



Vermont Land Trust

CONSERVING LAND FOR THE FUTURE OF VERMONT

February 11, 2020

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Josh Arneson (via email)
Town Manager
Town of Richmond
P.O. Box 285
Richmond, VT 05477

Dear Josh:

Following a unanimous vote of the Conservation Commission to recommend that the Selectboard approve funding of \$20,000 from the Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF) to support the Peet Farm Conservation Project, I am excited to forward the enclosed Peet Farm CRF application for consideration at an upcoming Selectboard meeting.

The Peet Farm conservation project is an exciting effort to permanently protect 68 acres on two sides of the Richmond village. The project will protect agricultural resources, water quality, wildlife habitat, natural features, and recreational, cultural, and scenic values in town. The project's features summarized below make it an excellent fit with CRF criteria:

REGIONAL OFFICES

Central Vermont
8 Bailey Avenue
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 223-5254

Champlain Valley
P.O. Box 850
Richmond, VT 05477
(802) 434-3079

Northeast Kingdom
171 Scott Farm Road
Newport, VT 05855
(802) 748-6089

Southeast Vermont
and Mountain Valley
54 Linden Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301
(802) 251-6008

Southwest Vermont
and Mettowee Valley
10 Furnace Grove Road
Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 442-4915

- The project will facilitate a transfer to Mark Fasching and Christa Alexander of Jericho Settlers Farm, a local farm family that provides local food to Richmond and surrounding communities.
- An affordability mechanism in the conservation easement will help make this and future purchases affordable to farmers and keep agriculture a vital part of the Richmond community. Because the farm is located entirely in the floodplain, affordability to farmers (rather than development) is the highest threat to the agricultural resources.
- The property is comprised almost entirely of prime agricultural soils that are some of the best agricultural soils in Vermont.
- Eleven acres of Silver Maple – Ostrich Fern Riverine Floodplain Forest, an uncommon natural community of statewide significance in Vermont, will be protected.
- Almost 1,000 feet of frontage on the Winooski River with a naturally-vegetated buffer and a small cattail marsh will be conserved.
- The project includes the potential for a future public trail totaling approximately one mile in length from the village center and connectivity with other public trails.
- The farm has a long history in Richmond and helps define and maintain its rural character.
- A town contribution of \$20,000 toward the total budget of \$135,440 will be leveraged almost six times.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to discussing this exciting opportunity with the Selectboard.

Sincerely,

Bob Heiser
Champlain Valley Regional Director