

Town of Bethel, Vermont
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 13, 2016, 6:30 PM
Bethel Town Office

Meeting brought to order at 6:37 pm

Present: Chuck Davis, Mary Floyd, Lisa Anne, Jennifer Schomp, Mark Heckman, Emily Miller arrived at 7:10 pm

1. Minutes: Minutes from August were reviewed and accepted.
2. Branliere Project
 - a. Mary's conversation with Mark Schiff/ decision on marker placement
 - i. Mary talked to Mark who showed her some alternate spots where the trailhead sign could be placed adjacent to his property.
 - ii. The CC went out to look and determined a good site for the sign would be just behind the stone marker.
 - iii. Chuck will place the post.
 - b. Trail sign?
 - i. "Branliere Forest Trail" will be designated on the sign.
 - ii. Mark suggested a narrow, 33" long sign similar to those seen on the Green Mountain National Forest (e.g. along the Chittenden Brook area of the off of Rte. 73).
 - iii. Chuck will ask his daughter to seek out a volunteer at RTCC who can use a router to create a sign.
 - c. Trail map
 - i. The CC reviewed a great color map created by Angus McCusker showing the trail, topography and property boundaries.
 - ii. Emily will send the image of the map to the group.
 - iii. Mary will explore options for publishing the sign.
 - d. Outreach letter to landowners
 - i. Chuck prepared a letter to send to abutting and potentially interested landowners.
 - ii. The CC reviewed the letter and examined map & list of landowners.
 - iii. In the letter we will invite interested folks to our next CC meeting.
 - e. Hike during Forward Fest weekend
 - i. Emily will lead a hike of the trail during forward fest (time TBD).

- f. The CC reviewed 2 recent articles from Valley News and Herald on the Branliere Forest.
 - g. Maintenance of the road to the water tower
 - i. In response to our previous question about who maintains the access road, the CC has learned that the town is responsible for maintenance.
3. Forward Festival plans
- a. Chuck will create a poster to publicize what the CC has been up to.
 - b. Jennifer will bring card tables. Mary will bring easel.
 - c. Timing:
 - i. Jen 9-10
 - ii. Emily 10-11
 - iii. Chuck 11-12
 - iv. Mary 12-2 (and maybe Lisa?)
 - d. Materials for the table
 - i. Jen will get things from ANR
 - ii. Mary will bring other material.
4. Update on Locust Creek/107 field
- a. Mark has talked with folks from ANR and the state.
 - b. It is our understanding that the state is encouraging the area to be undeveloped river corridor.
5. ANR conference report - Chuck attended for Mary
- a. A strong focus was on how to make CCs more effective (how to prioritize, take action, etc.).
 - e. Suggest the use of Biofinder 2.0 and the VT ANR's Natural Resources Atlas
 - f. Encouraged annual retreat and inventory of resources
 - g. ANR officials encouraged CCs to make use of ANR and invite them to meetings.
6. Any other business to come before the committee
- a. Class IV Roads Committee (also referred to Ancient Roads Committee).
 - i. The CC wonders if the above committee has it been officially initiated or acknowledged by the town. Noting that:
 - 1. It has not begun to evaluate any roads as of yet.
 - 2. Some Bethel residents have requested to have assessments regarding throwing up roads near their residences.
 - ii. Can the status of the committee be revisited by the Selectboard?

1. The BCC knows of at least five parties who have volunteered to serve on the committee (Mo, Mary, Chuck, Lisa and Jennifer).
- h. Buyouts (will review next meeting)
 - i. Is there an electronic copy of the materials from Dubois and King that the CC could look at before our next meeting?
- i. Discussion about the new zoning bylaws (in particular with the proposed adoption of the river corridor zoning)
 - i. It was reported that it was a well-conducted, respectful meeting attended largely by concerned landowners along and adjacent to the river corridor who felt the new zoning might be overly restrictive.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15pm. Next meeting will be 10/18/16 (note: this is a different week than usual). at 6:30pm at the town office.