

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
PUBLIC HEARING**

**TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT GRANT
FEASIBILITY STUDY
SHARED USE PATH**

AND

REGULAR MEETING

August 15, 2011

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Barton, Jr. Bruce Schmidt Doug Ficken

STAFF PRESENT:

Frank Heald Terry Thayne Mark Gauthier
Margot Martell

OTHERS PRESENT:

Anne Gardner (VT Journal) Duncan Love (LPC-TV) Ted Reeves
Ralph Pace Glenn Heitsmith Sharon Bixby
Christian Avard (Rutland Herald)

Call to Order:

1. Chairman Howard Barton called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 pm. He said the purpose of the meeting was to inform the community and hear comments on the proposed Transportation Enhancement Grant Feasibility Study and Shared Use Path.
2. Frank Heald explained that this project was proposed by the Okemo Valley Chamber, Ludlow Bike Path Committee and many other interested parties to create a shared use bike path that would run from the Park-N-Ride up Route 103 to Ranta Road, to Jackson Gore onto the Okemo Road, which would then intersect over to Buttermilk Falls Road.
3. Frank Heald said they would budget up to \$30,000 for a feasibility study with 20% paid in cash or in-kind. Frank reported that there is \$1,600 left in the bike path fund and assuming we move forward, we would commit the \$1,600 and raise other funds. He thought the feasibility study would cost around \$26,000 to \$27,000.
4. Frank Heald said the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Okemo Mountain Resort and the Ludlow Bike Path committee, headed by Sharon Bixby have already expressed their support.
5. Frank Heald explained that the purpose for Transportation Enhancement Grant public hearing was to have one public meeting prior to filing the grant application.
6. Howard Barton asked what happened to the previous bike path plans for the southern section.
7. Frank Heald said they have already studied the southern section and while it would be the nicest option, potential wetlands, emergency services, flood plains and other regulatory concerns would keep the path from moving forward.
8. Christian Avard asked what the southern section entailed.
9. Frank Heald said it would run from BRHS, crossing behind the little league field, by the LEC land, by the Black River, through lands owned by Okemo to East Hill and Fletcher Field. Frank said it would be a spectacular bike and walking path that could have connected to Cavendish and routes south.
10. Ted Reeves said Ludlow's bike path group is still planning to go back to the state and try to bring life back to the southern path. He said while there are regulatory hurdles in the way they plan to talk to the folks at the state level because they feel it would be a spectacular layout.
11. Sharon Bixby said the northern route would be easier to build with less wetland concerns and would connect the Village of Ludlow/Okemo to Buttermilk Falls.
12. Glenn Heitsmith asked if the northern portion travels over highways.
13. Frank Heald said Route 103 to from the Park-N-Ride to Locust Hill Road is wide enough to ride/walk. He said Locust Hill Road is a rural road to Okemo with sufficient width and that Route 103/Okemo Ridge Road could be reconfigured.

14. Sharon Bixby said the section from the fire station to Locust Hill could be a separated path with green space in between the path and road.
15. Doug Ficken said he assumed the Town would own the path and would also have to maintain it. He asked if it was known what the yearly maintenance fees would be.
16. Frank Heald said it would be the Town's responsibility with some falling on the state highway or right-of-way. Frank said until we do a feasibility study much is just speculation.
17. Ted Reeves said we could ask the Town of Springfield how much it costs them for maintenance.
18. Howard Barton commented that Springfield's path was recently re-paved.
19. Ted Reeves said they repaved the path due to the building of the new prison.
20. Glenn Heitsmith said he feel this would be a great asset to the Town of Ludlow for business.
21. Ted Reeves said he was involved in Springfield's bike path and first questioned why they were doing it. He is now surprised at how much use it gets and he uses it. Ted also commented on how much casual use Ludlow's Route 103 gets with bikers, walkers and runners.
22. Howard Barton asked if there were any additional questions or comments.
23. Ralph Pace asked what happened to the old bike path proposal.
24. Sharon Bixby said the state gave up on it and they would like to find out why. Sharon also wanted to thank Glenn Heitsmith for helping to make concessions on his own land with the old bike path proposal.
25. Howard Barton asked if there were any more questions or comments.
26. Howard Barton closed the Transportation Enhancement Grant Public Hearing at 7:15 pm.

LUDLOW SELECT BOARD

REGULAR MEETING AUGUST 15, 2011

1. Call to Order:

- a. Chairman, Howard Barton, Jr. called the regular meeting of the Ludlow Select Board to order at 7:15 pm

2. Approve Minutes:

- a. Howard Barton advised that the minutes to be approved are from the regular meeting and Board of Health Meeting held on July 18, 2011.
- b. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to approve the minutes as presented from the Board of Health and regular meeting held on July 18, 2011. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

3. Comments from Citizens:

- a. There were none.

4. Transportation Enhancement Grant:

- a. Howard Barton asked if there were any questions regarding the Transportation Enhancement Grant Feasibility Study for the Shared Use Path.
- b. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to authorize Frank Heald to sign the Transportation Enhancement Grant. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

5. Hear and Act on Report of the Listers Regarding Reappraisal Bids:

- a. Mark Gauthier said the Listers sit here tonight to recommend that the New England Municipal Consultants, Ltd be hired by the Town of Ludlow to perform the reappraisal. He said that out of three bids, ARG has dropped out leaving Vermont Appraisals Co and New England Municipal Consultants.
- b. Mark Gauthier said there was a significant difference in the proposals.

- c. Mark Gauthier said they met with a representative from Vermont Appraisals Co last week and also talked with Bill Krajeski from New England Municipal Consultants. Mark said as of this afternoon, Bill Krajeski has revised his proposal to \$63,000 after adjustments to the amount of work that the Listers would perform.
- d. Howard Barton asked if the Listers would have more responsibilities with the adjustments.
- e. Mark Gauthier said the Listers want to be more instrumental in the process. He said they feel that Bill Krajeski is more familiar with the town since he has been through the process and understands the Village, lakes and ski area. Mark said with 3,600 parcels and a grand list valued at 1.5 billion, Ludlow is among the top five in Vermont value wise.
- f. Mark Gauthier explained that Bill Krajeski and his group are very good when meeting taxpayers and their competence is exuded in the many hearings they run. He said Margot Martell and Terry Thayne feel the same way and added that there is no learning curve needed because Bill and his company have taught them a lot and are hands-on.
- g. Mark Gauthier said that while the Listers may be working more hours, the value to them professionally and to the Town will cost less in the future as they (staff) will be able to do more.
- h. Bruce Schmidt said he is not comfortable with the bid process because a company can't come back with a lower bid after they have all been opened.
- i. Howard Barton said it would be different if the bids had already been awarded.
- j. Bruce Schmidt said he understands this is a very unique situation, but they could be walking a slippery slope.
- k. Frank Heald said the process is more of an art than a science and should not have been construed as a bid. He said they sent out a request for proposal (RFP) the reappraisal with three proposals returned and one company has since dropped out. Frank explained that two of the companies were relying on the Listers to do more than they had planned for. He said that while ARG is more than capable to do the job, the Patriot system is not their software of choice so they would need to adjust. With Vermont Appraisals, they live several hours away and may not be as readily available.
- l. Frank Heald said in terms of getting the job done the Listers have increased their skill levels and can do a lot more now in the field than they did previously. Frank said he agrees they need to keep things clear and transparent, but the proposals that were submitted are not the same.
- m. Bruce Schmidt said it shouldn't be called a bid process. He said we need to be as transparent as we can and not change the end goal. He asked how many appeals New England Municipal Consultants have done and how many have appealed to the BCA from 2005 to present.
- n. Mark Gauthier said it really does not compare.
- o. Margot Martell explained that with the recent mountain appraisals there were 40 grievance appeals of which 17 went to the BCA.
- p. Mark Gauthier said Bill Krajeski was very surprised there were so few.
- q. Terry Thayne said 10 of the 17 appeals were attorney handled.
- r. Mark Gauthier said they wanted to come before the Select Board tonight to recommend New England Municipal Consultants. Mark said the Listers felt it was in the towns' best interest to have Bill Krajeski sharpen his pencil and save the town some money.
- s. Bruce Schmidt said there should be a procedure in place regarding bids.
- t. Mark Gauthier said the problem with the proposal is that it wasn't clear as to what needed to be done.
- u. Frank Heald said he did not envision the other two companies spending as much time here and expected the Listers would need to do more. He added that until the conversation with Bill Krajeski this afternoon, the Listers wanted to go with his proposal for \$91,000.
- v. Doug Ficken said the Select Board listens very highly to those recommending and agrees with Frank Heald it was done in a manner to save money, but the process was different.
- w. **MOTION by Doug Ficken and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to accept the New England Municipal Consultants reappraisal bid for \$63,000. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

6. **DRB Appointments (Corrective Action):**

- a. Frank Heald said there was a question regarding the DRB appointment for Linda Petty whether it was a one or two year term. Linda Petty should be reappointed for a one year term.
- b. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to appoint Linda Petty to a one year term on the DRB. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

7. Board of Listers Errors & Omissions:

- a. Howard Barton advised that there were two corrections.
- b. Bruce Schmidt noted that for the number of properties on the Grand List, the Listers do a good job.
- c. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to accept the errors and omissions as presented from the Board of Listers. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

8. Town Road Name Request:

- a. Frank Heald said there was a subdivision at the former Capiello residence and the names presented were in the order of preference.
- b. **MOTION by Doug Ficken and seconded by Bruce Schmidt to accept the road name of Yorfino Hill Drive. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**

9. Discuss East Lake Road Speed Limit:

- a. Frank Heald said a letter regarding East Lake Road was included in the Select Board packets. He said the town wanted to do some data collection but one of the links on the speed collectors from Regional Planning failed.
- b. Frank Heald said he attended the Lake Rescue Association meeting this past Saturday and told them we will have updated numbers and would consider their request at another meeting.
- c. Frank Heald said the current black/yellow under 35 mph speed signs may be confusing so the town has purchased several yellow/black signs with pedestrian and bike symbols and 25mph cautionary speed limits that should alert drivers that walkers and bikers on the road. He said he and Ron Tarbell were there today to document and view the area.

10. Ludlow Semiquincentennial Update:

- a. Frank Heald said a schedule of events and expense/donations update was included. Frank added that Ralph Pace has done an incredible job of keeping the Ludlow 250 committee going.
- b. Frank Heald reported that the committee has raised nearly \$9,000, with \$7,000 in cash/checks and a significant in-kind donation from Okemo totaling \$1,600 in signs, banners and programs. He added that Ludlow Insurance and Ralph Pace have also contributed in-kind donations. Frank said this should be a marvelous two-day festival that has been driven largely by Ralph Pace, Sharon Bixby and many other committee members.
- c. Howard Barton said everyone has done a great job and the Select Board appreciates their efforts.

11. Department Head Reports:

- a. Howard Barton advised that all of the reports are in, with the Police Department report received tonight.
- b. Bruce Schmidt asked if Chief Billings has noticed an increase in juvenile complaints.
- c. Frank Heald said he believes it is purely cyclic and weather related.

12. Other Business:

- a. Howard Barton asked if there was any other business.
- b. Ralph Pace said that after listening to the reappraisal bid report he felt a procedure should be put in place for the future.

- c. Bruce Schmidt said it is important for all RFP's to be reviewed by Frank Heald. He suggested a possible retainer or contract in the future.
- d. Frank Heald said he spent the day last Friday at a valuation seminar at VTC in Randolph with Terry Thayne. He said maintaining a grand list is a very difficult and complicated process for all towns. Frank added that for that reason he supports the contract with Bill Krajeski.

13. Set Date for Next Meeting:

- a. Howard Barton advised that because of the Labor Day holiday the next meeting would be held on the third Monday of the month, which would be September 19, 2011.

14. Sign Warrant Orders:

- a. Howard Barton advised that there were warrant orders to sign.

15. Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts/Legal:

- a. Howard Barton asked Frank Heald if an executive session was needed.
- b. Frank Heald advised that a short Executive Session is needed.
- c. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to enter into Executive Session. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**
- d. Select Board entered into Executive Session at 8:05 pm.
- e. Select Board exited Executive Session at 8:11 pm.
- f. No action taken.

16. Adjourn:

- a. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to adjourn. All in favor and the motion passed unanimously.**
- b. Meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Cruickshank, Acting Secretary

Howard Barton, Jr., Chairman

Brett Sanderson

John Neal

Bruce Schmidt

Doug Ficken