

MIDDLESEX CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Thursday, May 2, 2019
7:00 p.m.
Middlesex Town Office
Middlesex, VT

Minutes

Commissioners Present: Larry Becker, Heather Katz, Ross Lieblappen, Dell McDonough, Lee Rosberg, Dave Shepard

Guests: Hope Crifo, Mitch Osiecki – Middlesex Recreation Director/Planning Commission, Stanley Scribner

1. Guest Issues

a. Hunger Mountain Trailhead

Hope Crifo described a human waste problem at the Hunger Mountain Trailhead due to the lack of any toilet facilities. She has spoken to the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) and they are aware of the situation but have no money in their budget for this field season to address this issue. It is likely that FPR could fund some type of toilet facility in future years. Hope estimated it would cost about \$400-\$500 to rent a portable toilet for the May-October timeframe for this year and asked if the Middlesex Conservation Commission (MCC) had any ideas of how this might be funded? Mitch thought some support might be able to come from the recreation budget and some money could likely come from the MCC operating budget. Dave suggested checking with Red Hen Bakery, since they donate tip money to various local causes, to see if this project would be of interest. Mitch will follow up with Red Hen.

b. Scribner Riverfront Property

Stanley Scribner explained that his family has a significant amount of land along the Winooski River whose future use is uncertain. This includes approximately 5 acres of fields at the Settlement Farm. He feels the land has gravel resources that might be valuable to the Town and that the field serves as a floodplain for the river that could possibly be enhanced in conjunction with some gravel removal. Dave noted that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has a program that purchases easements along rivers to allow rivers to protect river corridor areas to allow the river to meander and flood in a natural manner. He will provide Stanley with a contact at the DEC to follow up with if he is interested.

2. Administrative Operations

a. Previous Meeting Minutes

Lee moved to approve the minutes of the MCC April 4, 2019 meeting with a second from Heather. Mitch noted that he was not in attendance at that meeting and with that change the minutes were approved.

b. Treasurer's Report

Heather reported the following balances:

- Special Projects Fund = \$864.94
- Operating Budget = \$430.00
- Conservation Fund = \$4,032.22

Lee suggested that once we know about funding through the Tiny Grant Program from the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) we'll have a sense of what the MCC could contribute toward a portable toilet at the Hunger Mountain trailhead.

c. Correspondence

Lee presented a draft letter of support from the MCC to support reclassification of Martins' and Herrick Brooks. The MCC approved the letter. Lee will check with the Select Board about them sending a similar letter.

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District will be holding a water quality projects training in Richmond on May 18th.

Heather completed and submitted on behalf of the MCC a municipal energy survey from the League of Cities and Towns.

3. Project Reports

a. Emerald Ash Borer

The weather was not very cooperative for the training scheduled for April 27th. Lee and Dave marked a few trees using the app and found it worked well. At this point it may work best if interested individuals team up for a training with someone who is already familiar with use of the app. National Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week is May 18th-25th.

b. Middlesex Town Forest (MTF)

The application for a Tiny Grant from the AVCC has been submitted to help pay for a trailhead kiosk, trail signs and blazing paint. The grant awards will be announced in May. The Vermont Youth Conservation Corps will make a site visit to assess the trail crew work needed for the Chases Mountain Trail to help inform the MCC grant application for a Recreational Trails Grant. There will be a modest fee for this site visit. Dave reported that from his conversation with the Watershed Management Division it is very unlikely that the trail construction would require a stream alteration permit; still following up on any potential wetlands issues. National Trails Day is June 1st, the MCC will lead a trail construction/maintenance hike on the Chases Mountain Trail. Lee made a motion to purchase paint for blazing the trail with a second from Heather; the motion passed.

Maintenance of the cabin will be tabled for now.

c. Shady Rill Park

Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District will be holding a meeting for the 100% design grant at their office on May 6th from 9-11 a.m.

d. Rumney School Gully

There was a stakeholder meeting on April 30th. Stone Environmental has completed the elevation survey. There are two ideas under consideration:

- an impoundment to contain stormwater; or
- constructing a connection, with some stone check dams, into an existing swale along Story Road to divert stormwater into Martins' Brook upstream of the gully.

e. Composting Workshop

A composting workshop will be hosted by the MCC and conducted by the Central Vermont Solid Waste District on May 22nd at Rumney School. Volunteers will be needed for set-up and take down; George, Heather, Ross and Dave indicated they could help.

f. Green-Up Day

Some trash has been collected and staged on Three Mile Bridge Road that will need to be picked up; the pile includes a mattress. Groups of volunteers have indicated they will cover Shady Rill, Wrightsville and Camp Meade.

g. Amphibian Migration

Wendy Knapp has posted several notices on Front Porch Forum (FPF) and George has put up signs along Molly Supple Hill Road. Dave reported that he and Susan Warren had visited the Brook Road crossing site on two occasions, no action on the first visit when there was still a fair amount of snow in the woods and a fair number of peepers, wood frogs and spotted salamanders on the second.

4. New and Other Business

- No news on an Energy Committee for Middlesex; Lee will pose the idea to the Select Board and if there is interest he may post on FPF to gauge interest.
- AVCC Annual Meeting will be on September 28 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Middlebury College Breadloaf Campus.
- Next MCC meeting is the annual meeting potluck to be held at Shady Rill Picnic Area starting at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will include election of officers. Heather won't be able to attend the meeting but is willing to continue as Treasurer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Dave Shepard, MCC Secretary