

South Hero Lavin Vision Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2026 1:30PM

Attendance: David Lane, Joan Falcao, David Carter, Peter Zamore, Phil Scott

Members Absent: Don Bedard

Guests: Greta Brunswick, NRPC; Bridget Kerr, Conservation Commission; Marian Fritz, Planing Commission; Anne Zolotas, Selectboard; Bob and Sue Toolin; Jeff Sikora

The meeting was opened at 1:30pm by **D Lane**.

Adjustments to the Agenda. None

Public Comment. None

Review draft guiding principles, vision elements and statement (attached):

G Brunswick presented the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles that she had drafted for the committee's review and discussion. **M Fritz** asked how the town would provide affordable housing. **G Brunswick** and **D Carter** explained a likely path of writing an RFP for the town's housing vision, based on decisions by the Selectboard, to transfer ownership of a parcel to a developer. The RFP may specify a mix of affordable, mid-range and market rate housing. The town can then control how the land is sold and to whom, via a sales agreement. The town will likely use the CHIP program (a project-based TIF for housing) with a 20-year bond that can be incurred by the developer or the town to finance the wastewater development. **P Zamore** stated it was a blessing that the town has full ownership and can decide how it will be used. **J Falcao** expressed concern that wastewater was the focus of the vision statement and guiding principles, because documented feedback from the visioning workshop did not mention wastewater. She asked that guiding principles 1 and 2 be deleted and that these important considerations be explained at the beginning in some background information section, as they were at the visioning workshop. **G Brunswick** suggested that they could be included as existing conditions. **P Zamore**, chair of the Wastewater Committee, emphasized the importance of developing soon to avoid inflation expenses. **B Kerr** pointed out that the residents at the visioning session in August were not informed that the wastewater would be used only for new onsite development. **P Zamore** responded that it was a priority, not a requirement -- that grant funding restricted housing wastewater rates and the Otter Creek contractor report found distribution costs too high, if distribution extends to Route 2. **D Carter** stated that housing is a local and national priority and wastewater was a condition of the funding to acquire the property. We could potentially conserve 2/3 of the land. **A. Zolotas** felt that some property owners are not willing to

pay for Lavin wastewater and questioned whether the CHIP program bond could be paid off with the designated 85% tax increments generated. The developer is eligible to take out the bond. According to **J Falcao**, the grant funding the Lavin property purchase had no specific time frame for building a wastewater facility. She suggested that in the event development didn't happen in the near term, the town should still proceed with implementing recreational elements of the visioning project. And perhaps a town forest would be a good idea, since it was simply a plan to care for the property and didn't pre-empt any other land use. **P Zamore** didn't want to do anything irreversible that would impede later development. **M Fritz** raised another issue – water for new housing. **P Zamore** said that in his conversations with Fire District 4, they are not accepting new connections, but **G Brunswick** found grant money to fund an asset management plan to better understand the preventative issues from new connections. **J Sikora** who knows the Lavin property well, stated that Chevalier did not find the hydrology of the Lavin property suitable for drilling wells. Ground contamination from the nearby town dump was another limiting factor.

4) Review draft use diagrams and site plans #1, #2 and #3 (attached) :

G Brunswick presented three diagrams to assist the committee and the next visioning workshop in visualizing different housing and recreational uses of the land. All three diagrams show Lot 1 reserved for commercial and mixed use. And all three diagrams leave Lots 6,7, and 8 undeveloped, with the possibility of a road going back to them. Diagram 1 maximizes housing development, with 12-30 homes in Lot 4 and 24-26 single or duplex units on small properties in Lot 5. Diagram 2 highlights a Little League ballfield in Lot 4 and shifts housing to Lot 5. **B Toolin** noted that a multi rec field for youth would provide additional functionality. **P Scott** suggested that the Lot behind the Folsom school had 9 acres that were not wetlands, already had parking, and might be suitable for rec fields. Diagram 3 leaves Lot 4 as a nature and trail park. **P Scott** emphasized that diagrams need to show connection to existing trails. **J Falcao** suggested disregarding the old lot designations and using the eastern sides of Lots 4 and 5 for development and the rest for recreation.

5) Finalize date for second vision session – November 18, 6pm at the Folsom school, if available. **D Lane** will check. **G Brunswick** offered, as an alternative, tabling at several locations and times. The plan moved towards using the diagrams for the second vision session and asking participants what they like and do not like about each. **B Kerr** reminded the committee that an online survey had been planned. **G Brunswick** offered that it would be easy for her to include the content of the second vision session online, allowing participants to submit comments remotely as an option. **P Zamore** emphasized that we need maps and types of uses before we can make technical plans for a wastewater system and that we are losing time.

6) Minutes from September were approved with minor edits.

Next Regular Meeting Date and Agenda – November 10, 1:30 pm at the **town hall** unless an alternate location is needed.

Adjournment at approximately 3:15pm

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Falcao, secretary