

WEST WINDSOR SELECTBOARD

Draft Minutes
October 24, 2013

Present: Glenn Seward, Tom Kenyon, Bruce Boedtger, Dave Halpert, Ken Parrot, Cathy Boedtger, Jim Lyall, Cathy Archibald, Martha Harrison

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Glenn Seward called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.
- 2) Public Comment – None
- 3) EC Fiber discussion – Dave Halpert said the October 1st closing didn't go well; a total of \$62,500 is invested in the West Windsor project so far. Dave presented a revised 8.3 mile route map that would be less expensive to build and has enough potential subscribers to pay the debt service on the municipal portion of the line. One of the major changes is a connection to Sovernet near the talc plant rather than a connection to FairPoint in Reading. Dave said between \$45,000 and \$50,000 is still needed for the project. Dave said another public information meeting is planned for November 5th at 7:00 PM, and another investment closing is planned for December 1st. Dave suggested that the town have a \$10,000 cushion available to cover contingencies on the municipal portion of the line. Glenn asked Dave to estimate when the investment from the town would be needed and said the Selectboard will discuss budgeting \$10,000 for contingencies. Tom asked about the Happy Canyon spur. Dave said the Happy Canyon spur is a mile and a half long and there aren't enough investors on the route to cover the cost. Dave said it costs between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per mile to build the network, plus \$1,000 per drop to connect customers.
- 4) Discuss ATV meeting – Glenn asked if there was a sign-up sheet at the October 17th ATV meeting. Cathy Boedtger said she has a sign-up sheet. Glenn said it appeared to him that half of the people at the meeting were from outside West Windsor. Glenn said, personally, he is interested in the opinion of West Windsor residents. Bruce agreed that he would like the opinion of local tax payers. Bruce said he is concerned that everyone was not aware of the meeting. Bruce said he would like to be sure that everyone who wants to has had the opportunity to speak. Bruce said the verbal feedback he has gotten, the emails and the responses generated from STAB's website are completely different from the tone at the meeting. Bruce asked how the Selectboard should weigh the different opinions. Tom said he thought the Selectboard was going to wait for a recommendation from the Town Forest Committee (TFC). Glenn said the fact that the Selectboard has received information as it comes in doesn't preclude the TFC from making a recommendation. Jim Lyall said it's difficult for people to speak against something at a public meeting where the majority opinion is positive. Jim said he thinks the opinions of trail users should be considered in light of the marketing project that the town has been working on. Cathy Boedtger agreed with Jim and said she thinks the meeting was "stacked" in favor of ATV use and was intimidating for opponents of ATV use. Cathy was concerned that this issue is dividing the community. Cathy suggested mailing an annual newsletter with information about important issues and the address of the town's website. Cathy said voting at the meeting was inappropriate. To be fair, Cathy said, a survey should be mailed to each household and each household should have one vote. Martha said the Planning Commission mailed their recreation survey, which included ATV use, to everyone on the Grand List and/or the voter registration list. Martha said she can't recall the exact ratio but she thinks negative opinions outweighed positive

opinions by about 3 to 1. Bruce said he thinks that is the appropriate way to gather information. Bruce said he will not let his personal opinion override what the voters want but he wants to be sure that he has an accurate idea of public opinion. Bruce said he doesn't think the public forum was used to gather information from the public; it was used to present a position and that's not what it was for. Glenn said the forum has to be considered as one piece of information along with other information such as the Planning Commission's survey. Glenn agreed that, in a perfect world, there should be a newsletter, a blog, and a list serve, but everyone in this room is maxed out. Bruce said somehow we have to reach out to more people. Cathy suggested that each committee volunteer one member to help with a newsletter mailing to introduce the tax base to the fact that we have a website and they can subscribe to get updates. Bruce asked Jim if someone is going to present an opinion on behalf of STAB. Jim said he will look into that. Tom asked if the opinion of someone who lives on Blood Hill should have the same weight as the opinion of someone who lives on Coaching Lane. Tom said he thinks the TFC should investigate the concerns raised (noise, erosion, etc.) and present the facts. Glenn said he doesn't think the Selectboard should make a decision until the "experts" (e.g. from Fish & Wildlife) have weighed in. Bruce said when we submit an Act 250 application it is presumed that we're asking for it because we want it so we should gather the information on air pollution, erosion, etc. before we submit an application. Before we spend the time and money to gather that information, Bruce said, we need to decide whether public opinion would support the application for an Act 250 amendment. Cathy said the TFC asked Tii McLane for an opinion, which they will discuss at their next meeting, and they can discuss hiring noise and erosion consultants as well. Tom said he would like a written report from the TFC. Bruce asked if the TFC's report is going to include feedback from STAB and others or if it's just going to include the public forums and the survey. On a related note, Jim asked if the trail system can be kept open until November 9th when youth hunting begins. The Selectboard said the system will have to be closed in accordance with the Act 250 permit. Martha asked Jim about his interest in borrowing a trail counter from the regional planning commission and his thoughts on the best time and place to install it.

- 5) Compliance Certification form: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – **Glenn moved to sign the compliance certification form for the Brook Road box culvert project. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 6) Request for final highway access approval: Silver Hill Farm LLC (Medinger) – Glenn said, according to the highway foreman, the culvert is too deep, which causes it to fill with roadside material, and the approach to the road is too steep, which results in drainage onto the town highway and doesn't meet B-71 standards. **Glenn moved to deny final approval. Bruce seconded the motion.** Tom said he agrees with the highway foreman and is also concerned about snow being plowed onto the road. Glenn said he thinks addressing the first two issues will address the snow plowing issue as well. **Glenn called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.** Glenn suggested that Karl Hansen meet with Mike Spackman to discuss what needs to be done.
- 7) Discuss mitigation grant funding – Glenn suggested applying for funding for emergency access to the resort onto Mountainside Drive through Snowdance's right-of-way, which appears to be eligible. Glenn said replacing the culverts on the Jewett-John Myers-Bible Hill-Harrington watershed would not be eligible because previous damage costs do not equal or exceed the projected cost of the project. Glenn said he also inquired about the Brownsville-

Hartland Road slide area, which may be eligible. The final project, which has some merit, Glenn said, is the buyout of the Hale mobile home on Brook Road. Glenn said FEMA is no longer requiring a cost-benefit analysis for buyouts but the town would probably have to fund 25% of the project, or between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Martha said, in the past, there were grants available to cover the town's portion of the costs but it's not clear whether those grants will be available this time. Tom suggested inquiring whether the Crocker Wildlife Sanctuary might be interested in acquiring the property. The deadline for applications is November 18th. Tom noted that Jeff Hale's application to replace his bridge was denied so his only recourse is to apply for a structure that's in compliance. Martha noted that a compliant bridge would probably cost more than the property is worth. The Selectboard agreed to contact the owner of the Wildlife Sanctuary. Regarding the emergency access to the resort, Glenn said Snowdance is willing to consider giving the right-of-way to the town since FEMA will not fund a project on private property. Bruce asked if acquiring the ROW obligates the town to upgrade the road to Class 3 standards. Glenn said no; not that he's aware of. Tom said it would be nice if the emergency access were in place prior to the state closing Route 44 to replace Bridge #7.

- 8) Discuss Grand List/Schedule budget discussion – Tom said the 2013 municipal tax rate was 40 cents, which included 11 cents for the town and 18 cents for the highway. Tom suggested taking the 29 cents and multiplying it by the Grand List to see how many dollars there are. Glenn suggested that the Selectboard identify areas where expenditures can be postponed.
- 9) Sign Town Clerk's orders – **Tom moved to sign the Town Clerk's orders. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 10) Other Business – Sheddsville: Tom said we need to consider what we're going to do about the Sheddsville wall and address labor costs because we're running out of money in the Sheddsville Fund. Brook Road: Tom said he heard that there's going to be a town vote in Windsor to decide what to do about their section of Brook Road. Rice Tree: Tom said he'd like to schedule Rice Tree to come for a couple of days to take down dead trees on Brownsville-Hartland Road and Brook Road. Access to talc plant property from Reading: Tom asked if any progress has been made. Glenn said he has not heard back from Bob Allen. Ski area auction: Bruce asked if there is an auction on November 4th. Glenn said yes. After the auction, Glenn said, there is a 30-day confirmation period that allows the state to determine whether the auction was conducted according to statute.
- 11) Adjourn – **Glenn moved to adjourn at 9:35 AM. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison