

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

Conservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting- May 17, 2018

Minutes Approved on- June 21, 2018

Present: Michael Munhall, Valerie Germain, Jon Manley, Joseph MacGregor, and Gary MacKinnon

Co-Chair Valerie Germain called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

1. Minutes
 - a. The minutes from the April 19, 2018 meeting were accepted as written.
 - b. The minutes from the May 3, 2018 public presentation of Natural Resources Inventory were accepted as written.
2. Crotched Mountain West Project
 - a. This is the property formally known as the Samuels property. Valerie Germain attended the closing on the property last week. The property is 118 acres.
 - b. Valerie Germain was presented a map and a cd filled with information about the property from the Frankestown Land Trust. The Commissioners would like copies of these to be available at the Library, Town Hall, and in the archives. It may also be possible to have electronic copies that are accessible. There are no official hiking trails. A biking trail has been created by neighbors. A letter will be sent to these neighbors along with the neighbor's information being forwarded to the FLT. The FLT are aware that these trails have been put in but would like communication with the neighbors as there are bridges on the property. While the Commissioners discussed the idea of posting contact information regarding the usage of this property, the Commissioners will defer to the FLT at this time as the ones to take the lead.
 - c. Gary MacKinnon asked if the FLT is in touch with the New England Mountain Bike Association. This resource will be passed along to the FLT.
3. Conservation Plan (post NRI)
 - a. Once the formalized report from Jeff has been received the Commissioners will begin working on a conservation plan. One resource the Commissioners have available to them is Frankestown's conservation plan that is available on the Frankestown website. The Commissioners will look at conservation plans from towns in the Monadnock region prior to next meeting.
 - b. The Commissioners would like the opportunity to present the NRI to the Planning Board as it should be part of the Master Plan according to RSA.
 - c. One sensitive piece of land that the Commissioners discussed was the land by the Contocook River and the parking area on the other side of Route 202 across from the river. The Commissioners will revisit the discussion of this land in the future.
4. Earth Day

- a. After the garbage bags from the clean up were collected, a State worker informed the Tom James that any bags located on RTE 202, 47, and 31 could have been collected by the State. This would save the Town from filling up the Town Transfer Station.
 - b. A big thank you to Joe MacGregor and Tom James for collecting all the bags!
 - c. Jon Manley announced that the next cleanup of RTE 31 is on June 24, 2018.
5. Scholarship Recipients
 - a. There were three essays submitted for the camp scholarships. Valerie Germain recused from the vote as two of the students are from her classroom. All of the students will be entering fifth grade next year. Valerie Germain read the essays aloud without sharing the name of the candidate.
 - b. The Commissioners discussed the essays and who might most benefit from the camp experience. It was asked if there were enough funds available to send all three. It was not known if the Harris Center has a third camp spot available. The Commissioners unanimously voted to award the camp scholarships to Adeline Regis and Joseph Hodgen. Valerie Germain will contact these students. The Commissioners will check on the availability of a third camp spot.
6. Spring Newsletter
 - a. Michael Munhall will be writing the newsletter. Possible items to include are the Earth Day cleanup, NRI, plans for the creation of a conservation plan, announcing scholarship recipients, river float on June 30th, Crotched Mountain West Project, a public thank you to Mr. Verney and all those who helped to cleanup Bennington either through the Earth day event and to Aaron Willette for cleaning up Bruce Edes Forest.
7. CC Sponsored Summer Hikes
 - a. The Conservation Commissioners discussed hosting several summer hikes one up Mountain Rd area, another in the Bruce Edes Forest. The hikes will be co-sponsored with the Recreation Department. The Commissioners will contact the Library to see about their interest in hosting any additional hikes. Valerie Germain will contact Michael Munhall with dates so that they can be included in the spring newsletter.
 - b. Hikes could be advertised through a newsletter to go home with students at the end of the school year. The Commissioners discussed the creation of a website, noting that there are fees associated with a website.
8. Class 6 Roads
 - a. Valerie Germain contacted a Town individual letting him know that the NRI has been completed. The individual informed Valerie that the Class 6 Roads need to be identified for the public.
 - b. Jon Manley informed the Board that several Class 6 Roads in Town have been abandoned by the Town. Jon has the list and will bring it to a meeting.
 - c. The Commissioner discussed if a pamphlet showing the Town Class 6 Roads and trails would bring clarity. This would require research.
9. Other
 - a. Correspondence from the NH DOT was shared. They are planning the subject highway safety improvement project. The tentative date is September 11, 2018. Jon Manley will contact them regarding paving near the VFW and bridge.
 - b. Denise French has reviewed past records and deposited into the Conservation Fund any funds over the years that were not encumbered from Mr. Verney's contributions to the Earth Day event.

- c. Joe MacGregor shared with the Commissioners “A Poem for Bruce Edes Forest” by Harley Wilson, Adeline Regis, Noah Regis, Cate Stahl, and Cadence Christian. The poem was published in the Villager.
- d. Joe MacGregor notified the Commissioners that PanAm in trying to get back the right of way from Peter Leischman.
- e. Valerie Germain will follow up with Kristie LaPlante regarding the location of the Town well to forward to Jeffry Littleton.
- f. The Commissioners will also follow up on the recommendations they made to the Selectmen on Town owned properties to not be sold.
- g. Joe MacGregor had asked Denise French regarding the property between Evergreen Cemetery and the Catholic Cemetery. It appears that the formal paperwork may not have been done. Denise did say that if the Commissioners were to make recommendations regarding this property, the Selectmen would be open to hearing them.
- h. The Commissioners discussed the perambulation of the Bennington-Hancock line. A date will be set at the next meeting.

As there was no other business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Karen Belcher
Conservation Commission Recording Secretary