

La Perle Farm Property Committee Meeting
March 28, 2017
Meeting called to order at 7:05PM

Motion to approve minutes by Ginny Callan.
Second by Bob Morey
Approved

Andy reported on conversations with

- Kathy Beyer at Housing Vermont
- Rick DiAngelis and Craig Peliter at Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
- Eileen Peltier at Downstreet Housing
- Jeffrey Glassberg, a private development consultant.

See attached report on those conversations.

Discussed using Sandy pines revolving loan fund, which may be accessible, and there are criteria for using money from that fund.

Discussed applying for a VHCB feasibility study. Most folks want to put in an application to do the four elements listed in the draft of the application, attached here. Seth to email Zack to get the latest draft of the application, attached here.

Seth to contact Fairmont Farms to see about possibility for additional land adjacent to the parcel for septic. We volunteered Renee Carpenter to talk to Jeff Cantor about what he needs to know to give us a price to do financial planning. Seth to ask Bruce Johnson to contact Crane Associates to update market study. Andy will ask Ryan Case if he would talk to us about innovative wastewater treatment. Seth to ask Steve Connor if he'd come to a meeting to talk with us.

Next meeting date: April 18, 7PM, backup date April 25.

Meeting adjourned 8:15

Notes on research for La Perle Farm Property.

Andy Shapiro December 29, 2016

Phone with Jeff Glassberg, December 17, 2016

Jeff is a development consultant with whom I worked on a project some time ago. I called to see a) what he thought about the project and b) if he might be a consultant for a planning grant. He was very helpful with advice.

1. Town should decide what they want out of this parcel. A big study may not (probably not) be needed at this stage. It's pretty simple, he said: If we want affordable housing – meaning anything below market rate – whether senior or not, we need someone to put in money: you

can't build cheap enough for housing to be affordable. Talk to Housing Vermont and Downstreet Housing and others to see if this project is of interest to them in terms of developing it with public money it. If not, don't pursue affordable housing further. There's a \$\$ gap between cost to build and affordability – affordable housing can't really be done without public money.

2. Another approach is to decide what the Town will put in and what it wants and invite developers to see if anyone bites. For example, Town donates land and builds walks to Village if X units of family and Y units of senior can be built, with resulting rents at \$Z. Or maybe they are condo, at some maximum price. If no one bites, it's not economic and terms need to be shifted.
3. No one will be interested if zoning is not in place. Decide what we want there and change the zoning to fit what we want to see. Shows Town intent and removes an obstacle for development.
4. To get anyone interested must demonstrate need, such as develop a waiting list with folks who indicate they will buy/rent a particular type of unit for \$X.
5. Talk to Housing Vermont, Downstreet.
6. Take a look at how urgent this project is. Save the land for the future as more needs and a clear path to get there emerges?

Phone with Craig Peltier and Rick DiAngelis, VHCB, December 17, 2016

1. Rural development costs high – this is an obstacle. Not necessarily out of the question, but not an easy project
2. Funding competition has gotten intense, with many more projects and much more need than there is funding.
3. Need to have Downstreet and VHCB on board – talk to them first.

Phone with Eileen Peltier, Downstreet Housing re LaPerle Farm land -- December 29, 2016

1. Competition for funds is very intense and likely to get more so in next several years. Projects that have town water and sewer are less costly to build and operate. Projects that are in walking distance to food stores and other needs (in town) are more compelling to funders and make cost of living lower for occupants. Family housing is more appealing to funders these days than senior housing even though there are needs for both. Some appealing story is needed: an example is replacing flood damaged housing in Waterbury.
2. They commissioned a housing study that is about to come out and includes a section on East Montpelier. They will send along when issued.
3. East Montpelier is seen as a good partner – folks wanting more housing to happen, good schools, near Montpelier, good folks thinking hard about best ways for things to happen.
4. Project would be more attractive if Town put resources in, such as land, walking paths to town, integration with village redevelopment/density increase. Could commercial development on Rte 2 that would be part of the Village plan make sense and help pay for development? A child care as part of it might make it more appealing.
5. Maybe think outside the box, like a small mixed age development of very small houses, small in order to lower cost, but not subsidized houses, include daycare that could also serve others and other commercial development to help support development cost. (My own thought outside the box: change zoning so that a single family house can be changed to two apartments – low

cost way to get more housing units in town. Give some kind of preference to 2 bedrooms or more to encourage family housing. No cost to Town; could encourage elders to stay in home by having income stream and lower operating cost.)

6. Suggested looking at Bowen study on housing needs in the state:

<http://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/Housing/H-Research-VTHousingNeedsAssessment.pdf.pdf>

Phone with Kathy Beyer, Housing Vermont, December 29, 2016

1. Private water and septic “give pause” to funders: costly to permit and develop and operate (they have a few private water systems that have ongoing issues.) If serving more than 10 units it’s a “public water supply” with a lot of requirements.
2. Non-age-restricted housing has a broader market – more need for other than elderly housing. What will market support in this location?
3. Maybe the site supports a small development of say 10 units or something like that, but those are hard to finance through affordable channels – too small to support the overhead to get the financing and manage the construction and operation of project.
4. Suggested talking to Eileen Peltier at Downstreet.

LaPerle Farm Committee VHCB Application Grant Draft

Overview:

The town of East Montpelier is exploring the feasibility of using a piece of town-owned property in the village center to create multi-generational housing. This would build on past work done to plan for senior housing in the town, while meeting a broader set of needs such as providing affordable housing, mixed use development, community open space and encouraging interactions in ways that will benefit all living there.

Background:

In September 2015, the town of East Montpelier purchased the Old LaPerle Farm Property, a 48 acre parcel at the eastern boundary of the town’s center. The town formed the Old LaPerle Farm Property Committee and charged it with recommending a use or uses of the property to the select board. The town also put out a call for comments from residents for recommendations for the property’s future use.

This property had been previously considered for senior housing by a local non-profit, the East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative (EMSLI). EMSLI commissioned a survey to establish the need for senior housing in 2008, and has developed plans for a building which would contain 24 units of senior housing. EMSLI also considered proposals to meet the senior housing need with multiple detached

structures, but determined that these options would be too expensive. As part of that work, EMSLI also had the property tested to determine the wastewater treatment capacity of the site.

Feedback from East Montpelier residents both in writing and at the informational meeting prior to the 2016 town meeting identified a desire for the town to use the property both for senior housing and to provide affordable housing and/or additional housing that would attract families with children to the town.

Concurrent with the purchase, the Town of East Montpelier was awarded a village planning grant and has partnered with the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission to develop a village plan. This parcel of property falls partly in the already defined historic village of East Montpelier as well as within the proposed lower village, mixed use boundary. The proposed lower village is one of the projected growth areas focused on by the Planning Commission.

Proposal:

The LaPerle Farm Committee is seeking feasibility funds to determine if and how the project's scope could be expanded from the existing proposals for senior housing to support development of mixed-generational housing. The project would support both the housing needs of younger families and seniors. Interaction between the groups has been shown to be mutually beneficial.

The town has already procured the property, and the LaPerle Farm Committee has conducted additional wastewater treatment capacity testing in the fall of 2016 to determine the total amount of housing that the property can support using conventional septic systems. The Committee is seeking assistance with the following planning elements:

Financial Planning and Evaluation: assist with the development or evaluation of a financing and ownership model for any development of the site. This will include analysis of whether the town should maintain control of the development or if it should be privately owned and developed, with conditions placed of its use as a condition of the property's sale.

Site Design and Land Use Planning: assist with master planning for the site, particularly with respect to expanding the scope of the intended uses to include mixed-generational housing, community uses of the land, and other permitted uses.

Other Septic Suitability Tests: assist with an assessment of the potential to increase the septic capacity using alternative wastewater treatment designs to increase development capacity.

Market Study: determine the current demand for both senior and affordable housing, and market-rate housing (particularly for multi-unit housing).

Review and analyze current available data for senior, multi-generational, and affordable housing, including market-rate housing.

Plan and budget for work to be done.