

Gaysville FEMA Buyout Meeting II – Minutes

January 15, 2019

Stockbridge Town Office

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Introductions: Attendees

Beth Dawley	Janie Feinberg
Marc Scott	Bill Edgerton
Pam Lyman	Marilyn Edgerton
Chuck Lyman	Chad Merriss
Joanne Green Mills	Matt Lille
Chris Lillie	Bow Thayer
Dave Walls	Todd T
Alice Walls	

Mary Russ – White River Partnership
Christian Pelletier – White River Partnership

Review of Property Map and Floodway



Figure 1: Floodway shown in Red Lines, Floodplain shown in red shading

- a. Restrictions to Floodway: **No increase in elevation**
- b. Parking lots possible – would need engineer to develop parking
- c. Pavilion would NOT be allowed in floodway
 - i. There is area outside of floodway that pavilion can be placed.
- d. All other activities (trails, river access, parking (if designed by engineer)) can be implemented in floodway

Review of Approved Activities:

Meeting attendees voted Yes and No for potential activities – votes were not tallied but group consensus was reached for each item. **Green** Items were approved; **red** items were not.

- 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**
- 9) Open field for recreation
- 10) Picnic tables and BBQ grills – primitive fire ring, benches (natural looking)
- 11) **Food Truck – idea of creating an entrance to the park that features a food truck in times of peak usage**
- 12) Donation Box and Signage
- 13) Rentable Area – **Dependent on Act 250 questions**
 - a. Used for family outings
 - b. Bigger events possible
 - c. Mowed area
 - d. Used for school events
- 14) Gate – the ability to limit access to site at desired times.
- 15) Dog-friendly trails
- 16) Port-O-Potties with enclosures instead of permanent restroom facility
- 17) *****River-accessible primitive campsite (maybe on Hull property) – agreed on not using the property as a camp site but need to determine if there is still an interest in providing a few primitive camping areas (could be used for school trips, etc)**
- 18) **Noise/fireworks (fireworks may be allowable for special occasions)**
- 19) **No Motorized Vehicles (dirt bikes)**
- 20) **Camping (on a constant basis)**

Permits/Approvals Required

- A. **FEMA** – all plans for buyout park will have to be reviewed by FEMA.
- B. **Stream Alteration Permit** – only required for actions below the ordinary high water mark. Could be applicable for certain planned items such as access into the river. Likely that the project can be designed to avoid this permit.
- C. **Army Corps of Engineers Permit** – required for release of fill/sediment into water sources. Will likely not be required for this project unless adding or removing material below ordinary high water mark.

River Corridor Easement Consideration

- A. Estimated Easement Value: \$25,000
 - i. 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)
- B. With River Corridor Easement, the pavilion may have to be built on skids
- C. Money from easement can be used to develop the area, and can also be used as a “match” to leverage additional grant funding.

Act 250 Questions

- A. Will any of the approved activities trigger Act 250 permit?
 - a. Main concern with renting out the property- will the exchange of money to use the property/pavilion trigger the Act 250 permit???
- B. White River partnership is following up to answer all Act 250 questions, we will send out an e-mail update when we have additional information.

Development of “Friends of (Name of Property)” Group

- A. Need to explore forming a group, possible a non-profit that is in charge of stewarding the location. Can be in charge of scheduling events, cleaning up property, organizing volunteers, etc.

Naming of the site – potential naming opportunities:

- A. Students from local schools suggest and vote on name
- B. Consult with historical societies and longtime residents to find out if there are any historic names related to the site
- C. Involve entire town in naming the site – possibly at Town Meeting.
- D. Name should not include “Campground”

ATV Trail

- A. Chuck Lyman proposed an ATV Trail that follows (roughly) the path below:



- B. Path would be used to create a connection between existing ATV trails
- C. Path would not be for motor cycle and dirt bike use
- D. VASA (Vermont ATV Sportsmen's Association) would provide signage for the trails
- E. Possibility of involving VASA (Chuck is Vice President) in funding or assistance in park development
- F. Group Consensus that this type of trail/activity would be *allowable* to location.

Other Site Considerations:

- A. Need to remove Knotweed from site
 - a. Will require professional treatment with herbicides. Knotweed cannot be removed by digging out/goats/etc.
- B. Parking Considerations
 - a. 6 Spots? 10 spots?
 - b. Potential for two parking lots – one closer to the road that is visible from 107. One closer to the river to facilitate access down to the river for all users.
 - c. Instead of two parking lots – potential for an access road that can be used as a drop off closer to the river.
 - d. Should explore small engineering grant for development of parking
- C. Liability Waiver:
 - a. Likely that site will not need additional insurance/liability waiver if the town already has locations covered. White River Partnership is following up with Royalton to fully answer this question.
- D. Operation and Maintenance Costs
 - a. How will money be appropriated and raised for O&M
 - b. What are the yearly costs for O&M. White River Partnership is following up with Royalton to understand the cost of maintaining their FEMA buyout parks (which include mowing and Port – o – potties)
 - c. Cost associated with locking the property each night

Next Steps

- A. Reserve a spot to present at Town Meeting
 - a. Appears to be two mechanisms to get onto Town Meeting agenda – need to explore best option in coming weeks
- B. Present preliminary plans to select board on **February 7, 2019**.
- C. Create initial budget to have a reasonable sense of price and funding sources for town meeting
- D. Create finalized map/poster to be used at town meeting

Preliminary Drawing – Bow created an initial plan similar to what will be presented at Town Meeting. Will likely need one more iteration.

