

Gaysville FEMA Buyout Site – Overview for 2/7/19 Selectboard meeting

Gaysville Property:

- A. Gaysville Buyout property: ~20-acre parcel
 - a. Option to add 9.5-acre Hull property for total of ~30 acres
- B. Hull property: 9.5 acres
 - a. Property use restricted by a River Corridor Easement held by state and Vermont River Conservancy
- C. FEMA Buyout Program:
 - a. FEMA-funded buyout sites are subject to certain allowable/non-allowable uses: see pages 13-15 at https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1424983165449-8f5dfc69c0bd4ea8a161e8bb7b79553/HMA_Addendum_022715_508.pdf
 - b. Allowed uses: picnic tables, non-walled small foundation buildings, signs, bike paths, packed gravel trails
 - c. Non-allowed uses: walled building (except bathrooms), fences, paved areas
- D. Floodplain considerations:
 - a. Property use restricted within FEMA floodplain and floodway
 - b. No increase in elevation in floodplain, e.g. gravel parking lots possible with engineered design
 - c. No development in floodway, e.g. picnic pavilion would NOT be allowed

Approved Activities:

12/19/18 and 1/15/19 meeting attendees voted for following approved activities:

- 1) Combine Gaysville Buyout property and Hull property for site development
- 2) Clean-up site – remove downed trees, thorny brush, and trash
- 3) Build open-sided pavilion – particularly one that can function as a concert venue
- 4) Improve 1-2 river access points
- 5) Build walking trails – both for passive recreation and for “peaceful” reflection
- 6) Design & build parking lot – would prefer parking lot to be visible from road to discourage illegal activity
- 7) Establish a beach area – established beach area for recreation and swimming
- 8) Maintain open field for recreation – would need to mow on somewhat regular basis
- 9) Install picnic tables and BBQ grills – primitive fire ring, benches (natural looking)
- 10) Install signage – wayfinding and informational signage, donation box?
- 11) Consider making the site available for event rental
- 12) Install a gate – to limit access to site at desired times.
- 13) Consider having dog-friendly trails
- 14) Install Port-O-Potties with enclosures instead of permanent restroom facility

Permits/Approvals Required:

- A. FEMA – all plans for buyout park will have to be reviewed by FEMA.
- B. Stream Alteration Permit – only required for actions below the ordinary high water mark. Could be applicable for certain planned items such as access into the river. Likely that the project can be designed to avoid this permit.
- C. Army Corps of Engineers Permit – required for release of fill/sediment into water sources. Will likely not be required for this project unless adding or removing material below ordinary high water mark.

River Corridor Easement Consideration:

- A. Estimated Easement Value: \$25,000
- B. Site use restrictions: River Corridor Easement means that property owner has sold their rights to develop the property (structures without foundations are allowable in some circumstances), gravel mine the river and/or actively manage the channel (no riprap etc.), and cut native vegetation within a 50-foot riparian buffer from the “top of bank” (Ordinary High Water Mark)
- C. Money from easement can be used to develop the area, and can also be used as a “match” to leverage additional grant funding.

Other Site Considerations:

- A. Need to name site
- B. Consider removing Japanese knotweed and other invasive plants from the site
- C. Consider developing a “Friends of (Name of Property)” group
- D. Consider other parking issues
 - a. Royalton police department patrols the buyout parks (2); issues have included people sleeping in the parking lots (they do not allow overnight camping)
- E. Research additional liability/insurance issues
 - a. Royalton has liability insurance for other town parks; existing coverage was adequate to cover new buyout parks (2)
- F. Operation and Maintenance costs:
 - a. Royalton, VT – Buyout Sites (2) Yearly Budget

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Price per Year</i>
Mowing	\$2,100.00
Portable Toilet (2)	\$1,300.00
Total	\$3,400.00
 - b. Royalton does not rent out Buyout Parks or allow overnight camping
- G. Research Act 250 questions
 - a. Discussed proposed plans with Linda Matteson, Act 250 District Coordinator; she determined Act 250 would not be triggered if disturbed area remains under 10 acres
 - b. Linda offered to make a final determination once site improvement plans were finalized