

WILLOWSFORD CONSERVANCY
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
January 18, 2018

Minutes

Attending: Rick DiBella, Mark Trostle, Stacey Kessinger, Stan Settle, Mary Hegedus, Chris Bodley, Claudette Papathanasopoulous – Trustees; Iris Gestram – Executive Director

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:20pm. (Chris and Claudette were introduced as the new homeowner appointees; Mary Hegedus appointed by the Founder to bring the total number of Trustees to seven.)

Approval of Agenda: Mark moved to approve the agenda. Rick seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Minutes: Mark moved to approve the minutes from November 16, 2017. Stan seconded. Motion passed 4-0, with new trustees abstaining.

New Business:

New Trustee Orientation

- An overview of the Conservancy was provided and why it was formed originally as a 501 (c) 4, along with the Board's vision for the future as the Conservancy transitions from Founder control to homeowner Trustee control.

2018 Budget

- The Board reviewed, by line item, the approved 2018 consolidated Conservancy farm and non-farm budget, which was adopted on December 27, 2017, by unanimous written consent. The total developer subsidy for 2018, including farm and Conservancy operations in addition to all capital improvements, is budgeted at \$1,136,059.

Community-wide Meetings

- The Conservancy has scheduled a community update meeting for each village at 6:30 pm on Feb. 6 (The Grange), Feb. 7 (The Grove), Feb. 13 (The Grant), and Feb. 16 (The Greens). Staff from the Conservancy and the Willowsford Development Team will review information on the Conservancy's role; current projects; the FY2018 budget; and opportunities for residents to get involved. Twenty-four residents registered since the meetings were announced a week ago. The meetings will be promoted in the weekly newsletter and freestanding e-mails to all residents. All trustees are invited to review the meeting presentations the week of Jan. 29.

Old Business:

Farm Business Planning

- The Conservancy continues to work with consultant Steve Richards on implementing results from 2017 business planning—to continue improving the financial sustainability of farm production and retail operations while supporting the Willowsford community and residents with fresh farm produce, and food and farming related programming. 2018 areas of focus include: expanded marketing to strengthen the CSA and farm market customer base; streamlining of crop, livestock and value-added production and retail; and adjustments of operations to assist with cost control.

Rt. 50 Farm Market Study

- The Board reviewed the preliminary study conducted by Kitchen Table Consultants in November. More information is needed to decide the type and size of market operation that may be feasible and financially sustainable in this location. The Conservancy continues to work with farm consultant Steve Richards and other consultants as needed to collect and evaluate data and develop a retail strategy by June 2018. A mobile test “pop-up market”, additional market research, and evaluation of successful farm market models are scheduled for the next months.

Executive Director Report:

Website

The Conservancy website is scheduled to launch on January 24. It includes extensive sections on the farm, trails, wildlife, programs and venues. Residents will be able to:

- o sign up for CSA shares
 - o download trail maps, get trail updates and report trail issues
 - o reserve campsites and venues, register for programs and events, and submit volunteer applications
 - o purchase firewood
 - o obtain comprehensive Conservancy information including board and financial information
 - o access information on wildlife, plants, open space, projects and programs.
 - o the resident database has been refined to contact residents by street if needed to reach out with updates and information.
- Maintenance and update of the website will transition from Marketing to the Conservancy.

Cedar Pond Pavilion

- Site repairs and preparations are proceeding. Materials, fixtures and finishes have been selected. The raising of the pavilion structure is scheduled for February. Completion is expected late spring/early summer 2018.

Deer Population Management:

- The final firearms hunt is underway, to end Saturday, January 20. To date, 35 deer have been harvested this season.

Resident Archery Club and Archery Range:

- Willowsford residents are forming a recreational target archery club, named Willowsford Archers. Like other clubs, it will operate under HOA guidelines. The club plans to form a non-profit entity to enter into a use agreement with the Conservancy, for use of the Greens archery range. Range design is nearing completion, for construction this spring. Outreach and member solicitation is planned for March. The club plans to hold a range opening event in May.

Land Steward Hiring:

- Patrick Boleman is scheduled to begin work on February 5. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a BS in Environmental Science & Forestry, he served three years in the United States Peace Corps in the Peruvian Andes, working in reforestation and environmental education. Upon returning to the U.S., he obtained a MS in Forest Resource Management from Penn State University, studying agroforestry and sustainable forest management. Patrick has since been dedicated to land conservation and management with a focus on forests and grasslands, serving as Restoration Ecology Program Associate at The Wilds in Cumberland, OH, prior to joining Willowsford Conservancy.
- The vision for the Conservancy is to be as self-sufficient in-house as possible to avoid high costs by outside vendors or contractors while upholding a higher standard of quality.

Farm Tenant House

Land development is complete and the general contractor has been hired with building construction currently underway.

Next Meeting Date: March 15, 2018 at 4:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 pm.

Conversation continued between board members and residents after the meeting adjourned.