

SPRINGFIELD TRAILS, GREENWAYS, BYWAYS AND RURAL ECONOMY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 22 , 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:06. Present were Randy Gray, George McNaughton (presiding), Chuck Gregory, Bettina McCrady and Hallie Whitcomb. Representing the Union/Park Neighborhood Association were Lori Claffee and Dick Andrews. Also in attendance was Planning Commission chair Walter Wallace.

Old Business

Approve Minutes of prior meeting (see addendum 1, below) Moved to approve (Gregory/Whitcomb). Passed.

Review Master Maps prepared by Randy Gray (see addenda #2 and #3)— Randy Gray said he used the interactive town listers' map for his master. George McNaughton said the end product should be a map that can be taken to the select board for creating a "fancy map." He expressed the desire to have someone with a GPS to walk the former path behind the State Office Building to get it established on the town map. Randy said he noticed some sort of earthmoving work at the Park Street School site. Chuck Gregory said he would find out what it was about and report to Randy. Bettina McCrady mentioned that the Hartness Park trails need to be addressed for inclusion. Dick Andrews mentioned there

Report by George McNaughton regarding Basin letter. George reported writing a letter dated January 24, 2018 to Julie Moore and Emily Bodecker of ANR asking that there be added to the Basin Plan more recreational activities encouraged by amending the plan to read:

Outdoor water-based recreation, swimming boating, fishing and riverside hiking/biking/walking, are important components of living in the region. Recreational resources include public and privately-owned swimming holes and beaches, boat launches on rivers and lakes, pedestrian and bicycle paths and trails along the rivers and shores, and fishing access points and parking. State agencies, municipal departments and local groups are all involved in creating and maintaining these resources.

He opined that the standard response he received, which was a note that they had received the letter indicates they will ignore it unless there is a substantial public outcry. Walter Wallace said the Planning Commission has not received any information about the Plan from this committee or any other source. He said that getting those activities improved would enhance the bike/walking trail. Discussion was had regarding the adverse impact that the way buffer zones are being enforced and administered is having on multi-use trails along the river. Richard Andrews said it should be pointed out to the State that internationally many countries have endorsed and created riverside multi-use paths without major harm to their rivers. It was moved to ask them for an update on our written request regarding protected buffer zone areas (McCrady/Gray). Passed.

Hemp Production regulation (Report by Randy Gray)— Randy reported that Vermont law on production of hemp does not protect growers from the force of the federal law making it illegal. George asked if the committee would like to take a stand. Moved

that the committee request our Congressional delegation to repeal the federal ban on hemp production and our Vermont legislators work to repeal the \$25 permit fee and restriction to research on production in the state. (Whitcomb/Gray). Passed. George McNaughton volunteered to draft the letter.

New Business

Report of Bettina McCrady about contact with Bob Flint and Town Manager about status of the Toonerville Trail Extension— Bettina said Tom Yenerell is debating with the State of Vermont about who has jurisdiction over the project and that it is a time-consuming process to get VTrans' involvement; that 2020 is the likely date of beginning the work. She said she has contacted Jon Kaplan, one of the original parties involved in moving the Toonerville Trail project forward, to assist us, since he has expertise which will facilitate progress. She said she will report updates at the next meeting. She said requests for funding for grants have been issued and that they are due June 22nd. She has asked to Tom Yenerell to find out what applications might be made. Moved that when Bettina hears from him, we shall meet to act upon that information to apply for a grant (Gregory/Gray).

Short discussion was had about the School Board's decision to nix the planned community garden in front of Union Street School. It was noted that Freedom Park Neighborhood Coalition appears to be successfully going forward with a community garden at Freedom Park.

Discussion of the Mineral Street Project— Chuck Gregory provided the Union/Park Neighborhood Association's summary of their position on the project (see addendum #5). Dick Andrews rendered his opinion of the feasibility of the project, which was that narrowing the vehicle lanes might suffice. In response to Lori Claffee's question about UPNA's expected role, George said they could define it as they see fit. He said that John Harmer reported that his students were aborculturists rather than designers. Walter Wallace stated the Planning Commission's role insofar as possible would be to partner with any and all agencies in projects. George said it would be suitable to write the town manager and the Public Works department that it appears that segment of the street can be modified relatively inexpensively and that we could ask that the town back us in writing a grant request. Bettina will follow up with the letters to the town. George said he will contact someone about writing a grant if the town accedes. Dick Andrews brought up the matter of cars blocking pedestrian use of sidewalks. Hallie Whitcomb will ask the Chief of Police if there is a regulation regarding this.

Discussion regarding permission to contact landowners from Town Manager and Selectboard regarding: Gap in trail leading towards Muckcross State Park (Randy Gray) Contact Lovejoy regarding Mineral Street Project. Hallie said she has seen Bob Flint a couple of times about pollinators, but had not talked about Mineral Street. Hallie will talk informally to Mr. Priestley of Lovejoy and report at the next meeting.

Such other matters needing timely action under the Committee's 5 Top Priorities
Discuss Agenda for next month—
—Parking which blocks pedestrians' paths.
— Hallie will talk informally to Mr. Priestley of Lovejoy and report at the next meeting.
Randy Gray will get names of property owners on the gap between the Hartness Trails and other trails, and also the gap in trails leading to Muckcross to George and George will contact Selectboard about permission to contact landowners.

Move to adjourn (McCrary/Gregory). Passed. Adjourned at 8:30 pm