

Railroad Bed Public Forum
Groton, VT
September 14, 2018 at 6:30 PM

Wade opened the forum up at 6:30 PM.

Gary Lamberton likes the RR Bed Ordinance as written.

Gavin Reid pointed out that Forest and Parks and VAST have reviewed the ordinance and found no problems.

Wade Johnson pointed out that the ordinance refers to no parking from 12 am to 7 pm. It should be midnight or 12 PM to 7 AM.

Michael Thomas, pointed out that it would be impossible to build a trail like the RR Bed now. The RR Bed will continue to grow as an asset to the town of Groton.

A question was asked: Will permissions that the SB approves go on permanently? A suggestion is made that there should be time limits on such permissions.

A suggestion was made by Gavin Reid, that the Select Board should create a permit for alterations to the RR Bed such as a curb cut, and not rely on the permit process for roads, in order to avoid confusion.

It was pointed out that the Reversionary Clause in the deed is quite strict, and would be automatic if violated. For this reason, it would be wise for the Select Board to submit requests to grant permissions to State Forest and Parks.

Gavin Reid pointed out that it is not necessary to put the Reversionary Clause into the Ordinance.

Gary Lamberton asked if the past permissions for the Buckaroos to cut trees and maintain the RR Bed in order to keep it open for snow mobile will be sufficient to allow them to continue or do they need annual permissions. This issue can be discussed further at a Select Board meeting.

Brian Wohlleb asked what powers the Select Board would have to enforce the fines, etc.

Gavin Reid responded.

Repeated infractions would become a public nuisance. He also pointed out that the process of creating the ordinance is education for the public about the RR Bed.

An injunction could be issued by a court.

Harold Hatch and Brian Wohlleb noted that they currently are mowing parts of the RR Bed which abut their land. There was a discussion about the maintenance of parts of the RR Bed which enhance it. It was suggested by Deborah Jurist that abutters would benefit by looking at the survey of the RR Bed to see exactly where their property lines are and then address their mowing to the Select Board.

Michael Thomas pointed out that some abutters might want to allow a buffer of tress to enhance their privacy from the public use of the trail. He suggested it might be wise to add language to the Ordinance now that addresses buffers and enhancements in order to prepare for the future.

It was asked when voting on the ordinance will be on the Select Board agenda. Hopefully, that will happen on Sept. 20, 2018.

Deborah made a motion at 7:08 PM to adjourn, Aaron seconded, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Johnson
SB Secretary