

**TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
SELECT BOARD
NOVEMBER 17, 2020
6:00 PM
MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES**

Draft minutes subject to approval.

Present: Chair Mary Riley, Jill Davies, L.D. Sutherland, Keri Cole, John Doten, William Kerbin, Nikki Nourse, Mary McCuaig, Fire Chief David Green, Matt Stout, Alison Clarkson, Tom Weschler, Lucille McCarthy, Allan Stein, Beth Finlayson, Mary Margaret Sloan, Jason Rickles, Sally Miller, Donna Foster, Neil Leitner, Wendy Marrinan, Isabelle Chicoine, Bill Corson, Dan Fiedler, Howard Krum, Elizabeth Romano, Julian Underwood.

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Chair Mary Riley called to order the Select Board meeting of November 17, 2020 at 6:00pm.

B. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Amend Section 110; Rural Retreat of the Town Zoning Regulations to define and add "Rural Retreat: A facility rented out for events, generally indoors, on large, isolated parcels, or historic farms"
 - a. Add Section 535.B4 to add "farms on the National Register of Historic Places are exempt from criteria 2 and 3 under general requirements".
 - Letter from Charles Degener
 - Ms. Sloan shared a presentation (included in the minutes).
 - Mr. Leitner stated that rural retreat permits shall be reviewed annually.
 - Ms. McCuaig stated that she owns Fullerton Fletcher Farm. She did not know much about this change. Now that she does, she supports it. She does not have any plans to do something like that with their farm.
 - Ms. Cole stated that Gilbert's Hill is not specifically applying right now. This is about the proposed language in the amendment.
 - Mr. Krum stated that a farm has to be on the National Historic Register. This only refers to three properties.
 - Ms. Cole stated that any properties that fit the description would still have to apply for permits.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve and amend Section 100; Rural Retreat of the Town Zoning Regulations to define and add "Rural Retreat: A facility rented out for events, generally indoors, on large, isolated parcels, or historic farms, and to approve the addition of Section 535.B4 to add "farms on the National Register of Historic Places are exempt from criteria 2 and 3 under general requirements".

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: Mr. Doten stated that he thinks it needs more study.

Vote: 4-1-0, passed. Chair Riley for, Ms. Davies for, Mr. Sutherland for, Ms. Cole for, Mr. Doten against.

C. ADDITIONS TO AND DELETIONS FROM THE POSTED AGENDA

1. Town Meeting Discussion – added to Manager's Report

D. MANAGER REPORT

1. General Report

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that a section of the portico ceiling fell this week. There were no injuries. Mike Eramo is going to secure the area and make sure nothing else is loose. They had a conversation with the Agency of Transportation regarding the paving that is occurring next spring. There were questions regarding parking spaces. They are encouraging the Agency of Transportation to hold a public engagement meeting in January. They are going to be watching the paving job and he will contact the State if there are any issues.
- Chief Green stated that they need to keep a careful eye on them.
 - Mr. Sutherland stated that there were a lot of drainage issues that occurred last time.
 - Ms. Marrinan stated that there were issues near Mountain Avenue near the Recreation Center. Drainage issues occurred there. This created a huge puddle. Water does not get to the drain. This affected the crosswalks.
 - Mr. Sutherland stated that the paving project will go from Village line to Village line.
 - Mr. Kerbin stated that the project will start between April and June. The earlier it starts the better.
- b. The Town Hall is starting a digitization project. Treena Toliver is doing some research regarding this. She is looking into a document management company to possibly reduce the paper usage at Town Hall.
- c. Ms. Davies asked whether they are encouraging employees to work from home?
- Mr. Kerbin stated that he is keeping it in mind. He is going to wait and see what the Governor says.
 - Ms. Davies stated that the Governor recommended anyone who possibly can needs to work from home.
 - Mr. Kerbin stated that they do not want to affect operations.

2. Financial Report

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that their objective is to improve the financial information for the Select Board. They are working on updating the capital improvement plan. They are working on an annual calendar for budget forecast. In March, they will be starting the capital improvement program process. September/October they can prepare the budget. November/December they can submit a draft budget to the Select Board. In December, the Select Board would review the budget. By January 15th, the budget would be approved. This is just a draft calendar and subject to change.

3. Town Meeting

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that they need to discuss Town Meeting because of COVID-19. The State is allowing the legislative body to use Australian Ballot for all votes. However, they are required to do a public information meeting online.
- b. Chair Riley stated that voting will happen on March 2, 2021. They need to post the warning by January 31st. They need to have the Town Report out by February 20th. There will be no floor vote. It will all be by Australian Ballot. If someone wants an absentee ballot, they can request one. If they vote to have this, they cannot go back to having a floor meeting or floor vote. The choice is optional. Normally they do a partial Australian ballot. The budget is generally done by floor vote. With Australian ballot the budget will be either a yes or no vote. If they have a floor meeting and vote they can have up to 75 people.
- c. Ms. Cole stated that given the viral count right now, she would like to make sure as many people can vote as possible. She thinks all voting should be done by Australian ballot.
- d. Ms. Davies stated that they should hold the meeting electronically.
- e. Mr. Doten stated that they need to have the voting by Australian ballot.
- f. Mr. Sutherland stated that he thinks they need to act on this soon so people can be prepared.
- g. Ms. Davies stated that they can do several meetings instead of just one.
- h. Mr. Kerbin stated that the law requires them to have at least one meeting.
- i. Mr. Houry stated that he is reassured to hear there is a plan to have multiple sessions for the budget. There were a lot of big-ticket items last year.
- j. Chair Riley stated that they will be scheduling the budget meetings tonight.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to have all town voting in 2021 be done by Australian ballot.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

E. PERMITS

1. Overweight Truck Permit – Single – George E Whitney – G&L Trucking LLC

- a. Mr. Doten stated that he has reviewed the permit and recommends they approve it.

Motion: by Mr. Doten to approve to overweight truck permit for a single truck for G&L Trucking LLC.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. Vail Field Update

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that the Vail Field paving is complete. The painting of the lines has to wait until spring.
- b. Mr. Sutherland stated that the fencing around the courts is all done.
- c. Mr. Corson stated that the pickleball fencing is not done correctly. The pickleball lines will be painted on top of the basketball court. The fence

is inadequate. The balls would not be trapped by the fences as they are now.

d. Mr. Kerbin stated that the courts will be completed in the spring.

e. Chair Riley stated that hopefully this can happen early in the season.

2. ESB Update

a. Chief Green stated that the bids for the Emergency Services Building are due this Friday. They will be opened in person. Ten people are allowed at the bid opening. Chief Green and Mr. Kerbin will be two of the ten. Things are going along very well.

3. Full Time Ambulance Service Update

a. Chief Green stated that the Town voted to have a full time Fire and EMS service last March. This is going very well. They hired eight people full time. Four of them were current employees. The fast response has dramatically helped people's outcomes. They have not had any major fires. It has helped in other ways as well. An insurance company denied a homeowner on Cox District Road due to having a volunteer fire department. Now this individual can get insurance. There have been some grumblings about the cost. However, after an emergency everybody is in full support. At the time, they are very appreciative.

4. Faulkner Park Update

a. Mr. Kerbin stated that the Faulkner Park Committee had a meeting last Thursday. Roles were assigned. He is going to be the liaison to the Select Board. Chair Riley will be doing the minutes. They discussed meeting protocols. It was a good start. They will have a meeting again this Thursday at 5:30pm to 7:00pm.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. VT Endowment Trust Fund Statement of Investment Objectives and Policy Revisions

a. Ms. Davies stated that she is part of the Investment Advisory Committee. They are requesting one change: "Annual distributions are to be made from the fund between January 1st and January 31st. The distribution will be adjusted in line with tax increases for the Town and Village." They distribute \$69,500 to the Village and Town annually.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the change to the VT Endowment Trust Fund Statement of Investment Objectives and Policy Revisions.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-1, passed. Chair Riley for, Ms. Davies for, Mr. Sutherland for, Ms. Cole for, Mr. Doten abstained.

2. Brad Prescott TRORC Alternate Appointment Request

a. Mr. Prescott stated that he has been a Woodstock resident for five years. He has practiced architecture in Lebanon, New Hampshire. He has a strong interest in assisting the community. He has approached Don Bourdon. He is currently on the Town Development Review Board. He used to work in Massachusetts on a similar committee.

b. Mr. Doten stated that he will be a good man for the job.

Motion: by Mr. Doten to appoint Brad Prescott as the TRORC Alternate.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

3. Discussion & Review of the EDC Grant for Wassail Activities

- a. Ms. Finlayson stated that she would like to encourage the Select Board to support some of the grant money from the Economic Development Commission. They will be having a Deck the Doors competition. There will be no tree lighting. They will not be doing the horse and carriage rides. Wassail is paused until next year. They will have Santa walk around saying "merry Christmas" and giving out candy. Gatherings of more than ten people who are not family are not allowed. The scavenger hunt is in question, but they think that could happen. Adrian Tans is in charge of it. This would occur December 12th. Merchants will still be open until 7:00pm. People can do strolls with their family and enjoy the Deck the Door contest.
- b. Ms. Miller stated that the EDC has approved up to \$5,000 for Wassail.
- c. Ms. Davies suggested maintaining the \$5,000 grant from the EDC but diverting some of it to advertising for retailers.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to support the EDC grant of \$5,000 to promote Wassail activities.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

4. Approval of Grand Lists

- a. 2016
- b. 2017
- c. 2018
- d. 2019

- Chair Riley stated that there has been one parcel in litigation for a few years, so the Select Board has been unable to sign the Grand Lists.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the Grand Lists for 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

5. Energy Coordinator

a. Operating Budget

b. Discussion of Consensus of Boards from Other Towns

- Mr. Kerbin stated that Woodstock entered in an agreement with six other municipalities to hire an Energy Coordinator. The agreement is to increase the budget for the Energy Coordinator by 5%. The Energy Coordinator is working well. He is getting ready to do energy audits for our buildings.
- Chair Riley stated that they have the opportunity to add it to their budget.
- Mr. Kerbin agrees that would be a good idea.
- Chair Riley stated that Geoff Martin seems to be enjoying the work.
- Ms. Davies stated that the 5% increase is for healthcare.

- Chair Riley stated that he was hired by TRORC. This is our contribution to his insurance.

6. Consideration of Appointment of Library Board of Directors

- Ms. Chester stated that she has served a three-year term on the Library Board of Directors. She is the Chair of the Fundraising Committee. She was not sure if she could do another three years. She believes this will be a good position. She is passionate about the library.
- Chair Riley stated that this is a one-year term as the Select Board's Representative. Ms. Chester would start now. They will reappoint her in March.
- Ms. Chester stated that she is not going anywhere. She goes to all the Library Board meetings. There is always going to be work to do. They have an outstanding board right now. She believes she can bring a lot of information.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to appoint Laurie Chester as the Select Board's Representative for the Library Board of Directors.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

7. Review Request from Woodstock Area Mountain Biking Associates to Create Trail on Mt. Peg

- Ms. Clarkson stated that the Billings Park Commission is requesting along with the Woodstock Area Mountain Biking Associates for a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town. They are proposing to build a new multipurpose trail. The trail will be entirely in the Mount Peg Park. It will not use any of the existing trails. It will allow beginner to intermediate mountain bikers to access the WAMBA trails on top of Mt. Peg. The access would be fabulous for young kids. The MOU will cover the agreement about issues such as use and maintenance. WAMBA will begin construction once this is signed. This will be good for the mountain bike competitions. It will provide easier access from the elementary school.
- Mr. Stout stated that he is the President of WAMBA. He shared a presentation (included in the minutes).
- Ms. Clarkson stated that they would like the MOU signed as soon as possible.
- Mr. Stout stated that construction will likely start in the spring.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to Memorandum of Understanding for the Billings Park Commission and the Woodstock Area Mountain Biking Associates to create a trail on Mount Peg.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Chair Riley to authorize Mr. Kerbin to sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

8. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Ambulance Rates

- Chair Riley stated that they establish these rates annually.

- b. Mr. Kerbin stated that he has talked to Chief Green. Ambulance rates are going to remain the same. Costs are not warranting a rate increase.
- c. Chief Green stated that this is regarding the per capita fees for each town we contract with. Raising the fee would be quite a blow to these towns. He does not want to raise this until they see where their actual costs will be. They can take another look at it next year and change these rates. They need to have this information to these towns by the first week of December so they can put it in their budget.

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to approve the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Ambulance Rates as recommended by Chief Green to keep the per capita rates the same.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

9. Schedule for Budget Workshops

- a. Chair Riley stated that these will be 90-minute meetings. Nothing is scheduled yet. They will be starting these meetings the week of November 30th.
The meetings will be 12/1/20, 12/3/20, 12/8/20, 12/10/20, 12/15/20 and 12/17/20. These meetings will start at 12:30pm and end at 2:00pm.

H. OTHER BUSINESS - none

I. BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

1. Request for Abatements

a. Karen Deprizio – 71 Butternut Lane Unit 1&2

- Chair Riley stated that Ms. Deprizio has requested an adjustment to her sewer bill.
- Ms. Davies stated that they received an email from her stating that there is a single person in the second unit.
- Ms. Fish stated that there are two connections. One should be billed at the single person rate, and the other should be billed at the couple rate.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the rate changes for 71 Butternut Lane Units 1&2. They will not charge penalty or interest. The Town will work on determining correct number of people in these locations and bill them accordingly.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

b. Owen Shindler – 164 Butternut Lane

- Chair Riley stated that Mr. Shindler is requesting an abatement. The Select Board agreed to this at their last meeting, but they did not make a motion.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the abatement of 164 Butternut Lane.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: Ms. Davies stated that they need to look at a way to make adjustments to how they charge people.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

2. Sewer Permit

a. The Frost Mills Nominee Trust (Eva Douzinas) – 45 Elm Street

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the sewer permit for 45 Elm Street as submitted by the Frost Mills Nominee Trust.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

J. CITIZEN COMMENTS

1. Mr. Kahn stated that last winter snow built up on the sidewalks for days at a time. He is requesting the Select Board instruct the Highway Department to remove snow blocking sidewalks within 24 hours of the end of snowfall. He has never seen it as bad as last winter. This is referring to the walls of snow that are built up on the edge of sidewalks.
 - a. Mr. Kerbin stated that he will talk to Ken Vandenburg about it.
2. Mr. Kahn stated that he noticed the Select Board takes their citizen comments at the end of their meeting. It is a long wait.
 - a. Mr. Sutherland stated the reason for this is to have people stay for the whole meeting.
 - b. Mr. Kahn stated that there are not as many people on as were on in the beginning of the meeting. Some people may like to make comments earlier.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES AND PERSONNEL REVIEW

Motion: by Ms. Cole to enter executive session at 8:46pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to exit executive session at 9:36pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

L. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Joint Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2020

2. Meeting Minutes – October 20, 2020

- a. Ms. Davies stated that there are minor changes that she will email Ms. Nourse about.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the Joint Meeting Minutes from October 8, 2020 and the meeting minutes from October 20, 2020 with the minor changes.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed. Mr. Doten was not present.

M. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: by Ms. Cole to adjourn the meeting at 9:37pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse

Summary

The Rural Retreats Amendment is the ideal vehicle for supporting historic Woodstock farmscapes like Gilbert's Hill.

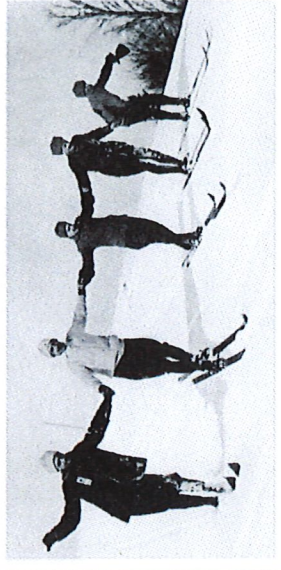
- **Baked-in safeguards** — Conditional Use Permitting, Performance Standards, Site Plan Review, and yearly reviews thereafter
- **Highly selective criteria** — application to the National Register is arduous and a high bar; Only 1 property is protected by the PTV Easement Program in Woodstock
- **Broad support** — this proposal is supported by the Woodstock History Center, the Vermont Land Trust, and our neighbors

Summary

The Rural Retreats Amendment is the ideal vehicle for supporting historic Woodstock farmscapes like Gilbert's Hill.

- **Direct alignment with the Rural Retreats Amendment** — our proposal would support farmcape attributes, which is the central purpose of Rural Retreats Amendment
- **Historic farmscapes benefit everyone** — the neighborhood, community and Town businesses (big benefit/ultra-low impact)
- **Designed to provide supplemental support** — clearly, the RRA does not enable full-time event businesses

Proposal

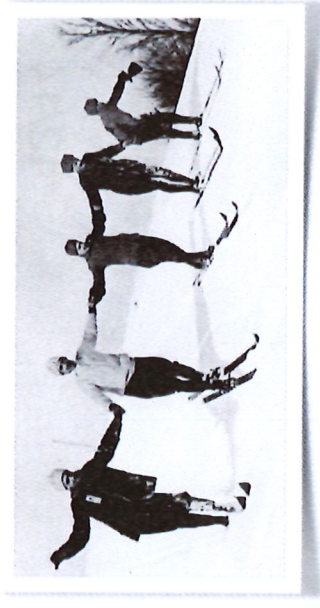


The Planning Commission unanimously agreed upon an amendment to extend the benefits of the RRA:

— Exempt farms on the National Register of Historic Places from general requirements 2 and 3:

- This would add 3 properties for potential consideration under the RRA: Gilbert's Hill (112 acres) Fletcher–Fullerton Farm (53 acres); Isaac M. Raymond Farm (83 acres).
- The amendment could read: Section 535. B4 to add “Farms on the National Register of Historic Places are exempt from criteria 2 and 3 under general requirements.”

Proposal



We respectfully request that the Selectboard extend the Rural Retreats Amendment benefits to include officially-designated historic farmscapes like Gilbert's Hill.

**** This proposal is not about farming
— it's about preserving Woodstock
history and iconic farmscapes.**

Preservation



We've been working towards a preservation plan for years:

- In early 2016 (before we purchased GH) we were **pre-approved by VLT** for the short-term rental of the Warming Hut and for hosting a limited number of small events.
- In 2018 we attended related PC meetings and **began discussions with Michael Brands** re hosting events and he recommended that we pause our efforts until after the Town concluded litigating a case.
- We **resumed working with Michael in March 2020 then the COVID-19 pandemic hit** — we belatedly learned about the Rural Retreats Amendment when the Public Hearing was Warned.

Restoration

We've invested heavily in capital repairs over the last 4 years.



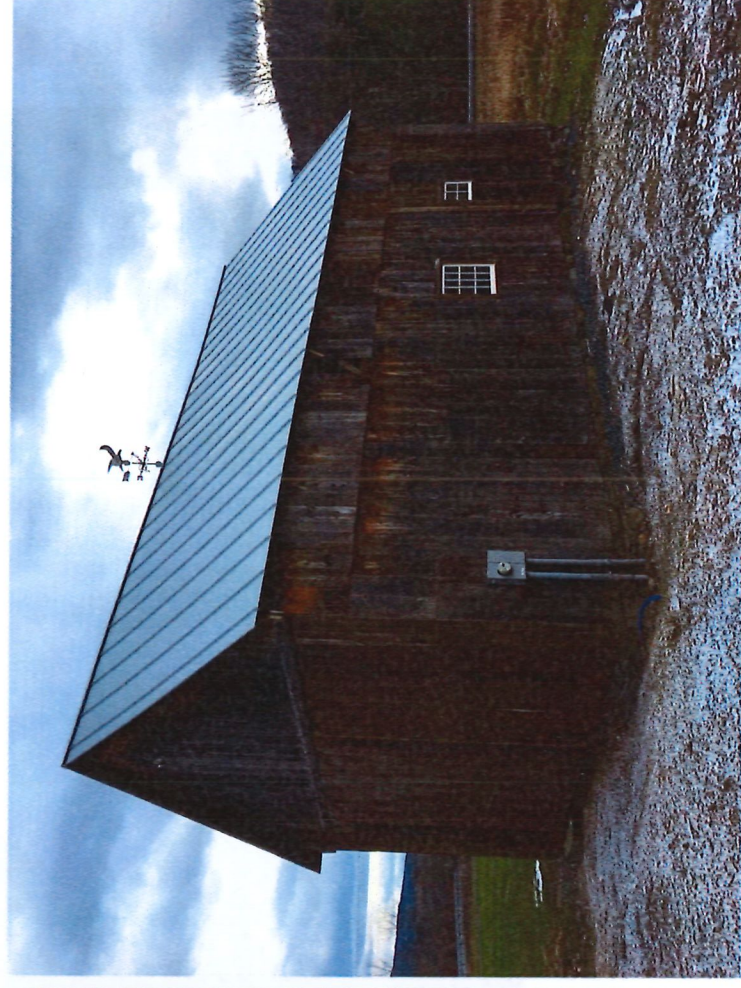
Restoration

We've invested heavily in capital repairs over the last 4 years.



Restoration

We've invested heavily in capital repairs over the last 4 years.



Three Steps

1. Secure the Land (*done*)
2. Restore Historic Structures (*done*)
3. **Provide Long-Term Care**



History



- In 2015 the National Park Service, Vermont Land Trust (VLT), PTV and the Green Mountain Club launched a massive campaign to “Save Gilbert’s Hill” .
- In less than a year, they secured funding from over 200 donors to purchase the property!

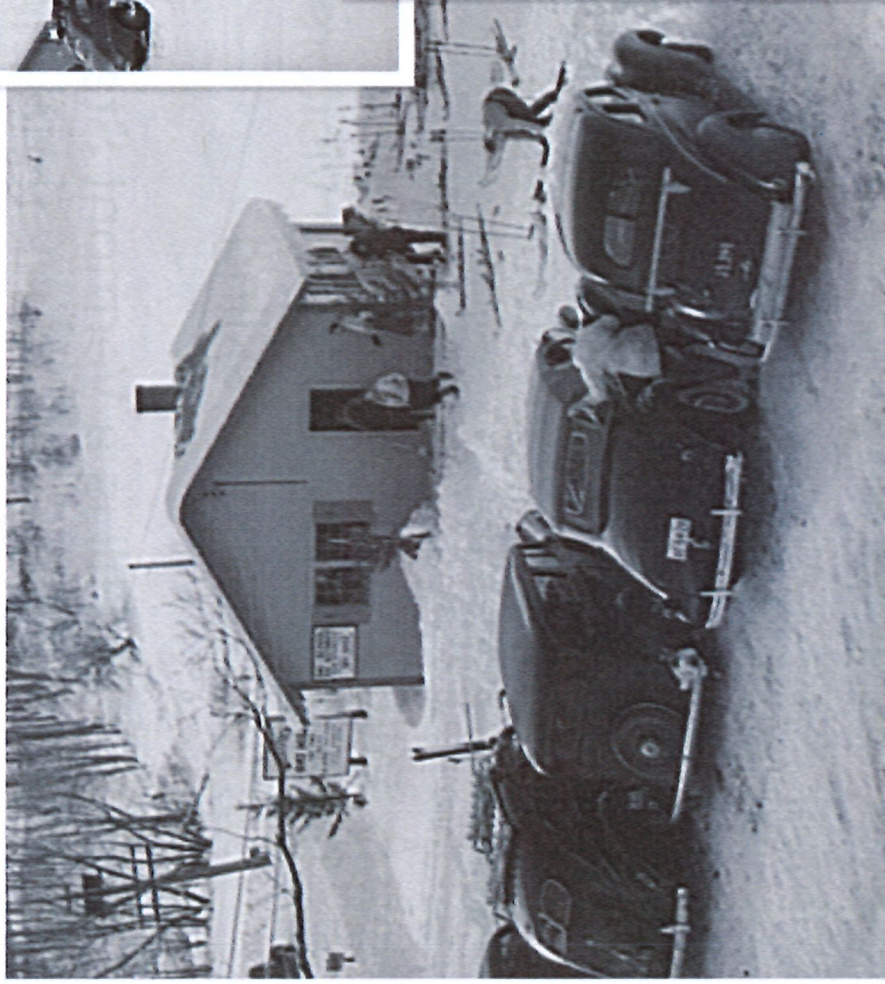
**But, buying the land
was just the first step in
Saving Gilbert’s Hill**

History



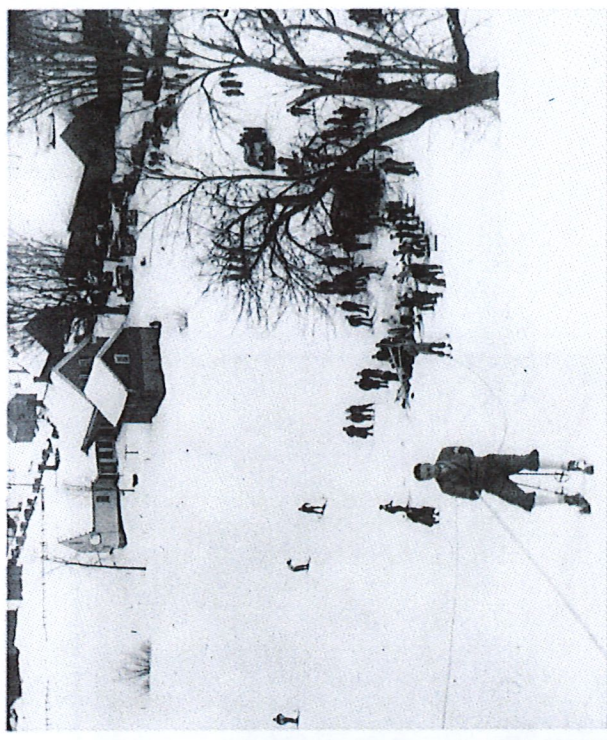
- Woodstock has benefited economically from Gilbert's Hill (GH) for nearly 100 years
- A skiing mecca for 18 years — thousands vacationed here, and now, we have visitors every single day: site-seeing, hiking or skiing
- Gilbert's Hill is a Vermont State Historic Site, is on the National Register of Historic Places, and is protected by the Preservation Trust of Vermont (PTV)

History



History

In 1934, history was made in Woodstock!



Extending the Benefits of Rural Retreats to Historic Farmscapes

Context | Long-Term Care | Proposal

