

**Selectmen's Meeting, Monday, March 7th, 2016 in the Cavendish Town Office
Meeting Room at 5:00 PM.**

Present: Bob Glidden (Chairman), George Timko, Mike Ripley, Wendy Regier, Jill Flinn, Rich Svec (Town Manager), Bruce McEnaney (Assistant to the Town Manager), Jen Leak (Recording Secretary), and citizens as listed on the attached sheet.

1. Call the meeting to order

Bob Glidden, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Review Correspondence

Bob Glidden, Chairman, advised the Select Board there was no correspondence to review.

3. Meet with representatives of Vtrans regarding the Green Mountain Railroad trestle project on Cavendish Gulf Road. This is a follow-up to previous discussions including September 14th, August 10th, 2015, January 11th, 2016 and February 8th, 2016 and will focus on the town's cooperation with the project and the Maintenance Agreement which was discussed at the February 8th meeting. The option of shotcrete and soil nail construction remains as discussed at the January meeting.

Dan Delabruere and Kyle Wells of Vtrans and Aaron Guyette of VHB were present. Dan explained that this project is a safety issue which they must complete this construction season. He reviewed the project history with the Board, including the issues which caused the original, concrete block retaining wall option to be unbuildable. Dan said that the shotcrete and soil nail construction is the only remaining option which provides the needed bank stabilization while also allowing the adjacent brook and town highway to remain open. He added that he had read the minutes from the February Select Board meeting during which the Board discussed, and decided not to sign, the maintenance agreement.

The Board asked whether there was a way to still build the concrete block wall and support it with driven piles. Dan said it was not possible to bring in the big equipment required to drive piles due to the low railroad underpasses on either side of that location.

Rich said that he, Bruce and the Vtrans representatives visited the site earlier that day. While they were there, a freight train went along the tracks so they could observe the urgency of the situation.

Wendy said she would abstain from voting on this issue. She said she did understand Vtrans' concerns, but felt that this project was not in character with the existing structures in that area. She said her job as a Select Board member was to preserve the landscape and character of the Town, and this project was not compatible. George agreed. Dan said part of their constraint was that, since this is a FEMA project, they are unable to make any "improvements" to the project area or they would lose the FEMA funding.

Jill said she was concerned about the safety issues, although she appreciated Wendy and George's concerns. Bob said he was very concerned about the safety issues as well.

George asked if there was another option to support a concrete block wall other than driven pilings. Aaron said there was just not a stable enough foundation in that area to support a block

wall. He said since the shotcrete did not need such a foundation it would be the only realistic option for this site.

Rich asked if train speeds would increase if the bank was stabilized by this project, since it seemed to be a narrow and dangerous area regardless. Dan said current speeds in that area are 10 mph, and he did not see train speeds going above 25 mph. Rich reminded him that there are two at-grade road crossings in that area as well several curves, and he thought that 25 might be too fast. Wendy asked if the trains will run more frequently after this project is finished. Dan said that, since Vtrans owns the tracks but does not operate the railroad, he had no way of knowing future schedules.

Rich reminded the Board that the FEMA funding runs out at the end of this construction season, and that Vtrans needs to put out new bids since the project design has changed. Dan said he would like to know tonight whether the Select Board will sign the agreement.

Wendy asked if vegetation will be cleaned off or allowed to cover the shotcrete. Aaron said they would not clean algae or small plants. Wendy asked if vines could be planted around the shotcrete which might grow over and camouflage it. Dan thought that might violate the shotcrete warranty. Aaron said that large plants would need to be removed. Rich noted that the top of the shotcrete wall would extend right to the rocky ballast of the tracks, so nothing could be planted there. George pointed out that the railroad annually sprays herbicides along the tracks. Dan said the ditch at the bottom also would need to be kept free of vegetation.

Bob Glidden moved/Mike Ripley seconded a motion to sign the Maintenance Agreement regarding the Green Mountain Railroad trestle project on Cavendish Gulf Road. Bob Glidden, Mike Ripley, Jill Flinn and George Timko voted in favor. Wendy Regier voted no.

Bob Glidden moved/Mike Ripley seconded a motion to authorize Rich Svec, Town Manager, to sign the Maintenance Agreement on behalf of the Town. Bob Glidden, Mike Ripley, Jill Flinn and George Timko voted in favor. Wendy Regier abstained.

Kyle thanked the Select Board for meeting with them tonight. Mike Ripley thanked Aaron, Dan and Kyle for looking into other options and working with the Town. Dan invited the Board members to contact him if they have any questions during construction. He said they hoped to be finished before school starts in the fall but admitted it might be cutting it close. Jill asked if trains will still be able to run along those tracks during construction. Dan said there will be some windows where they cannot run but they plan to have the tracks open the rest of the time.

Aaron showed some slides of the site showing the area where the slope is sliding and undermining the railroad ties.

4. Adjourn (anticipated by 5:30 pm)

Mike asked who the young lady was sitting at the Transfer Station over the weekend. Bruce explained that she is a young woman who needs to do some community service hours over the next few weeks. Bruce said they did some work together on Saturday, but he heard that on Sunday she was not working as much. Rich added that he and Bruce talked with Howard about her not using her phone or sitting while she is there. Also, she should not have any friends visiting with her while she is performing this duty.

Jill said several people have talked to her about a comment Wendy made at the pre-town meeting, indicating she was not about to give up her seat on the Board to a younger person and that bothered them. Wendy apologized, saying she meant to encourage younger people to get involved, and that she was not holding onto her Select Board position to keep anyone else out of it.

Mike said that, without any contested races, he didn't see much need for a pre-town meeting anyway, especially given the small turnout at both the pre-town and town meetings. The Board briefly discussed whether changing the day and time of Town meeting might bring more people out.

George Timko moved/Bob Glidden seconded a motion to adjourn at 5:44 p.m. All voted in favor.

Minutes Approved: _____

Date: _____