

Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC)

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

Opening

The regular meeting of the Mount Holly Conservation Commission (MHCC) was called to order at 7:08 pm on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 by Phil Crane. It was held by Zoom only.

Present

Philippe Crane, David Martin, Philip Leonard, Fred Garrow, Jim Corven, Peter Smith, Susan Presson, Stephen Michel (guest), Jon McCann (guest), Brigid Sullivan (guest).

Approval of Agenda

The meeting agenda was approved as previously circulated.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from May 3 meeting were approved as submitted. Motion to accept: P. Crane. Second: D. Martin. Unanimously approved

Presentation from Conservation Trust Guests P. Crane suggested that we take up the request from the Mount Holly Conservation Trust before any other business. Brigid Sullivan, assisted by Jon McCann, discussed this matter. The Trust has purchased 448 acres of land (210 in Weston, 228 in Mount Holly) that intersects VT100 just downslope from Slawson Road in Weston. This land has been of interest to Vermont Fish & Wildlife for over 30 years. The Trust would like to convey the property to that agency, which would operate it as a Wildlife Management Area. As part of this process, both parties wish to obtain support from the towns involved. The Trust has asked the Conservation Commission to encourage the Mount Holly Select Board to offer this support.

After an illustrated presentation about this parcel, some questions, and discussion among MHCC members, Dave Martin moved - and the Commission agreed by voice vote – that we ask Fra and Philippe to convey the support of the MHCC for the proposed transaction to the Mount Holly Select Board at its next meeting.

Brigid Sullivan offered to take interested Commission members on a tour of the site.

Star Lake

Phil L. gave a brief update about the process toward the July installation of bottom barriers in Star Lake. A next move is to inspect and inventory the ones that are offered on loan by the Lake Ninevah Foundation.

Shade Tree Plan

Phil Crane made an illustrated presentation about the Shade Tree Plan and his role as Mount Holly Tree Warden. There is a draft plan (with appendices that include significant visual documentation)

that he had circulated prior to our meeting. He plans to speak before the Select Board at its next meeting to address the following:

In order to proceed, the statute requires the plan [Shade Tree Preservation Plan or STPP] be published for public review, and presented at a public meeting prior to action by the Selectboard.

Phil went through a draft version of his intended remarks, and answered questions from members and guests about aspects of the plan, including implications of agreements with landowners where included trees are located and the possibility of including shade tree costs in the next town budget cycle.

Dave Martin asked about a motion showing the Commission's support for taking the STPP to the Select Board. Susan Presson made such a motion, seconded by Peter Smith and passed by the Commission.

Other and New Business

Jim reported that he has spoken with Jeff Chase, and that the health officer has agreed to carry out water testing at Star Lake weekly from late June into the Fall. It turns out that testing for coliform and e coli is both inexpensive (\$15/.kit) and simple. Some help may be needed in transmitting samples for analysis. Jim also discussed signage related to algae and cyanobacteria should either become problematic.

Jim mentioned that the Conservation Commission has a more "official" email contact address, namely, conservationcommission@mounthollyvt.org

Action Items

- Phil C. (and/or Fra) to present STPP information to Select Board.
- Teams to work on draft definitions related to their various categories.
- Jim to assist us in opening up document sharing using Google.
- Phil L. to proceed toward installation of bottom barriers.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of MHCC will be on Tuesday, July 5, 2022, at 7:00 pm. The agenda will be provided in advance.

Adjournment

Phil Crane declared the meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Phil Leonard, clerk.