

Town of Waitsfield Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

July 17, 2023

6:30 PM Waitsfield Town offices and Via Zoom

Members Present: Lindberg, Laferriere, Grimaldi, Joslin, Huffman, Loomis, Cook, Donaldson

Members Absent: none

Members of the public present: Gail O’Keefe – prospective WCC member, Alice Peal – Planning Commission Chair, Misha Golfman – Mad River Path Association

Lindberg opens the meeting at 6:40 PM

1. Welcome and review agenda – no suggested changes
2. Public input: Alice Peal reports on the VNRC Parcelization Webinar and recommends WCC members view the webinar. Discussion
3. Review and approve minutes of 5/19, 6/19 and 7/6 meetings.
 - 5/19 minutes – MOTION by Huffman, seconded by Laferriere to approve the minutes. Discussion. Suggested amendment – regarding discussion of the Tardy Management Plan, include Hadley Gaylord’s full name the first time it is used. All agree.
 - MOTION APPROVED as amended.
 - 6/19 Minutes – MOTION by Huffman, seconded by Grimaldi to approve the minutes. MOTION APPROVED with Donaldson and Loomis abstaining.
 - 7/6 Minutes – MOTION by Laferriere, seconded by Huffman to approve the minutes. MOTION APPROVED with Loomis and Grimaldi abstaining.
4. Scrag Trail Project Update.
 - Donaldson provides an update on the project. Contractor working toward beginning work the week of 7/24, weather permitting. Discussion. All agree a delay in favor of better weather for startup is pertinent. James will keep the group informed of progress.
5. Discussion with Misha Golfman – Mad River Path Association
 - A round of introductions and brief discussion of collaboration possibilities.
 - Golfman describes the current MRPA vision for “completing” the Mad River Path by capitalizing on the Route 100 corridor as a location for sections of the path.

- Golfman describes the need for significant public support for the concept prior to taking further steps and describes his actions toward gaining such support at the municipal level via visits with municipal boards and commissions.
- Discussion of the vision and connectivity of the future path with the Cross VT trail and the VELOMONT trail.

6. Recommendation to the Selectboard on new prospective WCC member Gail O’Keefe.

MOTION by Laferriere, seconded by Cook, to recommend to the SB the appointment of O’Keefe to the WCC. MOTION APPROVED

7. Haskin Survey – Discussion of expense. Laferriere questions whether this should be an item for Executive Session. Discussion and check of Open Meeting Law.

Meeting paused at 7:27

Meeting resumed at 7:29 after a call with the Town Administrator.

MOTION by Huffman, seconded by Joslin to move Item 7 to the end of the agenda and address in executive session. MOTION APPROVED

8. Farley Riverside Park – Huffman provides an update.

Selectboard has approved the management plan for the parcel and the change of name to Farley Riverside Park. VLT has signed the management plan, Town Administrator to sign for the Town.

Next Steps:

Engagement with a landscape architect for the design of the memorial area will be handled by SB member Brian Shupe.

Mapping the management zones described in the plan and identifying specific actions.

Discussion – reserve fund handling. Bruno will check with the town Treasurer on the status of the creation of the reserve fund.

Ground work is likely to start in Spring 2024

9. Financial Matters – Grimaldi provides an update

New fiscal year started July 1, 2023 (FY 2024)

Budgeted annual operating account for FY23 completely exhausted.

\$375 invoice for Brian Colleran to be paid out of Reserve Fund #41 – Invasive Species Reserve Fund. MOTION to approve this invoice as noted by Grimaldi, seconded by Joslin – MOTION APPROVED

10. Other Business –

Next meeting – 8/21/23

Invite to future meetings – Friends of the Mad River, Vermont Land Trust, County Forester
ARPA grant possibility for invasive species management.

MRV Bear Initiative contribution of \$500

MOTION by Laferriere, seconded by Grimaldi to go into executive session to discuss contract matters.
MOTION APPROVED

WCC goes into Executive Session at 7:48 PM

WCC comes out of Executive Session at 9:09 PM with the following action to be taken:

Members of the WCC will perform a review of material related to contract matters prior to next regular meeting.

MOTION to adjourn by Huffman, seconded by Grimaldi. MOTION APPROVED

Meeting adjourned at 9:11

Respectfully submitted, Chris Loomis, acting secretary.