



BENNINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

June 17, 2021, 6:30 PM

Depot Parking Lot

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 6:31 PM

Present: Zach Allen, Tom James, Joe MacGregor, Jon Manley, and Mike Munhall

MINUTES of May 20, 2021 meeting APPROVED

REPORTS

River Committee - no report The River Committee meets next on June 21

Membership - Pat Long joined the meeting at 7:25 as a potential new member.

OLD BUSINESS

- 4-H Forest Guides - Jon Manley has been in touch with Bethany Craig regarding commissioners assisting the 4H with their invasive species project.
- Rhubarb Festival - Review - Many people stopped by the tent expressing interest in knowing about the Commission and River Committee. A lot of literature was handed out. It was mentioned that the Commission should look for any opportunity to reach out to the public at events.
- River Paddle June 26 - Plans are set. The ladder will be put in the river at the steel bridge Saturday morning. Many people are talking about it so it is possible that we will have a lot of participation. Snacks are ready. Joe is bringing his trailer to help with boat relay.

- Depot Paint/Repairs - We should use satin paint that allows for the walls to be cleaned. Consider a paint with a primer in it. If possible the floor should be encapsulated to deal with possible asbestos.
- Master Plan
 - Water Quality - Zach Allen shared documents about VLAP and VRAP the Volunteer Assessment Programs for lakes and rivers and a sample of data from Gregg Lake. Currently the Mill monitors the water quality in the river, it was discussed that we should get Bennington town back involved in the process of water sampling by monitoring Lake Whittemore in 2022.
 - Work with Planning on Commercial/Industrial areas - Mike Munhall has reached out to David Mackenzie of the Planning Board for an initial conversation on placing commercial/industrial zones in town. A further meeting is planned.
 - Land Use Change Tax - Joe MacGregor thinks that it still is but the current situation at town hall hasn't allowed him to confirm it.
 - Rail Trail - Steve Willette and Jon Manley mentioned that there is a Trail Association and that Bennington should coordinate with other towns that are developing their rail trails.
 - Alternate water sites - Jon Manley said the NRI shows that there are two watersheds: Crotched Mtn to town and Switzer Road to the River.

NEW BUSINESS

Zoning Variance Application - The application for a variance for a Storage Facility 202 behind Dollar General was reviewed. There was no objection to the application. However, it was mentioned that there should be consideration to changing the passing zone on 202 near Dollar General to reduce risk of accidents.

Membership - Pat Long was approved by the Commission as a new member. Her appointment will be sent to the Select Board for approval.

GOALS for 2021 *current status*

- Continuing to work to get the Board of Selectmen to commit to getting the depot restored and functional.
- Continue to work on finding uses for the Old Stagecoach and Durgin Road properties.

- Find at least two new members to be on the Commission that would increase the diversity of the membership. **Completed**
- Pursue grants to fund our projects.
- Tally town and current use properties to see what can be done to make them accessible to the public.
- Maintain what we currently have:
 - Work with Eagle Scout to complete his kiosk and plant tagging **DONE**
 - Repair benches in the forest **Completed**
- Do more educational outreach
- Perambulate the Deering townline.
- Work to get the trestle opened and explore a bike trail.

Next Meeting: August 19, 2021

Meeting was adjourned 7:45

Submitted: Mike Munhall