

Morristown Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes for
October 19, 2006

Members Present: Steve Rae, Kevin Lane, Amy Walker, Jim Pease

Members Absent: Gert Lepine

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

The first order of business was the review of the September 2006 minutes. Following review, Amy motioned that the minutes be accepted as corrected. Jim seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

Then came the report from the co-chair, with Steve offering the following:

- Jim obtained permission from the State for the Commission to do clean-up on the path leading from the Stagecoach Road to Terrill Gorge so long as no motor vehicles or heavy equipment is used. Steve and Gert completed this work in early October. Given the amount of time required to obtain permission, Jim was authorized to seek permission for a 2007 clean-up - including the possibility of some signage.
- Steve and Gert attended the October 6, 2006 event celebrating the Conservation of the Stancliff's Joe's Pond property. The event was covered by the News & Citizen - and Steve showed a lovely color photo showing the attendees gathered about a beautiful sign announcing the Conservation.
- The Friends of the Worcester Range Fall Celebration was held on October 14, 2006 at the Morrisville Water & Light building. While the turn-out was slightly lower than expected, Steve noted that the attendees enjoyed a "few hours of interesting discussion".
- The "Earth For Earth" event was held October 5, 2006 at the Puffer Methodist church. This event was well attended - with 30 people attending the Eco-Party, 70-75 watching "An Inconvenient Truth" and 25-30 remaining after the film for a discussion.

The next item on the agenda was discussion of the operating budget for the upcoming year. Following discussion, it was decided that we'd request the same amount as was requested for the current year.

Also discussed was the Commission's contribution to the Town's Annual Report (the deadline for which is January 5, 2007). Jim offered to draft the Commission's report, with entries suggested for the following:

- The Commission's request that the Conservation Commission Fund receive additional money was approved by a 3 to 1 margin (with thanks to those who have supported our efforts).
- Facilitating the conservation of the Stancliff parcel (which includes Joe's Pond).
- Major participation the 2006 Community Forum - including the Commission's 1st bulk-mail survey soliciting views on a wide range of issues.
- Hosting the annual Friends of the Worcester Range celebration.

- Amy Walker being named to the Commission.
- Members attending the annual Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) meeting.
- Maintenance of the trail leading to Terrill Gorge.
- Co-hosting the "Ear for the Earth" event ("eco party", education, and viewing of "An Inconvenient Truth").

The commission then discussed the schedule for its November 2006 meeting. The meeting cannot be held at the regularly scheduled time of 6:30 on the 3rd Thursday of the month – so it will be held on 11/30 (6:30PM at the Tegu Building). Kevin will post notices of this change the Town Clerk's Office, Post Office, and Library before 11/15.

Next on the agenda was discussion of activities related to the Ancient Road legislation passed by the Vermont Legislature during its 2006 session. Other nearby Conservation Commissions (Elmore and Middlesex) have applied for grant money to help municipalities prepare for this legislation's implementation. And the issue is on the Town's "radar screen" as well, with Dave Crawford, Town Administrator, approaching Steve, as an individual, about applying for a grant. Steve indicated that the town should apply for funds and offered some suggestions on activities that those funds may support. The issue before the Commission is whether it should establish a subcommittee to support this effort. Following discussion, Steve motioned that "the MCC vote to authorize the formation of a subcommittee, chaired by Steve, to study issues and make recommendations related to the issue of 'Ancient Roads'. This subcommittee would meet from time to time to consider issues related to the existence, documentation and policy regarding 'ancient roads'. It would report to the full MCC body, and when it has recommendations would submit them in writing to the MCC for consideration." This motion was seconded by Kevin and passed unanimously after discussion. Also, Kevin indicated that he is will to serve on the subcommittee.

The commission then discussed the Town Plan update process. Steve and Amy attended, along with about 30 other members of the general public, the Planning Commission's October 17, 2006 meeting. At this meeting, small groups of rotating membership were formed to discuss the following issues:

- Land Use
- Government & Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Housing

In terms of "next steps" with respect to the planning process, Kevin suggested the following:

- The commission needs to "put something concrete" before the Planning Commission.
- The commission should consider publishing the "build out" analysis completed by Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) to stimulate discussion and participation.

For "old business", Jim noted that a local farm may be subject to an "enforcement action" for allowing silage leachate to enter the Kenfield Brook (resulting in a fish kill).

For "new business", Jim reported that the road to Beaver Meadow has been "improved" (widened, reinforced with gravel, etc) in preparation for logging. He also noted that it should make for some great skiing!

At 8:50 PM, Amy motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Steve seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Lane