

MINUTES OF  
SPRINGFIELD TRAILS, GREENWAYS, BYWAYS AND RURAL ECONOMY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FOR AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2017  
7:00 PM Selectboard Room, Springfield Town Hall

Present were Randy Gray, Hallie Whitcomb, George McNaughton (presiding) and Chuck Gregory. The meeting began at 7:00. Absent was Bettina McCrady.

Old Business

1. The minutes were approved as submitted. (Whitcomb, Gregory)
2. There were no changes to the agenda submitted
3. George McNaughton explained the Climate Economy Model Communities program and how it was applied for by the North School Preservation Society on behalf of Town with the endorsement of various local businesses. Although it was not accepted, NSPS was encouraged to apply again. The next application period is not yet open. The grant program favors projects which improve walkability. The consensus of the group was to support applications to the program.

New Business

4. Reports by Members:
  - a. Chuck Gregory provided a list of maps and map sources with Springfield information. George said there are two sidewalk studies and the traffic revision plan that need to be included. Randy Gray said he will provide a snowmobile trails map. Audience member Walter Martone explained how to get a flash drive to store the information for the Town Manager's assistant, Donna Hall.
  - b. Bettina McCrady's written report to the committee about contact with the predecessor group, STAG, and with the Springfield Garden Club was provided indicating the interest of the Garden Club in working with the Committee. Christian Craig said he provided her with information regarding STAG.
  - c. Hallie Whitcomb asked for clarification regarding her assignment as to "viewshed." Discussed were the definition and how it relates to Springfield's scenic highways (none are designated) and byways (of which there is one designated, the Connecticut River Scenic By-Way). George gave Hallie the suggestion of a cleaned-up Seaver's Brook Road as a possible scenic highway and Muckross for likely viewsheds. Hallie's assignment regarding islands was re-assigned to George McNaughton. Hallie Whitcomb indicated that she had attempted contact with SOM and left messages for Director Plunkard of SOM. Audience member Christian Craig was in attendance at the meeting and expressed the Edgar May Recreational Center's interest in the work of the Committee.

Audience member Matthew Pincus stated that there was a route Hallie should check out along the right side of the Muckcross pond. George mentioned a cross-country track team practice trail that used to run from the general area of the high school to Brockway's Mills. George mentioned that the commission has to check out the rumor that the islands are submerged during spring runoff. Hallie's assignment regarding Islands was re-assigned to George McNaughton..

- d. Randy Gray said the state is already talking with the landowners adjacent to the Muckcross entrance about creating a parking lot, with a meeting to be held in September or October.
  - e. George provided a report on the creation of a new neighborhood association, Wall Street, and provided basic information about the existing ones— Freedom Park (being revived) and Park/Union Alliance. Major concerns of the associations are sidewalks, either present condition or the complete lack thereof; lack of directional signs; and the lack of pocket parks. Other concerns included pedestrians having to share sidewalks with cyclists. For the parks issue, George proposed the commission work up a draft policy to submit to the Planning Commission. Hallie mentioned a possible location at the back of the cemetery on the Common. Matthew Pincus said there are a number of grants available for such purposes.
5. The Revised Scope of Work approved at the last meeting was reviewed with each member of the Committee indicating which were on their list of the top five priorities. Items 1, 4, 6 and 14 all tied as being on the list of 3 members. Items 8 and 9 tied as being on the list of 2 members.

Randy Gray said 8 and 9 might be combined. By consensus the top five priorities are 1, 4, 6, a combined 8 and 9, and 14. By consensus the Committee approved the Chairman notifying the Select Board and the Planning Commission.

George stated his limited inquiries about value-added agricultural practices indicate that landowners are finding it more profitable to grow hay for the equestrian market and letting other land return to forest rather than to raise beef cattle. Hallie Whitcomb will review the content of George's inquiries and report her observations at the next meeting.

George said he will not be at next month's meeting. The agenda was set:

1. Discuss the five priorities chosen.
2. Hallie's report on the value-added agriculture survey.
3. Muckcross' possible role in the commission's plans.
4. Bettina McCrady's input about reaching out to the State, the Garden Club, and STAG.
5. [Plus additions noted below]

Matthew Pincus reported a tree identification trail in Chester that could serve as a model for one in Springfield, and that cellphone technology would allow electronic identification, including historical as well as botanical information, for walkers and hikers. He provided the technical information to George. He volunteered to be on the agenda to report on his approach to the schools to recruit students to do the work.

Christian Craig will appear on the agenda to report on funding sources.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22.

The next meeting will be September 26th, 7:00 PM at the Town Offices.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Gregory, Secretary