



October 16, 2025

Attendees: Jerry Throne, Nancy Dunavan, Jim Pease, Sandra Zebal, Hilary Warner, Chris Espejo, Pamela Stanyon

Members absent:, Brent Teillon, Dave Stevens
Guests: Lisa Zinn, Kate Zoller, Evelyn Throne

Meeting opened at 5:02 pm

September meeting minutes were approved on motion by Pam and second by Chris.

Public Comments-Lisa Zinn is an environmental professor at Northern Vermont University in Johnson, a Morrisville resident and is interested in learning more about what the MCC is doing and getting her students more involved with conservation projects.

New Business

1. Dave Stevens resignation-there is a process we can follow to fill Dave's position; it was decided it should be filled sooner than later. The process involves filling out the application on the town web site, and the applicant reading the new job description (see 9 below) and the MCC bylaws, and an interview and a request to the SB. Peter Bourne is not interested and is happy with his position as a consultant to the MCC. Jerry will ask Judi if we can advertise in the N&C and FPF. Each member should contact any known interested parties and let them know of the opening. We may have a list of interested parties from Rocktoberfest. The position is open until filled.
2. Invitation to Johnson CC meeting-there is an open invitation for MCC members to attend. They meet the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm at the current Johnson Library (22 Pearl St).
3. Recap of AVCC meeting-Hilary summarized the meeting in an email to members. Town Forest management plans, natural resource inventories and knotweed problems were important to the different CC's. Nancy has the contact information for the person who would be willing to do a town wide inventory of Knotweed. Chris offered to digitize and make available older town documents, and the group noted that a natural resources inventory could be costly but would provide valuable information about protected species and resources (DNR may have one). Jim will circulate the two existing Town Forest management plans.

Jerry will see what files he has from Ron to be digitized. It was agreed that a future agenda item would be created to recap important points from the AVCC meeting,

Old Business

1. Rocktoberfest-Sandy noted that a brochure created by Margo was distributed and discussed the need for a map showing conserved properties on their website. The Trails issue is important to the Town as was the "vase of invasives".
2. Vision and Strategic Plan special meeting 9/26 -there wasn't a quorum, so it became a workshop where the draft strategic plan was discussed; the plan was developed from a Front Porch Forum survey of about 100 responses; Ron and Peter also provided input. After Pam reviews the bylaws and checks for consistency between the two documents, she will revise the document as necessary and get the plan back out, after which a second workshop will be held and the final document presented to a meeting of the full commission. A discussion of what constitutes a quorum ensued; it was clarified that a quorum for the commission is five members, and while smaller groups can meet without violating open meeting law, they should not conduct official business unless all members are present. Jerry will send clarification via email to members.
3. 1/4 cent investment plan-postponed until November. The group confirmed that the funds received from voters would be reserved for future land conservation opportunities, though they typically work with other organizations to fund complete land purchases.
4. Trails Update-3 new bridges were installed with the help of the PA Track team, and all maintenance work for the year is now complete. The group discussed plans to move leftover boards to the Bryan Pond parking lot for a wet spot on the farmstead Trail, though this task is on hold until Brent returns. The pizza dinner was postponed due to Brent's absence and scheduling conflicts with a national protest day. The team also discussed adding Hilary's GPS tracks of town forest trails to the E911 map, with links ready to be sent to Kevin Petrochko, and Chris will update the trail map with the new data. Hilary will try and set up a meeting with Etienne and the Planning Commission about trails connectivity and open space conservation.
5. Tic Borne Awareness-Evelyn shared plans to create a public-facing talk about tick-borne disease prevention, aiming to deliver it locally in the spring and potentially expand it to larger venues like Osher talks in the future. She may need some funding assistance.
6. Trash-Recycling Talk-Evelyn stated that the talk has been canceled. The group agreed to refer people to last year's recycling presentation, which will be shared on Front Porch Forum, after the outreach director's departure left the LRSWMD organization unable to organize this year's event.
7. Bylaws- Jerry pointed out that the town's legal counsel had advised the Town Manager that the bylaws were inconsistent with state statute and that they needed to be changed. The statute prohibits the MCC from representing the public but allows it to provide advisory

environmental evaluations to local Planning Commissions as well as recommendations to other authorities. We may need to better define the word "represent". MCC can advise the Act 250 Commission, they should not represent the public interest, as that is the role of legal counsel. Chris is to draft alternative language for the bylaws regarding "representing the public interest" with a focus on advisory roles rather than representation, and before the next meeting, to run it by Brent Teillon, who has experience with the Commission.

8. Airport Industrial Park-Jerry reported that no decision has been made yet, with the application in limbo awaiting a deadline of findings of fact from the Act 250 Commission.
9. MCC job description-the group clarified that the term of service is 4 years or less, depending on the start date, and agreed to remove any reference to term limits. They also decided to modify several sections to use "may include" language for responsibilities and desired skills, and confirmed that residency in Morristown is a requirement. There isn't a strict 80% meeting attendance rule but members need to be responsible about their participation. The position description for a conservation member was approved and Jerry will ask Judi to posted on the website to help with applications. Nancy will create a flowchart of the application process for new Commission members.
10. Muddy Moose-SLT has an agreement to purchase 100+ acres of the property for open space conservation but that is contingent on Downstreet LLC, a non-profit housing organization, purchase of 10-12 affordable housing units. The purchase is contingent upon DRB approval of a change of use from rental properties to housing, which will be discussed at the next DRB meeting on October 22nd. at 6pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:36 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Jim Pease, Secretary