



Bennington Conservation Commission

April 20, 2023 6:30PM

Minutes

PRE MEETING TRIP to Antrim Road/Bible Hill triangle and Rockwell Property

Call to order 7:08

Attendance - Present: Zach Allen, Tom James, Pat Long, Joe MacGregor, Jon Manley, Mike Munhall, Steve Willette

Absent: Christina Hahn

Minutes: March 15, 2023 Steve Willette moved, Zach Allen seconded, Unanimous acceptance

Mail:

Email from Val Germain regarding misuse of the Class 6 road near Onset Road. There was a stream of emails including Ben Haubrich (Francestown Land Trust) and Betsy Hardwick. Four wheelers/ATVs are ripping up and rutting the road. This led to an extensive discussion of Class 6 roads and who can and can't use them. The consensus was to have Tom James convey to the select board that class 6 roads should not be given up and that the Board should "pursue a solution" to the use of class 6 roads. Zach Allen will do some research and attend an upcoming meeting to discuss options with the board.

Reports

River Committee - The committee was excited about Zach Allen's work with the Pierce 4th grade. The committee spoke about new culverting for the storage unit property by Dollar General that the Conservation Commission needs to inspect any new culvert

Town Hall - Tom James

Old Business

- Gravel Pit - Tom James - What is the status of the pit? Tom says that there is a plan for closure of the sandpit. He will look into how much gravel tax has been accumulated over the past two years from the sandpit. Do the other two towns pay gravel tax for any gravel they remove? What is the life of the agreement of the three towns (Bennington, Francestown, Antrim) for use of the sandpit?
- Town Map Colors for types of land - Printed and ready to be colored according to use of each lot.

- Earth Day Cleanup Plans - APRIL 22, 9:00AM Set up will be at 7:30 AM
 - Depot Scheduled as headquarters
 - Problems getting seeds from UNH Cooperative Extension to be given out at the Transfer Station...2024 contact Cornucopia Project at ConVal for seeds.
 - We will serve breakfast again - Monadnock Mill donated \$250, Common Place is preparing a frittata at 8AM, Joe has the waffle irons, Steve will do fruit salad, Jon will do coffee and baked beans, Pat will make scones, Zach will get Juice. Joe will get road signs from DOT
 - Displays - will set up NRI and River Committee displays
 - Sign-in and assignments
 - Bag supply, gloves, vests, plates and bowls, cutlery, hot and cold cups *Plenty on hand*
 - Roving truck - Joe and Steve - Matt Blanchard, road agent contacted
 - Bag Collection and Transfer to Dump

- Bennington Trail parking - Rick Edmunds has asked that we provide a parking area for the trailhead so that Mountain Road isn't blocked with hiker cars. Apparently there is land closeby that is owned by the town. We will look into developing that into parking for hikers. Rick has offered to assist with the preparation of the lot. Mike will speak with Rick Edmunds about what he suggests we do for parking. Plan a Field Trip with Rick to assess the situation.

- Antrim Road Triangle - recommendation to cut out vines and heavily trim back trees. Save the ash tree. Do some temporary plantings and create a long term plan to make it look like a park. Instruct the town road crew to not stockpile sand-drenched snow. Possibly construct a curb to hold road sand back.
 Rockwell property - Tom James will convey to the Select Board that it is the BCC recommendation that the town sell the property at the soonest opportunity. It's nothing more than an old dump.

- Speakers - Joe has lined up Dale Russell for a talk on area railroads. Jon Manley will do more work getting lists of speakers from his various contacts. Jon said he would be the repository for speaker information.

- Outreach: Zach Allen reported on work with Pierce 4th Grade and water testing and fish launch. The Ledger Transcript ran a front page article about Zach and the 4th grade.

- Midsummer Eve - We are registered to sell hot dogs. Electricity is available to us. Logistics...who will be there?

New Business

- Earth Day Sign Competition - and the winner is Clara Regis. There will be a discussion about the future of the competition as the cost of signs is getting exorbitant.
- Recreational Trails Program - Zach Allen shared that he is attending the Recreational Trails Conference on May 17. There will be a clean up of the Bennington Trail on May 6
- 4 Wheeling on Class 6 Roads - erosion, trillium, Rockwell Property (see Mail)
- Perambulate Greenfield line is planned for late October, weather allowing.
- Recyclable cutlery - Mike showed the group the wooden cutlery he got and it was a consensus that the BCC should encourage local food outlets to use them for takeaway.
- We have been contacted by Bethany Craig to participate in the MidSummer Eve event at the gazebo on Friday, June 23. We said last year that we would sell hotdogs in 2023. It was agreed by the group that we would do it. We have sent the application to Bethany and requested electricity which has been granted.

GOALS FOR 2023

- Continuing work to get the Board of Selectmen to commit to getting the depot restored and functional.
- Finish the website and launch it. Include maps, minutes, trail maps, resources...
- Hold public educational events with speakers addressing environmental topics.
- Continued stewardship of the Forest with maintenance of trails and bridges and new signage.
- Continue to provide leadership in making the town cleaner and more environmentally proactive.
- Perambulate Greenfield town line and finish Deering town line.
- Encourage the town to use environmental “best practices” for the operation of town buildings and activities. ie: net metering, energy audit of town buildings.

Adjourned 8:26 PM

Recorded by Mike Munhall