

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 06, 2024

The meeting, held at the Public Safety Building (PSB), was called to order by Patrick Calecas at 5:00 p.m.

Attendance: Marielle Ambroch, Patrick Calecas, Joan Hildreth, Parma Jewett, Lynn Locher, Matt Paggi, Kip Potter, Charles Snedcor

Absent: Susan Baker

Additions/Changes to Agenda: Possible knotweed project (add to “Proposed...”), new business to discuss (add at end of meeting under “New Business”)

Visitors: None

Approval of Minutes 10/02/24 – After discussion, Parma made a motion to approve the minutes and Marielle seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The 10/02/24 minutes were approved.

Budget/CD Update/Treasurer’s Report – No update.

Payment to Elliot Cluba for Fire Skills/Star Stories Workshop – Everyone in attendance at the Knotweed Bonfire held on 10/30/24, co-sponsored by MRBA, MCC and Richford CC (RCC), reported that it went very well and that the workshop with Elliot was a successful and fun addition to the event. RCC member and astronomer, Dan Seeley, also attended and had been prepared to provide an additional talk/instruction on astronomy. However, the clouds did not clear enough to allow for use of his telescope. Everyone enjoyed his input and the demonstration of his laser star pointer, though. The cost of Elliot’s workshop: \$100.00. After discussion, Parma made a motion, seconded by Lynn, to approve payment of \$100.00 to Elliot for the workshop. The motion passed unanimously. The invoice will be sent to Erin Kopacz, Treasurer for payment.

Events/Projects:

Planned:

Meeting #2 – Montgomery Flood Resilience Project – 11/6/24 at 5:30 p.m. at PSB–

The engineering firm, SLR Consulting, will present information about potential flood resilience projects for the Trout River, Black Falls Brook, and West Hill Brook in Montgomery. Input from community members has been encouraged and is very much welcomed.

Proposed/Discussion/Updates:

Town Land (TL) Update – Matt reported that he picked up the tarp which was there, and had talked with Derek about any necessary preparations for mowing in 2025. Derek said that it would be important to scout out the path of the mower early enough in the spring in order to look for obstacles or other potential concerns.

Town Forest (TF) Update- There has been no word yet on the status of the Community Grants application submitted on 10/1. Joan is awaiting a reply to e-mails sent inquiring about it, and will follow-up as necessary.

Knotweed Project Possibility- Kip reported that he had spoken with Sarah Lunn of UMATR about possible funding for a project and she suggested that there could be funds available in the future through Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) grants. All agreed that this would be worth pursuing. LCBP might also offer grants in the future for projects related to infrastructure (e.g., the TF bridge?).

Tree Sale – May 2025 – MCC plans to continue with involvement in the sale as in prior years. There was also discussion about the idea of purchasing some trees/shrubs for additional planting at the Town Land. Kip agreed to make recommendations re: this.

Event Ideas for Late 2024/2025 proposed by RCC - Joan shared a list of presentation topics which RCC is considering for late 2024/2025. These include: waterfowl, fish, mustelids, grassland birds, geology of the area, topic(s) related to apples. All agreed that these topics sound interesting, and that partnering with RCC on events has been, and will continue to be, very worthwhile.

Conservation Reserve Fund (CRF) application – Kip reported that there had been no update yet from Dave Erickson, Conservation Director for Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC) re: the proposed project which had been discussed at a prior MCC meeting. The date for a site visit has not been set, and an application to the CRF has not been submitted. Therefore, the current status of the project is unknown at this time.

New Business:

Parma shared that she is resigning from the MCC. She has many, varied interests and responsibilities and has recently taken on more. All agreed that she has contributed tremendously to the MCC over many years, and that she will very much be missed as a member. She was one of the original members when the MCC first formed and has been involved ever since, with the exception of a brief break. Everyone wishes her well in her new endeavors and is glad that she is not going anywhere! She will remain an active member of the Montgomery community whose important contributions will continue to be greatly valued. A big “thank you” goes to Parma.

NEXT MEETING: It should be noted that the next planned meeting of the MCC is March 5, 2025 at 5:30 at the PSB.

Joan made a motion, seconded by Charles, to adjourn the meeting at 5:21p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth