

Morristown Conservation Commission

2/15/2024

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

Members Present: Ron Stancliff, Brent Teillon, Pamela Stanyon, Jerry Throne, Kari Anderson, Jess Zehngut

Members Absent: Dave Stevens, Jim Pease, Sandra Zebal

Guests: Evelyn Throne

January meeting minutes were discussed, clarifications and additions were noted, and they were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Lundblad Conservation effort

The Lundblads have not yet responded to Ron's inquiry regarding the conservation of their land, which is 50+ forested, sloping acres adjoining the Duhamel gravel pit.

2. Partnership with LRSWMD for Citizen Training Session

Brent followed up with Susan Alexander of LRSWMD after speaking with their community outreach coordinator (who is no longer in that position) and was encouraged by her enthusiasm for a collaboration to provide a public seminar on the waste stream in Lamoille County. The date for the seminar is tentatively set for April 27, 10:00-12:00 with an alternate date of May 11, location TBD. This falls between Earth Day (4/22) and GreenUp Day (5/4). MCC will want to place PSAs in the News and Citizen and post on Front Porch Forum. Discussion ensued regarding addressing specific questions from the public, which may encourage attendance. We can generate a survey using Survey Monkey to determine broad topics of public interest, and provide a space for specific questions as well. We can then let LRSWMD know which topics to focus on for the presentation. Brent has several MCC projects on his plate right now, and would appreciate somebody else heading this, so Evelyn Throne volunteered.

3. Arbor Day

Arbor Day is April 27. Brent met with Tricia Follert (Community Development Coordinator) and Anna Green (Recreation Coordinator) about celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day and was met with enthusiasm. He expressed interest in using a window in the Tegu building to display MCC activities and they agreed. The commission will generate ideas for display and for activities to celebrate these days. Vt Forest and Parks, Urban Community Forestry, and the Towns of Stowe and Johnson all commemorate these days with events.

The window would be an ideal way to highlight national and statewide celebrations, as well as our own Town Forest Day, conservation efforts such as the Koper land, etc. The commission will generate ideas for display.

Jess will contact Martha Battle to see if MACC or the budding Tree Board has anything planned for Arbor Day. Tricia mentioned a tree planting planned in front of Thompson's.

It would be beneficial to have more collaboration among town groups. The Recreation Committee is interested in trails in Morristown, and Brent received an email expressing interest in building a trail to connect from the Elmore Mountain Road area to the rail trail.

Town Forest Celebration

Town Forest celebration is planned for June 15. We will highlight the new kiosk (Walter incorporated Brent's last suggestions into the map and we have consensus that it is ready for print.) and parking lot. The commission will host various activities and informational talks. Possible topics include forest and tree education, wildlife demonstrations, and a discussion of the evolution of the town of Sterling. The commission could provide a simple BBQ as well.

GreenUP Day

The state has presented the campaign 'Vermont Top to Bottom Cleanup' to promote GreenUP Day this year. This will focus on coordinated trash removal along the entire Route 100 corridor from North Troy to Stanford. Morristown will be responsible for the 11.1 miles that pass through it. Cleanup of each mile will be assigned to a sponsor, which will contribute \$100, and oversee the greening up of their mile. GreenUp would like town GreenUP committees to secure sponsorships. Brent generated a list of 25 potential businesses to approach. Sponsors will be given a T Shirt, water bottle, and recognition, and proceeds will go back to the VT GreenUp Fund. GreenUp has provided a rap sheet, but we will need some more specifics in order to approach businesses. Discussion ensued regarding the safety risks inherent to picking up trash on Rt. 100, this being a major policy change from the state being responsible for state routes prior to this year. We will need deadlines for acquiring sponsors as well. Brent will meet with Kate of GreenUp Vt on 2/22 to get more details as well as display items for the Tegu window display. A Guinness World Record; 'The Most Pledges Received for Trash Cleanup in 24 hours' is being tied to the effort.

We may be able to use the fence around the vacant lot at Congress St and Main St to hang the GreenUp Day banner.

The Morrisville Soccer Club Eurotrip 2024 will hold a bottle drive at the Oxbow parking lot alongside MCC's GreenUp Day tent as it did last year.

MCC Canopy

Ron has looked into some options for buying a canopy. Brent made a motion that the commission purchase a 10x10 canopy to use for events. Pam seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Kari and Jess offered use of theirs in addition.

OTHER

Brent spoke with the assistant finance director (is this the correct person, Brent?) regarding MCC spending limits. He was not given any concrete guidelines, but advised to check in if the commission feels nervous about a proposed amount. Otherwise, she will trust our judgment.

NEW BUSINESS

Koper/NEFF Trail

Ron is interested in encouraging the construction of a trail on the Koper property bordering Bedell Brook with access off of Churchill Rd. He sent an email to the New England Forest Foundation regarding the trail from the Koper property to the old town highway on the upper part of Campbell Rd. Though these endeavors are personal actions, the commission is supportive and appreciates being kept informed.

Duhamel

Ron feels that it is important to act to reforest this area, not only to show that we are invested in beautification and combatting climate change, but because it is listed as a Morristown Forest on the tax map, so it is important that we show interest there as well as on the Mud City Loop side of town. Ron will coordinate with Kevin for access, and a walk of the boundary will be scheduled. MCC members can meet Kevin, Fran Sladyk, as well as members of the public.

ADJOURN

Jerry motioned to adjourn at 8:05, Brent seconded; motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jess Zehngut