

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday January 5, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Bruce Harmon David Jaqua, Jason Kirchick, ME Lawlor, Marina Meerburg ME –
Excused: Bob Fahey, – Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman – Guests: Lynn Wolf, Kim Komer

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

End of meeting

Intervale

Lynn Wolf from the Intervale Conservation Nursery in Burlington made a request to harvest portions of shrub willows on the Mayo Farm for the purpose of stream bank stabilization. This would be a onetime request as they are in the process of creating their own stand. No trees would be wholly harvested. CC members deliberated the pros and cons of the request and decided to approve. Motion: Allow the representatives from the Intervale Conservation Nursery to harvest shrub willows on a portion of the Mayo Farm adjacent to Field G. Harvesting is limited to 1/3 of the stand and a best effort made to not destroy viability of any individual tree. MSP.

Lamoille County Natural Resource Conservation District

Kimberly Komer of the LCNRCD was present to describe her organization's functions and describe some of its work in Stowe. Several potential areas for further collaboration were discussed. The CC appreciated the outreach effort and committed to working with LCNRCD as appropriate.

Conservationist of the Year

The CC discussed potential COTY recipients. Tom suggested Nancy and Richard Hobbs, who have hosted the annual Green Up Vermont event for many years. Motion: Award the Conservationist of the 2011 Year award to Nancy and Richard Hobbs. MSP

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

Tom presented a proposal from Stowe Land Trust for trail improvements on the Mill Trail property which connects Notchbrook to Bingham Falls. Discussion ensued. SLT owns the property, though a portion of the trail is on Notch Brook Condominium land. SLT is seeking funding for the project. The CC endorses the project and would consider funding at a future date.

ME agreed to serve on the Green Mountain Byway steering committee.

The Selectboard is looking for a CC member to participate on an ad hoc committee to recommend efficient LED lights for street lighting. David volunteered.

LCPC is applying for a bike / pedestrian planning grant for a multi-use trail connecting Stowe and Morristown. Bob will serve on the steering committee.

Other Business

Next meeting Wednesday January 19, 2011

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.

Stowe Conservation Commission
January 19, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Bob Fahey, David Jaqua, ME Lawlor, Jason Kirchick, Marina Meerburg –
Excused: Bruce Harmon – Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman – Guests:

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

The minutes for the Jan 5 meeting were approved

Bob distributed a current budget and expenditure report.

Tom indicated that the rip rap for the Quiet Path bottle on the Mayo Farm would be paid for by funds in the Mayo Farm fund.

The town is applying for a \$20K trails grant for work on Adams Camp. Phase one was mostly completed during summer of 2010. The town would provide both funding and in kind matches. The Work on phase two would take place during the summer of 2011.

Mountain Bike Trail Initiative

The Mountain Bike Club and Stowe Area Association are partnering on a program to improve and promote Stowe's mountain bike trails. SAA has identified mountain biking as a key economic driver. One important task is to identify trails and opportunities for new trails suitable for beginners. There is a meeting this Friday at 4PM. Jason has tentatively agreed to attend and be CC liaison for this initiative.

Election of Officers

David nominated Bob to be Vice Chair. ME Seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

David nominated Jason Kirchick to be Treasurer. ME seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

Change in Meeting Time

After a brief discussion, the commission agreed to change the usual meeting time to 5:30 PM.

Sunset Rock Brochure

There was a brief discussion of goals for the property and brochure.

- Promote awareness and use of the property, especially by visitors from the village
- Improve trail conditions and signage

Other Business

Next Wednesday March 2 meeting will be held Thursday March 3, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the Green Mountain Club.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday February 16, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Bob Fahey Bruce Harmon David Jaqua, ME Lawlor, Marina Meerburg – Excused:
Jason Kirchick – Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman – Guests:

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

The minutes for the Jan 19 meeting were not available.

Bruce Harmon announced that this would be his last meeting. All present expressed their sincerest gratitude for his service to the Town as part of the commission for the past nine years.

The commission discussed the proposal before the Planning Commission to allow signs on the Recreation Path.

Sunset Rock Brochure

The commission discussed the land brochure for Sunset Rock. o actions taken.

Other Business

The commission discussed setting up a table for town meeting.

Next meeting Thursday March 3, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the Green Mountain Club

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.

STOWE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: 03/16/2011

LOCATION: Akley Memorial Bldg.

START TIME: 5:30 pm

ADJOURNMENT: 7:00 pm

Members in Attendance:

Marina Meerburg, Chair

M.E. Lawlor, Note taker

Jason Kirchick

Bob Fahey

Tom Jackman

Members Absent:

David Jaqua

Others in Attendance:

Bethany Hanna, guest

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS:

1. INVASIVE SPECIES DISCUSSION:

Marina reported that she spoke with Jeff Grogin (Stowe 7th grade teacher) at a Green Drinks event. They discussed organizing the 7th graders in an event to pullout the garlic mustard plants in the Moscow fields and to include a "pizza party" with prizes for the participants.

The optimum time for pulling the plants is late May thru early June.

Action: Jason is moving plans for this event forward.

2. BROCHURE DISTRIBUTION DISCUSSION:

Jason reported that he has been in contact with PSD Distributors. They proposed to distribute the Stowe and Waterbury Recreation Guide in the Stowe/Waterbury area for approximately \$105.00 USD @ month for a 6 month contract period. The contract period for distribution is to be May thru October 2011.

Other additional avenues for promotion of the Guide were put on the table:

- the Stowe Reporter article
- the Stowe Reporter announcement insert

STOWE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Motion by M.E.: That the Stowe Conservation Commission approve an expenditure of not more than \$700.00 USD for PSD Distributors to distribute the Guide May-October 2011.

Motion 2nd by Jason

Result: Motion carried unanimously

Action: Jason will move this forward.

3. CURRENT BUDGET UPDATES DISCUSSION:

Jason distributed an updated FY 2010 – 2011 Budget. These funds are available through the end of the FY.

4. TOWN-OWNED PROPERTIES UPDATES DISCUSSION presented by Tom Jackman:

- Moscow Stump Dump – Alex's Trail & Wall Trail both need maintenance & designated parking areas.
- Moscow Recreation Field – Could use sign + Kiosk + information
- Mayo Farm – Waiting on grant
- Sunset Rock – Currently has a brochure rack. Before we re-design the brochure, we need to define the trail system.
- Sterling Forest and Sterling Falls – Needs much work.
- Matuchen Forest – Access must be addressed before any projects proceed. The picnic table resting at the bottom needs to be carried to the top.

Action: Jason will recruit some volunteers to do this.

Tom suggested that specific projects to be completed before the end of the FY be identified. There was some discussion that the remaining unallocated funds be used for the following projects:

- Sunset Rock trail maintenance
- Sunset Rock kiosk
- Sunset Rock brochure update

5. GREEN UP DAY DISCUSSION:

This is the 1st Saturday in May – this year May 7th. Plans for the event need to be finalized by the 2nd meeting in April (4/20/2011). Meeting place for volunteer assignments is the Sunset Grill. Volunteers collect small trash in bags and bring bags back. They report the large items that need to be collected. Volunteer assignments are not reserved – it's first come first serve; however, the Girl Scouts usually take the Recreation Path.

STOWE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Event needs:

- Banner (use one from last year)
- Banner installation (Tom to arrange)
- Bags (provided by Green Up VT)
- Doughnuts, cider, gloves - have some gloves from last year
- Map for volunteer assignments - need a new one and suggest that it be laminated (Tom to provide)
- Ad placement in the Stowe Reporter
- Community Service Forms (Marina will get these)

GREEN MOUNTAIN BYWAY DISCUSSION:

Tom presented an update on the Green Mountain Byway Committee Meeting which focused on the identification of critical wildlife crossings in VT and specifically on route 100 between Waterbury and Stowe. He will be working with them to develop and action plan. The general feeling is that this is primarily a Waterbury related project, but we would like to offer support in some way.

ADDITIONAL COMMISSION MEMBERS DISCUSSION:

Marina announced that 2 people have expressed an interest in joining the Stowe Conservation Commission: Bethany Hanna and Gar Anderson. They may attend the Select Board meeting on 3/28/2011 for a formal interview for potential appointment.

NEXT MEETING:

April 6, 2011 – Akley Memorial Building

MEETING ADJOURNED

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday April 6, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Gar Anderson, Bob Fahey, Bethany Hanna, David Jaqua, ME Lawlor, Marina Meerburg – Excused: Jason Kirchick – Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman – Guests:

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

The minutes for the Jan 19 and Feb 7 were approved.

Tom updated the CC on the status of the Critical Paths II wildlife crossing along route 100 in the vicinity of the Waterbury and Stowe boundary.

Tom mentioned State of Vermont Forest Commissioner Michael Snyder will be giving a seminar on forestry in Stowe on June 11, 2011.

Sunset Rock Brochure

The commission reviewed, discussed and made recommendations for changing the land brochure for Sunset Rock. No actions taken.

Sterling Forest

Gar presented several ideas regarding management of Sterling Forest and the Phase III cutting program. He wants to present a plan to improve some of the woods roads, trails and bridges with respect to ditching, vehicular support and other issues. This is a good opportunity for the CC to review activities and status at Sterling Forest and review the Sterling Forest Management Plan in the coming months. No actions taken.

Green Up Day

Green Up Day is Saturday May 7. The CC agreed to various assignments to make the event a success.

Other Business

Next meeting Thursday April 20, 2011 at 5:30 PM

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday April 20, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Gar Anderson, Bob Fahey, Bethany Hanna, David Jaqua, Jason Kirchick, ME Lawlor, Marina Meerburg – Excused: – Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman (excused) – Guests: Nat Goodhue, Karen Goodhue, Rick Sokolov

Stowe Garden Club

Karen Goodhue from the Stowe Garden Club made a presentation regarding the need for landscaping and planting at the newly renovated school house next to the Helen Day building. The ground surrounding the school house had been disturbed due to site preparation and renovation work. Club members have met with Charlotte Kastner of the Library, Bruce Gadin of Stowe Parks and Stowe Tree Warden Charlie Lusk to discuss ideas. They are seeking some funding for the project from the CC. They did not yet have a design or a plant list. The CC's consensus was that it would provide some funding for the project contingent upon a suitable design and plant list.

Stowe Mountain Bike Club

Rick Sokolov from the Stowe Mountain Bike Club made a presentation about the need for landscaping and planting at the Stowe Bike Park on the Mayo Farm. The CC had previously supported the idea of providing planting to mitigate the visual impact of the earth works that constitute the park. Rick also said there was a need for shade trees. He did not have a formal design or a plant list. The CC's consensus was that it would provide some funding for the project contingent upon a suitable design and plant list.

Motion: Grant up to \$1500 each to SMBC and SGC for plants to be used as described above provided that the organizations provide suitable designs and plant lists to the Town Planner. Motion was moved by David, seconded by ME, passed unanimously. Supersedes previous expenditure motions.

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

The minutes for the April 6 were approved.

Jason reported that the distribution of the Byway brochures will commence on May 10.

Sterling Forest

Gar reported that several signs had been repeatedly stolen from trails within Sterling Forest recently. While the specific reasons for doing so are not known with certainty, he suspected it might be due to local people not wanting others to be able to find the trails, thus giving them preferential use. If true, this is troubling. The CC discussed various possible responses including conducting an outreach campaign and/or changing town ordinance to specifically prohibit such behavior. The CC decided to postpone taking any action and discuss possible actions or remedies with Tom at the next meeting.

Sunset Rock Brochure

Nothing to report.

Other Business

Next meeting Thursday May 4, 2011 at 5:30 PM

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.

Stowe Conservation Commission
Wednesday May 4, 2011
Akeley Memorial Building
Meeting Minutes
(Approved)

Members present: Gar Anderson, Bob Fahey, Bethany Hanna, David Jaqua, Jason Kirchick, ME Lawlor, Marina Meerburg – Excused:– Absent: – Town: Tom Jackman– Guests: Biddle Duke, Leah Hodari, Paul Percy, Dale Percy

Stowe Community Supported Agriculture

Biddle Duke and Leah Hodari made a presentation on behalf of a local group who are trying to create or cultivate a community supported agriculture (CSA) venture in Stowe. A CSA is a food crop venture wherein community members purchase shares of food production in advance, and then receive a proportionate share of the crop yield when it is harvested. They would like to obtain use of some land in Stowe at a low cost for this purpose. They have met informally with several potential candidates. Seventy people signed a petition at town meeting in support of the idea. Specifically they are interested in whether a portion of the Mayo Farm could be made available for this purpose. They asked whether the CC would support such a use.

A discussion then ensued regarding possible suitable locations. They would start with less than an acre, but would want several acres in the future, a farm stand in a visible location, access to water, and possibly a location for a hot house. The production would be certified organic. The areas adjacent to the homestead and the community garden were offered as possibilities.

Paul Percy was present and voiced various concerns. He currently leases most of the agricultural land on the Mayo Farm for crop production and pasture. He does not want to cede any crop land. He is skeptical of whether such a venture would be sustainable in the long run. He is concerned that nibbling away at the land he leases will eventually threaten the long term viability of his agricultural operation.

The CC consensus was that it would most likely support a well thought out CSA that did not conflict unduly with existing uses. The CC asked Biddle and Leah to further investigate and document their requirements, get a better sense of the Mayo Farm lands, and then possibly submit a written proposal to the CC. They should also consider looking at other land possibilities in town.

Minutes, Correspondence and Reports

The minutes for the April 20 were approved.

The GM Byway grant was denied by the Federal government.

There are 9,000 GM Byway brochures left. The CC should consider updating the map and print more.

Tom gave a brief Green Up Day recap.

There is a Moscow Park riparian buffer planting event scheduled for May 18.

Sterling Forest

Gar made a presentation on a degraded stream crossing on one of the trails in Sterling Valley. He would like the CC to underwrite the material costs for a new bridge and culvert. Tom supports the project.

Motion: Expend up to \$2,365 for bridge and culvert materials for a stream crossing in Sterling Forest. Motion was moved by David, seconded by Bethany, passed unanimously.

Gar also discussed the need for improved trail signage for trails within Sterling Forest. He has a number of Sterling Falls Gorge Natural Area Trust medallions that he would like to use as trail markers. David expressed some concern that this might be confusing to people, as Sterling Forest is

Stowe Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

not really part of the SFGNAT. The CC will discuss further at an upcoming meeting. SFGNAT is contributing ½ costs for steel beams.

The CC reviewed Bob's letter regarding trail sign vandalism. Bethany agreed to work with Jason on a new version that more directly addresses the sign vandalism issue.

Other Business

Next meeting Thursday May 18, 2011 at 5:30 PM

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm. Respectfully submitted by David Jaqua.