

Morristown Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes for
April 19, 2007

Members Present: Gert Lepine, Steve Rae, Kevin Lane, Amy Walker

Members Absent: Jim Pease

Guests: None

Steve called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

The first order of business was the review of the minutes from the March 2007 meeting. Following review, Gert motioned that we accept the minutes as amended. Steve seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

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

- The VT Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) approved funding of Stowe Lane Trust's Valcour project with a scheduled closing date of June 1, 2007.
- A letter from the Select Board asks the CC to "assist the Trails Committee in any capacity" and "with the CC taking the lead role."
- The Select Board has approved the reappointment of CC members as suggested at our previous meeting.
- Steve sent a letter (drafted by Jim) to the VHCB expressing the CC's support of Vermont River Conservancy (VRC) effort to acquire land in "Worcester woods". VHCB has approved funding of this project.
- We received a letter from the State Agency of Natural Resources informing us that educational sessions on Wetlands Protection and Restoration are available.
- The Planning Commission (PC) is doing a survey to gather input for the Town Plan update. This survey has been sent individuals on the "grand list" (property owners) – so some town residents have been excluded and some residents who don't live in town may respond.
- Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) is scheduled to present findings on the Oxbox "brownfield" study at the Select Boards April 23rd meeting.
- The State has appointed Jens Hilke, a conservation biologist, to assist towns in performing wildlife inventories.

Next on the agenda was Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) membership. After discussion, it was decided (unanimously) that we'd renew the (\$50) membership.

The Commission then reviewed Green Up day plans.

- The roll-off unit will be at the standard Trombley Hill site
- Jim printed the map (with road names). Steve will take the map, sign-up sheets, and "Rules of the Road" to the Town Clerk
- Gert has requested refreshments from a number of local businesses
- Kevin will follow-up with Jim re: directional signage
- Amy will see that the banner is installed and write a thank you letter after the event completes

Then the commission discussed the Select Board's request that the Commission "partner" with the Trails Committee (TC). Mike Stafford – Trails Committee Chairmen – is too busy to continue serving in this capacity. One concern expressed was that current members, such as Leon Whitcomb and Bill Lizotte, be given the opportunity to request that they fill the vacancy. Following discussion, Steve motioned that we "form a subcommittee, as requested by the Select Board, to carry out the TC's mission, with public input, until the Select Board requests otherwise". The motion was seconded by Kevin and passed unanimously following discussion.

Next was discussion of the PC's Town Plan update. At a recent meeting, the PC asked if the CC if it is willing to perform an inventory of agriculture in town. Given that the CC as a whole had not had the opportunity to discuss the matter, neither Steve nor Amy (who attended the meeting both as "private citizens" and members of the CC's PC subcommittee) were able to commit. Therefore, it was suggested at the CC's April meeting that the PC Subcommittee meet soon to discuss:

- Performing an Agricultural Inventory
- Form a plan with the PC for suggesting zoning changes consistent with the CC's mission and input gathered in support of the Town Plan update
- Review the current Town Plan to learn about current suggestions or recommendation for CC "action"

For old business, Amy reports:

- She will schedule the Town Forest walk with Ray Toolan (County Forester). She'll also invite John Lipinsky and Mark Struhsacker.
- Contrary to previous reports, the position of Town Tree Warden is vacant.
- The Ag subcommittee has had 3 meetings. It was suggested that the Farmer's Discussion Group expand to include the entire county and invite owners of agricultural land. Given the premium farmer's place on their time, the subcommittee may do "1 on 1" sessions with farmers at the farm
- The Ag subcommittee is willing to do the Ag inventory as requested by the PC

For new business:

- Steve reported that he and Kevin, as "private citizens", had recently completed a course in web site design. Following discussion on the value of having a web site, it was decided that we'd notify of the Town of the CC's desire to have a web site.
- Amy reported that she has had conversations with Derrick Barrett - who is interested in learning more about the CC.

At 8:25 PM, Kevin motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Gert seconded this motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Lane