

Jericho Underhill Land Trust Annual Meeting – May 9, 2011

Board Members present: John Koier, Phyl Newbeck, John Schroeder, Trevor Squirrel, Catherine Stevens, Livy Strong, and Hilaire Thomas

Members present: Caroline Bennett, Peter Bennett, Eric Bishop, Nancy Carey, Dave Damkot, Sharon Damkot, Harry Ehret, Barb Frankowski, Barbie Koier, Donna Kunkel, John Kunkel, Sue Morse, Bob Naylor, Mary Neighbors, Pam Parshall, Karl Riemer, Eric Senn, Walter Senn, Cynthia Seybolt, Peter Seybolt, Julie Schroeder, Phil Sharpsteen, Brian Stevens, John Stewart, Ed Stygles, Bobbi Summers, Paula Vanderverter, and Marion Wrightington

Livy Strong, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02.

1. Introductions

Livy asked each Board member to introduce themselves and say a little bit about themselves. The Board consists of Vice Chair John Koier, Treasurer Hilaire Thomas, Secretary Phyl Newbeck, John Schroeder, Catherine Stevens and Trevor Squirrel

2. Review of minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting were approved.

3. Financial Report

Treasurer Hilaire Thomas presented the financial report for 2010. We have 268 members who contributed \$21,773 in 2010. We recently received \$14,260 from Green Leaf Forestry for the logging operation at Kikas Valley Farm. Our major expenditure in 2010 was the contribution of \$10,350 toward the purchase of Barber Farm. We currently have \$98,370 in the bank for future projects which is good because we almost depleted our reserves for the Gateway project.

4. Year in Review

Early last year, we concentrated our efforts on the purchase of the Barber Farm. Livy noted that many people are involved in efforts such as this one. It starts with a willing landowner who approaches the Board and requires fundraising from our members, and often outside groups such as towns, the Vermont Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. In the case of Barber Farm, we were able to conserve 148 acres thanks to members' donations and \$13,000 from the Jericho Open Space Fund. We finished fundraising for Barber Farm in March of last year and closed on the property in October.

Without an upcoming purchase, the land trust is now able to focus inward which, Livy noted, is hard to do. JULT is an action-oriented organization which goes from project to project, but we are currently trying to take a step back and figure out how to be a better organization. Part of that involves reaching out to those with whom we don't normally connect. There are people who

enjoy our conserved land but don't realize our role in keeping them open and we need to reach out to them. The goal is to be less of a reactive organization and to act more strategically. As part of that process, Trevor Squirrel is heading a subcommittee on strategic planning which will work with the Planning and Conservation Commissions in Jericho and Underhill, as well as a wildlife consultant. The hope is to identify key areas in both towns where we can be involved in conservation.

JULT is also trying to reach out to our community to keep our members better informed. We are working on creating a new website which will be updated more regularly. We have a new display board and will be updating our brochure, as well. We also established a Facebook page. Livy noted that we are open to new ideas on how we can better keep our membership appraised of our activities and also to reach out to those who are not members.

JULT's main source of revenue is our members although, as Hilaire noted, we also received some money from timber management at Kikas Valley Farm. Land conservation is expensive. We are not currently working on any land project, but we are talking to local landowners. These projects are time-consuming; they can take one year, two years, or fifteen years. We want to be able to conserve important properties and to have people visit these lands and connect with them. We own almost 600 acres of land which is overseen by our land stewardship committee to ensure that we can balance the needs of wildlife with public access for activities like hiking, fishing, and hunting.

One member asked what efforts were being made to bring younger people into the fold. Livy said that we are working with students from UVM and CCV, and that parents bring children with them for activities such as our annual bird walk. There is a huge amount of school activity at Mills Riverside Park which can also bring in parents. It was noted that our membership appears to trend older although we do not collect that kind of demographic information.

Another member asked about activities specifically for younger people and it was noted that some kids have attended our various work days, although they are not really designed with children in mind. We have an upcoming work day at Kikas Valley Farm and invitations have been sent to all the homeowners at the Wingate subdivision, many of whom have children. We hope to come up with some other ideas that are more inclusive and less taxing. It was suggested that ending events with bonfires and marshmallows could bring in more children.

Livy introduced Sue Morse of Keeping Track who gave a presentation on the deer of North America.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Phyl Newbeck
JULT Secretary