

Morristown Conservation Commission
March 17, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 at the Tegu Building and was available via Zoom.

Attendance: Ron Stancliff, Kristen Connelly, Brent Teillon, Dave Stevens, Jess Zehngut, Jenifer Andrews (Zoom), Mariah Keagy (Zoom)
Guests: Theresa Snow, Jamie Brewster

Brent made a motion to approve the February minutes with two corrections. Minutes may be reviewed for 10 days after they are sent.

Old Business:

1. Morrisville Village Land

Ron attended the 3/16 Village Trustees meeting to discuss the village-owned parcels he would like to see transferred to the Town. He will facilitate a meeting between the Stowe Land Trust and the Village Trustees regarding acquisition of development rights for Bugbee Springs.

2. Community Values Mapping

Kristen, Mariah, and Jen suggested launching the CVM project during the first hour of the April MCC meeting. The time would be used to provide information to and gain input from the public. Online mapping could begin as well. While we are entering a busy season, members feel that this project needs to be a priority. Ron will include it in the April agenda.

3. Recommendations to the Planning Council

Brent made a motion to accept Kristen's Conservation Subdivision Bylaw recommendations to the Planning Council. Jess seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

4. 2022 Trail Work Schedule

Brent has provided a trail work schedule. Dave pointed out that we can't take action until we're able to assess the ground conditions. Mariah volunteered to do a trail assessment. The trail subcommittee was discussed, as well as ideas to generate public participation in trail maintenance.

5. Large Tree Contest

Brent emailed the Morristown Centennial Library confirming the MCC's interest in collaboration. Dave pointed out that many aspects of the contest will take place online and that the library can take responsibility for those. Emily Potter, County Forester, and Fran Sladyk, Consulting Forester, are both willing to help. Kristen noted that Fran is now Morristown's Tree Warden, which is great news.

6. Trail Signage

Brent and Dave are continuing to work on details such as sign size, directional arrows, whether or not to include mileage, etc. Turn around by Great Big Graphics should be quick once the order is placed.

7. Bryant Pond

Dave and Brent will meet with rep from the Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation on March 29 to mark trees for removal, after which we will have a firmer cost estimate and can move ahead. Dave felt that it is doubtful there will be cost assistance from FPR, but the Town has indicated support from the Highway Department. Neighbors will be contacted regarding their interest in clean fill and trees that will be removed.

New Business

1. Duhamel Gravel Pit

Jamie Brewster spoke about the Act 250 Commission hearing process. He's been granted 'Friend of the Commission' status and is working specifically on permits to ensure safe, continuous trail connectivity across the haul road throughout construction. This area is a funneling point for the trail system and sees relatively heavy traffic. Mr. Brewster expressed some frustration with the Town over lack of communication with him personally and with the recreational community. Brent expressed his longstanding appreciation of the land's recreational value, and also defended the Town and its intentions. There is debate over whether recreational use was intended at the time of purchase in addition to gravel extraction. Mr. Brewster has found documents attesting to this and will forward them to Kristen. Regardless, open and frequent communication with recreators will be advantageous throughout the process. This led to a discussion concerning MCC's role in various parcels of conserved land (i.e., the Morristown Town Forest and the Duhamel parcel).

2. Officer Elections

Brent motioned to nominate existing officers for another term, Dave seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by those in the room.

Member Report:

1. Brent asked for approval to invite Sue Morse this spring since we have already paid for her to come present again. Kristen will check with Michelle at PA to verify that we can use the auditorium.
2. Ron requested that the Town pay for MCC membership dues to the AVCC since he has been paying them personally. Brent made a motion and it passed unanimously.
3. Kristen noted that the Morristown Recreation Committee has been dissolved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted by Jess Zehngut