for recreation and swimming

- 7) Playground for children
- 8) Horse Shoe Pits, Volleyball Courts, open field for recreation
- 9) Picnic tables and BBQ grills
- 10) Food Truck – idea of creating an entrance to the park that features a food truck in times of peak usage
- 11) Donation Box and Signage
- 12) Rentable Area
 - a. Used for family outings
 - b. Bigger events and concerns
 - c. Mowed area (ball field)
 - d. Used for school events
- 13) Gate – the ability to limit access to site at desired times.
- 14) Dog-friendly trails
- 15) Port-O-Potties with enclosures instead of permanent restroom facility
- 16) River-accessible primitive campsite (maybe on Hull property)

Big No's:

- 1) Noise/fireworks (fireworks may be allowable for special occasions)
- 2) No Motorized Vehicles (dirt bikes)
- 3) Camping (on a constant basis)

Questions/Concerns:

Q: Should we be encouraging use or discouraging use? Discussion revolved around the idea that this spot may become popular in the peak of summer. How many cars and people should site accommodate?

Q: Can solar panels be used to power any structure or pavilion that is placed on the property?

Q: Will Act 250 permits be required for any of the desired plans for this site?

Q: Are there any historical concerns at this location – anything that needs to be protected for posterity?

Q: Do we want a manicured park or a more natural looking park?

Potential Sites to Model Park After:

- 1) 3 parks in Royalton – Gilman River Access, Fox Stand Access (VT Fish & Wildlife Location), and Royalton Hill Picnic Area
- 2) Texas Falls
- 3) Water Street – Northfield

Next steps:

1. Mid-January meeting to finalize site improvement list and accompanying map
2. Share list/map with Selectboard for review/approval
3. Share list/map with community members at March town meeting