



November 6, 2023

Town of Richmond Water and Sewer Commission  
Morgan Wolaver, Chair  
P.O. Box 285  
Richmond, VT 05477

RE. Gateway District Water and Sewer Line Extension

Dear Morgan and RWSC,

I am writing on behalf of the Richmond Land Trust (“RLT”) in response to the request of the Richmond Water and Sewer Commission (“WSC”) for RLT to expand the scope of the existing utility easement encumbering RLT’s Willis Hill Preserve property for the purpose of extending municipal water and sewer service past the property of Robert and Joy Reap to other properties in the Gateway District. As we have discussed previously, the easement contained in the deed from Beverly Willis to Robert and Joy Reap in 2014 was only for the benefit of that specific parcel.

We have given considerable thought to this request and the complex issues underlying it; in so doing, we have consulted with members of the Water and Sewer Commission, members of the Planning Commission, representatives of the Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District, representatives from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and the Reaps, to inform ourselves with respect to the issues raised by your request. We appreciate the time, patience, and feedback of those people and entities in assisting with our deliberations.

The Richmond Land Trust recognizes the important role that the extension of municipal sewer service plays in development of the Gateway District and that centralized sewage treatment has environmental benefits over numerous on-site septic systems. The responsible future development of the Gateway District northeasterly of Route 2, as envisioned in the current Richmond Town Plan, can provide numerous benefits to Town residents. To ensure the extension of such service will not undermine the conservation values of the Willis Hill Preserve, RLT is willing to expand the scope of the existing easement through the Willis Hill Preserve to accommodate the Town's water and sewer line extension on the following terms:

- a. RLT will grant a new/replacement easement to the Town of Richmond upon extinguishment of the existing easement benefitting the Reap property, or

modification of that easement in a manner that will prohibit the ability for multiple water and sewer lines to be installed through the RLT Property.

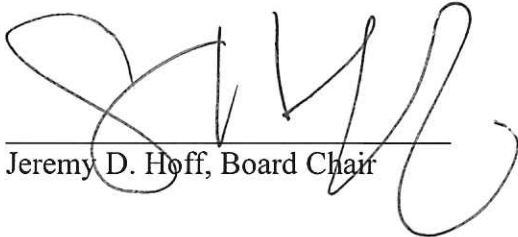
- b. A new/replacement easement will not be granted until the Town is prepared to take over the water and sewer lines extend through the MMUUSD from Jericho Road.
- c. The sewer and water lines will have a maximum diameter of 6" and will be installed via directional boring.
- d. No electric service will be installed on the RLT Property to support the sewer and water lines.
- e. No grinder pumps or pump stations will be located on the RLT Property to support the sewer and water lines.
- f. Final engineering plans will be subject to the review and approval of RLT, which shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed.
- g. The easement will allow service to be provided to the following areas:
  - i. All parcels located on the easterly side of Route 2 only, from the Reap Property to the Crate Escape Property (Parcels WI0035, WM0878, WM0920, WM0932, WM0978, WM1010, WM1012, WM1070, and WM1108).
  - ii. The Mobil Station (Parcel WM1436);
  - iii. The homestead only of the Verburg Farm (VB0365); and
  - iv. Any additional parcels north of the Interstate 89 interchange provided additional capacity exists within the 6" lines.
- h. All parcels located within the Gateway District desiring to utilize the new/replacement easement for sewer and water service must dedicate a thirty foot (30') wide strip of land fronting along Route 2 for use as a contiguous green belt and for the installation of a non-motorized recreation and transportation path (walking/bike path) to be owned by the Town of Richmond. Ideally, the water and sewer service lines could be located beneath or alongside the walking/bike path for ease of access for maintenance and repairs. No property owner dedicating such strip of land will be responsible for constructing path improvements, but shall set aside such strip of land for future improvements to be constructed by the Town of Richmond, State of Vermont, or similar organization or government instrumentality.
- i. All documentation establishing the terms of new/replacement easement shall be subject to approval of RLT and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

We realize there is considerable additional work to be completed before a water and sewer line extension can be realized in the Gateway District; hopefully, this formal position taken by RLT

with respect to expansion of the existing easement rights through the Willis Hill Preserve will be helpful the Town and others as that work continues. RLT is available to assist in whatever manner we can, and we look forward to working with you, at the appropriate time, to develop the plans and documentation needed to modify the existing easement rights in the manner set forth above.

If you have questions of RLT, or we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,  
THE RICHMOND LAND TRUST, INC.



Jeremy D. Hoff, Board Chair

cc.  
Josh Arneson, Town Manager  
Robert and Joy Reap