

From: Susan Mazurski February 24, 2009 12:34:29 PM
Subject: Board of Selectmen Minutes 02/12/2009 MEADOWOOD TRIANGLE
SPECIAL APPROVED
To: SimsburyCT_SelectMin
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Board of Selectmen

Special Meeting
February 12, 2009
Program Room – Simsbury Public Library

Meeting Minutes

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were First Selectmen Mary Glassman, Selectmen Robert Hensley, Richard Hogan and Moira Wertheimer. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mrs. Glassman called on Town Staff to make a presentation regarding the Meadowood Triangle Property.

Richard Sawitzke reviewed the history of the property and Hiram Peck reviewed the possible uses of the property.

The Board then invited the public to speak.

1. Don Rieger, 9 Stodmor Road, spoke in favor of maintaining the wildlife corridor and grassland habitat. He submitted a mapped area of the wildlife corridor by the Dept. of Environmental Protection. He suggested planning native grasses with native wildflowers and buffering the street with shrubs. He said he spoke with Peter Bacone, a wildlife biologist.
2. Kirsten Griebel, 7 Caryn Lane, spoke in support of the wildlife corridor as a primary goal, first and foremost.
3. Anthony Napolitano, 140 Old Farms Road, suggested the town investigate Habitat for Humanity's interest in preserving the house on the property.
4. State Rep. Linda Schofield explained the Town of Simsbury's interest in applying for grants to pay for the property and that the triangle was not eligible for grassland's money because a minimum of 100 acres was required.
5. Don Hartley, Gates Lane spoke of the need for a wildlife corridor and questioned whether the town needed more recreation fields.
6. Chuck Howard, 100 Terry's Plain Road, Simsbury Land Trust, spoke of the valuable need for a wildlife corridor and a natural connection as a

primary use and for additional agricultural purposes.

7. Ernie Gardow, 8 Whitcomb Drive, spoke in favor of the wildlife corridor and suggested hay as a cash crop would have minimal impact on the area.

8. Tom Hayden, 24 Musket Trail, suggested the need for additional soccer fields.

9. Recreation Director Gerry Toner addressed the current need for fields and stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission suggested that no more than 10 acres be reserved for fields.

10. Alex Jamieson, 440 Firetown Road, suggested that wind turbines would be an idea.

11. Ferg Jansen, 12 Echo Lane, suggested he would like to see a bike trail connection from Owens Brook to Simsbury Farms.

12. Dean Ober, 39 Chriswell Drive, suggested that there could be a compromise of several uses and suggested mountain biking trails on the site.

13. David Fagone, 15 Whitcomb Drive, suggested that lights be put on the fields for additional field usage and would like to see a wild life corridor.

14. Dave Taylor, 507 Firetown Road, would like to see multipurpose use.

15. Don Tuller, 261 Farms Village Road, suggested the wildlife corridor and agricultural use are compatible. He said he would encourage the town to preserve agricultural use since the town is not making anymore. He said that once land leaves agricultural use it never comes back.

16. Ashley Lane, 135 Old Farms Road, said he is expressing interest in using the land for farming and that the George Hall Farm is interested in leasing the land. He said the area could be suitable for vegetable production and that recreational and agricultural use is not compatible.

17. Edgar Morande, Schoolhouse Lane, said the town is in dire need of additional recreational fields.

18. Sherry Sigworth, said she would like to see fields on the triangle.

19. John Loomis, 500 Firetown Road, suggested the area be used as a wildlife corridor and agricultural use.

20. Dee Dee Ryerson, Holcomb Road, suggested a wildlife corridor would be the best use and that the area is beautiful and people often stop to take pictures. She said to keep it as natural as it is.

21. Carol Ackerman, 80 Holcomb Street, suggested wildlife and agricultural use.

22. Joseph Fleming, 6 Whitcom Drive, said he could attest to the area as a wildlife corridor and did not want to see recreation fields.

23. Barbara Corcoran said the entire town should be able to use it. It is needed for lacrosse and baseball fields.

24. Tony Rogello said he chose Simsbury to live and that the areas should be used for agricultural purposes and let the clubs find other places for fields.

25. David Bush, 7 Kathryn Lane, chair of the Parks and Recreation

Commission said the clubs were looking for a small percentage of the fields to be used for recreation purposes, less than 10 acres.

26. Linda Eklin, 1 Holcomb Road, said the area is a wonderful environment and is upset to hear that fields are being discussed.

27. Trevor Hughes, 22 Surry Circle, said lots of crowds and traffic would come with fields.

28. Sam Hammer, Holcomb Farm, said farmland is rare and agricultural use with community friendly farming would be the best use.

29. Sue Bednarczyk, 119 East Weatogue Street supports a DEP wildlife corridor and questions whether it was a safety issue to have fields near a wildlife corridor and said she is concerned with bears coming onto the soccer fields.

30. Dunny Barney, West Simsbury, suggested use of the wildlife corridor and said he is concerned that soccer fields have fencing and this will be a barrier to the wildlife corridor. He also said the town's capacity to feed itself depends on the town preserving agricultural fields.

31. Helen Peterson, 20 Long View Drive, said there is incompatibility of fencing for playing fields and agricultural uses.

32. Mike Girard, 352 Firetown Road, said the wildlife corridor is important and compatible with agricultural use. Once you create an athletic field, it is not suitable for agricultural use later on, he said.

33. Jim O'Herron, 12 Sanctuary Drive, said the area would be appropriate for fields of barley and rye.

34. Paul Mikkelson, 11 Whitcomb Drive, said he moved to Simsbury because it is a beautiful place. He said he felt the town voted to purchase the land so it would be open space. He said agriculture use could be okay but the agricultural use this summer was a disaster with migrant workers and was not a pretty site. He said he is not sure that kids need another field.

35. Peter Stempien, 9 Tim Clark Circle, said the need for agriculture is very important in town and there are other places to put more sports field.

36. Sean Carol, a member of Holcomb Farm, said he is in favor of agriculture use compatible with the wildlife corridor.

37. Dee Dee Ryerson spoke for the second time and said she is concerned about the budget. She said the town mowing periodically will not kill the budget but anything else would have to be kept up.

38. Margery Gardow said fences will interfere with the area.

39. Barbara Corcoran spoke for the second time and said agriculture use makes sense in the middle of the triangle.

40. Joan Coe, 26 Whitcomb Drive read her comments into the record and said the property should remain vacant as a continuation of the McLean Game Refuge. She said Pharos Farm was recommended as land that could be used for recreational activities.

Glassman and the Board thanked everyone for their comments. She said the

item would be placed on the Board's February 23, 2009 agenda for further discussion. Moira Wertheimer moved to adjourn the meeting seconded by Rich Hogan. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Glassman, First Selectman