

Convened in the Brown Public Library Community Room on May 13, 2009 at 6:35 pm with Chair Patricia Coppolino, Russell Barrett, Lawrence Garland, Pam Knox, Leslie Matthews, Donald Wallace and resident Sandy Hyde present.

1. The minutes of the April 8, 2009 meeting were approved unanimously on a motion by Leslie Matthews, seconded by Donald Wallace.
2. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation has granted \$7,100 to Northfield to do trail restoration and trailside amenity re-construction work on the Paine Mountain Municipal Property under the Department's Recreational Trails Grant Program. Russell Barrett will oversee the work for the Conservation Commission. He said that the Youth Conservation Corps will be doing the work late this summer and early fall. Work will include repairing and stabilizing portions of existing trail heavily damaged by off road vehicle use and suffering resultant erosion. The crew will also repair the existing lean to at the "Hawk Watch". He added that brush cutting to maintain the "Hawk Watch" opening is not included in the grant but could be undertaken with volunteer labor during the same time period.

3. Project Prioritization

A). Protection of the Paine Mountain trail repairs noted above will require some level of future wheeled vehicle control to prevent losing the investment of time and money. Leslie Matthews reported that use of dirt bikes and ATV's was an increasing and fairly common occurrence on the Paine Mountain property. She said that Norwich University has erected signs prohibiting wheeled vehicle use on their abutting lands and suggested that a similar restriction should be implemented on Municipal lands. Commission members recognize that they don't have authority to restrict vehicle use and that the Village Trustees hold that authority. Leslie Matthews agreed to developed draft sign language for review and Chair Coppolino agreed to take the issue to the Trustees and request permission to erect temporary signage at Municipal land entry points this summer in advance of a management plan being completed.

The Commission will conduct a field review at 5pm on June 9, 2009 to educate themselves on current trail conditions. Patrick Kell (Vermont Youth Conservation Corps) and David Packie (Mountain Biking advocate) will accompany the Commission.

B). Bear River Consultants has submitted it's final report on the Dog River Geomorphic Study to Municipal Manager Nanci Allard. The report includes several recommendations for further action. Commission members are asked to review the reports recommendations so that they may be prioritized at a future meeting.

C). Land Preservation- The Commission agreed to send a letter to Northfield land owners of 25 acres or more that will serve to educate property owners on available land management assistance and land preservation opportunities available to Vermont landowners. Chair Coppolino will draft the letter for Commission review.

D). The Commission agreed to postpone plans for a " summer festivus" until 2010 . The added time will allow development of a theme based, quality, family oriented community event with sufficient time for effective advertising to occur.

E). Chair Coppolino requested any further comments on the Town Plan be submitted to her immediately.

4). Other

A). Russell Barrett said that a timber cut approved in the Dustin's Pasture Management Plan was scheduled to occur this summer.

B).The Commission agreed to set up a program to sponsor one or more Northfield children to attend the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife's Summer Conservation Camp beginning in 2010.A fund raising system and a method to accept applications and select recipients will need to be developed by winter.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:79 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Lawrence Garland, Secretary
May 27, 2009

Next Meeting: June 10, 2009 at 6:30 pm in the Brown Public Library Community Room.