

Ashburnham Focus Committee Meeting, March 17, 2008

Present: Bob Fichtel, Chairman; Pat Frederick, secretary; Sallie Thoma, and Town Planner Eric Smith.

The meeting was called to order at 5:12 PM by Chairman Fichtel.

Committee members reviewed the minutes of the February 19th meeting. The minutes were accepted as written, so moved by Bob, seconded by Sallie.

Bob had spoken on the phone with Mrs. Hurley about the land on Williams Road. She sounded receptive, but said she would have to speak with her three brothers and two sisters. When Bob spoke with her again, she said the family was not interested in selling the land, and she didn't wish to discuss the matter.

Town Counsel thinks Bob's proposed warrant article is not legally worded.

The Selectmen want the Focus Committee to meet with them on April 7th to discuss the possible sale of land, to finance purchasing land to relocate the Highway Department. There is the possibility of taking land by eminent domain.

Bob has obtained a list of town-owned parcels that could be auctioned off to produce revenue for the Town, both by the sales thereof, and by the payment of real estate taxes by new owners. These properties were taken by the Town as tax foreclosures.

Eric supplied the Committee with Town maps with grids. The Committee considered some seventeen properties, some of which were wetland, or are to be kept by the Town at request of the Conservation Commission. A few looked promising. Bob will visit each plot this weekend, supplied with maps by Eric.

Eric mentioned there are grants for site planning and infrastructure, also some low-interest loans available to Towns.

Bob had met with Paul Teixeira from RCAP Solutions, and "Chip", who works with RCAP, securing funds from HUD. They were very enthusiastic about the land owned by Gil Carreiro. It would be 2, 3, or maybe 4 years before anything could be built. HUD would purchase the land, with the Town forming a "Town Housing Authority".

Gil Carreiro has submitted his resignation from the Committee, due to having moved to Cape Cod.

Next meeting will be with the Selectmen, April 7th at 7:00 PM.

Sallie moved to adjourn the meeting, Pat seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,