

Laperle Farm Committee Meeting Minutes, September 16, 2019 (Approved)

Members Present: Ginny Callan, Seth Gardner, Zach Sullivan, Andy Shapiro (arrived at 7:58)

A. Meeting called to order at 7:20 pm

No additions to the agenda

No public comment

No additions to the agenda

Minutes of the February 12, 2019 meeting approved with corrections. Motion: Callan, Second: Sullivan, in favor: Callan, Gardner, Sullivan. Opposed: None.

B, & C. Items B and C (Conversation re: Development Options and Discussion of Fontaine Proposal) were handled together because Marc Fontaine now has a more comprehensive proposal for purchase and use of a significant part of the land.

Seth Gardner reported on an updated proposal from Marc Fontaine regarding use of the land. Initially he had wanted to buy a portion of the northern part of the land, and Bruce Johnson had drawn a potential lot which would provide the land that he was interested in for his current business but which not include the land which has been identified as being suitable for a septic system. The new proposal would be for Fontaine to purchase 30 acres of the land on which he plans to develop a group of tiny houses, most likely as a planned unit development (PUD).

The group was generally supportive of the idea, both because tiny houses could potentially be affordable, and because it would still be a way for the town to sell the portion of the property which it will be unlikely to use for its own purposes as the committee's attempts to build more traditional affordable housing on the site have not succeeded. There was significant concern about the potential regulatory hurdles, however. Because this would likely be a commercial project, there is a real chance that it will need to go through Act 250 review. The property would likely need to be subdivided and developed as a PUD as the zoning regulations do not allow for multiple dwellings to be placed on the same lot. It could likely be developed as a condominium. If more than 9 tiny houses were developed, the water system would be considered a public water supply. None of these issues was deemed to be fatal to the proposal, but they would require sophisticated planning and permitting. Seth Gardner will talk to Marc Fontaine about these concerns to make sure that he understands the potential permitting needed.

The group discussed the logistics of selling part of the property. Bruce Johnson believes that it may be possible to sell a small portion of the land next to the mill to Fontaine without going out to bid, but it is likely that in order to sell a significant portion of the land an open bid process may be needed. The sale will also likely need to go to a town vote: while the Select Board was able to purchase the land without wider approval, it cannot sell town property in the same way.

D. No Other Business

E. Meeting Adjourned at 8:36. Motion: Callan, Second: Sullivan, In favor: All