

May 15, 2025

Attendees: Jerry Throne, Dave Stevens, Jim Pease, Sandra Zebal,, Hilary Warner, Pamela Stanyon, Nancy Dunavan

Members not present: Brent Teillon

Guests: Evelyn Throne, Ron Stancliff, Chris Espejo

Meeting opened at Town Hall at 5:05 pm

The April meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

There was no treasurer's report.

There were no public comments.

New Business

1. Green Up-Hilary-The commission then discussed recognizing Brent, who has been involved with the commission for at least 15 years, and involved with the Town for over 50 years, and is planning to retire. Ideas for a certificate featuring beavers, snowshoes, and trapping-related items were discussed. The conversation ended without a formal report on Green Up from Brent, who had sent a preliminary email update. The collection was similar to years past and Stage Coach and Randolph roads had the most bags. There was no illegal dumping at the Oxbow parking lot the night before. Hilary reported that Brent did a very thorough job of teaching her and Jerry about every aspect of Green Up Day so there will be a smooth transition to new leadership in 2026.

2. AVCC invasive species meeting-Jerry attended the meeting which focused on invasive species, particularly knotweed, that was discussed extensively. The Town of Hyde Park and the Mad River Valley area have worked extensively on this and Jerry shared insights from a recent workshop, highlighting various control methods including manual removal, stacking, and herbicides. The meeting also discussed other invasive species like wild parsnip, wild mustard, and bittersweet, as well as emerging forest pests (scale, long horn beetle, emerald ash borer, oak wilt, hemlock adelgid). Herbicides were also discussed for knotweed but to treat a large area an applicator license is required. Copies of workshop materials were available for those interested. The group considered the potential of using goats to control knotweed, though the economic viability of this approach was questioned. Finally Knotweed has an active ingredient that is being researched called Resveratrol that has beneficial uses.

3. Other-Housing-Sandra attended the Town Housing Committee meeting at the request of Judy Bickford, who asked if someone from the MCC would join the Housing Committee. If interested contact Brent/Judy at the Town office. The Committee's work includes addressing housing needs across different levels, including affordable and middle-level housing. Jerry attended previously and suggested that they are currently reviewing bylaw changes for 2025 that will eliminate architectural repetition requirements for up to 4 housing units. Act 151 does not allow for a requirement for 4 housing units to be architecturally similar. The meeting also discussed the plans to rezone areas around Morristown Corners from the Rural residential zone to LDR 5 or LDR 4. Jerry expressed concerns about proceeding too quickly with such a

large-scale change, preferring a more measured approach. If interested you must apply on line and contact Brent/Judy at the Town office. Sandy will notify the Housing Committee that they should advertise for volunteers on FPF.

Old Business

1. Hilary reported that she, Nancy, and Sandy met to discuss MCC marketing strategies and the logo design presented at the April meeting by Ann Howard. They are considering things like the Town Hall window display, creating a picture file, and reviewing the content of the MCC page on the Town website. Before moving forward, they are looking to the MCC for approval and acceptance of the logo and level of interest in participating in Rocktoberfest. MCC needs more publicity and ideas were shared on how to do this: a large logo in the front window or on the rail trail. Nancy provided suggestions for improving the logo by using the acronym MCC along with the name. Nancy and Sandy clarified that the approved logo design allows for color variations, similar to the Nike swoosh, and can be adapted for different applications. Nancy would like both MCC and Morristown Conservation Commission on the logo. She was thinking of compacting Morristown Conservation Commission (squishing it up some) in one font, and MCC running vertically in another font. That way the general public would make the connection that they are one and the same. Other changes including making the road look more like a trail and adding agricultural elements like hay windrows. Hilary will see if design changes can be made and at what cost. If the cost is \$200 or less the expenses are approved. The Conservation Commission's membership and recruitment process was also discussed, noting that applications are available online but may not have been adequately advertised.

2. Survey update-Pam reported that the poll received 94 responses. She noted that while this was similar to past town meeting response rates, the survey revealed a passionate group of conservation-minded residents who could potentially help with future projects. The results of the survey were sent to members. 12% of the responses had never heard of MCC. The 6 top issues were flooding, carbon sequestration, water quality, loss of wildlife habitat, invasives and climate change. About 40-50% of residents are familiar with the commission but only 7.4% are active volunteers. The group discussed forming a small committee of 4 members to develop strategies based on the survey data, with a focus on protecting wildlife habitats and conserving land for future generations. They agreed to keep the working group at 4 members to get things worked out before taking up valuable meeting time. If you are interested in reviewing the results speak with Pam.

3. Muddy Moose-this discussion table to next meeting. Jerry will follow up with Brent. Dave stated that it is courteous, we owe him a response, and we should not wait too long to respond to Mr Pepe. Members expressed an interest in preserving the land due to its unique glacial features and public ownership potential, but noted that the Stowe Land Trust had recently decided to hold off on commitments outside of Stowe at this time. The discussion also touched on parking concerns for any future public access to the property; this issue had been previously noted by Brent. Land Preservation-the discussion focused on land preservation efforts in the area, with particular attention to properties around the airport and the industrial park development. Participants expressed concern about environmental impacts and discussed potential preservation strategies for various properties, including the Copley

golf course which could revert to hospital ownership if the current operator ceases business. Research is required to determine if this is true. The group agreed that a comprehensive approach is needed to educate both the public and themselves about existing preserved lands and potential preservation opportunities.

4. Duhamel Reforestation- Jerry reported that Brent had sent a reforestation plan to Brent Raymond but B Raymond responded that implementing the plan would require an Act 250 permit amendment and the Town was not willing to spend the money to do that. Ron provided additional comments and it was agreed to table the issue and christen Ron as Father Nature who would continue to encourage natural revegetation of the site.

5. Commission Vacancy- There is a current opening and Chris Espejo has expressed an interest in it. The group discussed the process for filling a commission vacancy. The group discussed the possibility of adding nonvoting student members for 1 year term to the commission, following a successful example from Stowe.

6. Trails-should we form a Trails Committee with interested residents? Jerry and Brent will also follow up with the local Scouts.

7. MCC Bylaws Modification-Jerry will follow up with Brent.

8. Additional planning & follow-up of Summer Rec. Camp field trip(s) to Town Forrest-.A discussion about having MCC members teach students in the Town Forest for two days in July as part of the Town summer camp program was tabled until June because Brent was not present. Possible subjects include: 1. Wildlife in the forest and environs by Brent, 2. Tree identification by Brent or Fran Sladyk, 3. Birds in the forest by Pam/Nancy, 4. History of settlements and view cellar holes, 5. Insects in the forest by ?

9. Other- Jim and Jerry continued the discussion about submitting concerns regarding the proposed industrial park development to the state by Monday, with Jerry and Nancy tasked with compiling a group response. Will MCC sign this letter to the VTDEC wetlands section? A motion was made by Pam to have Jerry, Nancy and Jim approve the letter and have the MCC sign it. The motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:35 pm

Respectively submitted,
Jim Pease, Secretary