

## MINUTES FROM THE PUBLIC HEARING ON OCTOBER 17, 2011

Board members present were David Parot, Dan Champney, Gene Armstrong and Ron Lafreniere. Also present were twelve guests (see attached) Kate Willard, Gary Sawyer and Mike Fraysier of the State of Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation and Town Clerk Deborah La Rivière. The hearing was called to order at 7:05pm

Ron opened the hearing and gave the floor to Mike Fraysier. Fraysier explained that the Lafreniere Homestead had been purchased by the state about 15 years ago and consists of some buildings and about 400+- acres of land. The state has offered long term leasing contracts but without success. The state is contemplating several configurations for sub-dividing; the house, barns and three acres or the same structures and 10 acres or the structures and 27 acres. The sub-divided of the parcel has legislative approval and will have restrictions on it so that no further development can happen. The state knows it needs a survey and permits from the town. Susan Vita asked about the loss of taxes and whether or not the possibility of donating or selling the structures to the Shelburne Museum had been considered. She also feels it was wrong of the state to make this purchase 20 years ago when they knew they didn't want the buildings. Kate Willard said if the parcel were owned privately, taxes would revert back to a full payment status. Joss Besse explained that the value of the buildings stems from the position on the prime farm land, it's a package deal that brings the value and he expressed concerns over the present condition of the structures; that they have been left to ruin. Fraysier admitted the state can not afford to repair the buildings and did not really want them in the beginning, so would like to sell off the smallest amount of land possible. Linda Baker, chair of the Planning Commission stated that the area is twenty five acre zoning for a reason and the Commission would not be inclined to change zoning to satisfy the state's desire to sub-divide. Currently, the state is entered into an eight year lease agreement with a farmer from Huntington. These leases will have the ability to be renegotiated when the eight year period is ended. Those present felt the existence of the long-term leases of the prime ag land is a deterrent to anyone looking to purchase now. The proposed sub-division encompasses a land configuration that is less desirable with no ability for farming. Rodney Pingree advised that farm fields would be better suited to private ownership and farming. The wood lots included in the three proposals do not really include any of the prime agricultural land. Fraysier and the F&P Department are looking for support from the town. The question and answer period concluded and the Board decided that with the conceptual proposal presented by the state, the Select Board and the Planning Commission will sit down and draft a letter.

No other business needed to be brought before this Board at this time. Gene motioned to end the public hearing, seconded by Dan. The hearing ended at 8:20pm.

Attest: Deborah La Rivière Town Clerk

*Minutes are unofficial until approved. These minutes were read and approved by the Bolton Select Board on October 24, 2011. \_\_\_\_\_ For the Board.*