

**TOWN OF GREENSBORO
CONSERVATION COMMISSION (GCC)**

Meeting at Greensboro Free Library, Wednesday, December 15, 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Clive Gray (clerk), Erika Karp, Aaron Kromash, Mark McGrath, Elizabeth Metraux (chair)

VLT Black Hills Project: Mark described this project, for which a folder of maps and photographs was circulated to attendees. Mark reported that the Vermont Land Trust is negotiating purchase of a conservation easement (CE) on 1,685 largely wooded acres that include the 189-acre former Wallace Stegner property in North Greensboro, Glover's Black Hills, and the north slope of Paddock Hill, whose south slope forms part of the Nature Conservancy's Long Pond Preserve. There are no structures on the property. A Canadian, Lou Irwin, purchased the Greensboro acreage from Page Stegner and the Glover portion from John Meyer, incorporating it as Black Hills Forest Resources Inc.

Irwin, who passed away in 2009, wanted to protect the property from development and ensure its management under sustainable forestry. To that end he hired Rich ("Carbo") Carbonetti, a forester known to many in Greensboro, and effectively bequeathed the property to Carbo. Carbo approached the GLT vice-chair to seek advice and help in raising funds to purchase a CE from him. The GLT chair approached the Vermont Land Trust. The VLT found the property attractive, and is currently negotiating with Carbo.

Wherever the agreed price ends up, VLT will have to raise most of it from foundations, the VHCB, and/or other major funders. At the same time part of the financing must be raised from the two communities affected, Glover and Greensboro. We hope the VLT has contacts in Glover who can be tapped, as we don't. A ballpark estimate of the amount to be raised locally is \$25-30,000.

Mark stated that the project is of great importance to Greensboro, even if only 11% of the acreage is in our town. The property abuts 42% of Greensboro's border with Glover. Two miles of the property's border abut 1,100 acres of conserved land in Greensboro (VLT and The Nature Conservancy). Together the parcels would add up to 4½ square miles of contiguous conserved land. The Black Hills are a prominent feature in North Greensboro landscapes (Mark pointed to photos).

On December 10 the GLT mounted a three-trustee inspection team to visit the property and report to the GLT Board. Mark enlisted Carbo to show the team around. GLT participants were Mark, Clive, and Stephanie Herrick (Mark pointed to nine photos taken by the team). The team prepared a favorable report on the project, to be discussed at the GLT's January 8 board meeting.

After consulting the GLT Executive Committee, Clive had invited pledges to the project from one hundred previous donors to the GLT and Board/Advisory Committee members who had yet to donate in 2010. Thus far \$3,100 in pledges had been received. Mark and Clive indicated their intent to propose to the GLT that it commit to raising \$20,000, including individual pledges and an appropriation from the GLT's General Fund. They moved that the GCC recommend to the Selectboard that it appropriate \$5,000

out of the Greensboro Conservation Fund, which now totals \$10,000, comprising annual appropriations by Town Meeting.

The group discussed the project, asking questions about hunting rights and public access. Mark noted that hunting is currently restricted to a club consisting of about 130 members, many of whom are Greensboro residents. Annual dues are only \$10. Rod Kerr is president of the club. It is likely that hunting rights will continue to be restricted to club members. Carbo is agreeable to granting nonmotorized public access to the property outside the hunting season, but some qualifications to this are currently under discussion between him and the VLT.

The motion was put to a vote, and adopted unanimously. A recommendation and supporting documentation will be presented to the next Selectboard meeting.

Membership of GCC. It was noted that there are two or three open slots on the Commission, whose members are appointed by the Selectboard. Members agreed to canvass for candidates. Galen Fisher and Matt and Stacey Macallister were mentioned as possibilities.

Chairmanship. Elizabeth expressed a desire to hand over the GCC chair. It was agreed she would continue in an interim capacity until someone could be found to assume the post.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted _____ December 16, 2010
Clive S. Gray

Addresses:

Chair: Elizabeth Metraux, Craftsbury Road, Greensboro, VT 05841
Email: elizabethmetraux@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Erika Karp, Shadow Lake Rd, ...
Email: erikalakeview@vtlink.net

Clerk: Clive Gray, 1131 Craftsbury Rd., Greensboro, VT 05841
Email: clivegrayvt@gmail.com

Members:

Phil Gray, 1109 Craftsbury Rd., Greensboro, VT 05841
Email: grayp@wirelessvt.net

Mark McGrath, Town Highway #8, Greensboro Bend, VT 05842
Email: mmcgrath@hughes.net

David Metraux, Craftsbury Road, Greensboro, VT 05841
Email: david@davidmetraux.com

For the information of members, following are the functions ascribed to conservation commissions by the relevant Vermont statute (24 V.S.A. § 4505):

“Any conservation commission created under this chapter may:

- (1) make an inventory and conduct continuing studies of the natural resources of the municipality including but not limited to:
 - (A) air, surface and ground waters, and pollution thereof;
 - (B) soils and their capabilities;
 - (C) mineral and other earth resources;
 - (D) streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and floodplains;
 - (E) unique or fragile biologic sites;
 - (F) scenic and recreational resources;
 - (G) plant and animal life, especially the rare and endangered species;
 - (H) prime agricultural and forest land, and other open lands;
- (2) make and maintain an inventory of lands within the municipality which have historic, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural, or archaeological values in which the public has an interest;
- (3) recommend to the legislative body of the municipality the purchase or the receipt of gifts of land or rights thereto, or other property, for the purposes of this chapter;
- (4) receive appropriations for operating expenses including clerical help by appropriation through the budget of the legislative body;
- (5) receive money, grants or private gifts from any source, for the purposes of this chapter. Grants and gifts received by the trustee of public funds shall be carried in a conservation fund from year to year to be expended only for purposes of this chapter;
- (6) receive gifts of land or other property for the purposes of this chapter, by consent of the legislative body or by the affirmative vote of the municipality;
- (7) administer the lands, properties and other rights which have been acquired by the municipality for the purposes of this chapter;
- (8) assist the local planning commission or zoning board of adjustment or the district environmental commission, by providing advisory environmental evaluations where pertinent to applications made to those bodies, for permits for development;
- (9) cooperate with the local legislative body, planning commission, zoning board of adjustment, road committee or other municipal or private organizations on matters affecting the local environment or the natural resources of the municipality;
- (10) prepare, collect, publish, advertise and distribute relevant books, maps and other documents and maintain communication with similar organizations; and encourage through educational activities the public understanding of local natural resources and conservation needs;
- (11) make a brief annual report to the municipality of its finances and transactions for the year just passed, and its plans and prospects for the ensuing year. (Added 1977, No. 250 (Adj. Sess.), § 1.)”