

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2026

The meeting was held at the Public Safety Building (PSB) and was called to order by Kip Potter at 5:35 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Marielle Ambroch, Joan Hildreth, Lynn Locher, Cliff Loos, and Kip Potter

Absent: Patrick Calecas Matt Paggi, and Charles Snedikor

Visitors: Remy Crettol – Vermont River Conservancy (VRC), Dave Erickson – Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC), Charlie Hancock, Logan Reese – Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Chas Salmon (*To accommodate visitors' schedules, topics relevant to them, noted with * below, were covered first in the meeting.*)

Additions/Changes to Agenda: Additions: 1. Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District (FCNRCD) field trip to Town Land (TL) with MES 7th graders May 22, 2026; 2. Pollinator Friendly Yard signs; 3. Kursch Nature Preserve in Cambridge, VT – relevant ideas

Approval of Minutes 03/04/26: Marielle made a motion to approve the minutes; Cliff seconded. All present voted in favor of approving the 03/04/26 minutes. Motion passed.

Budget/CD Update/Treasurer's Report: Patrick was unable to attend meeting. No update.

Events/Projects

Recent: None

Planned:

- a. **Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District (FCNRCD) Tree Sale 5/2/26**
All set for pick-up site at PSB in Montgomery
- b. **Green Up Day 5/2/26**

Proposed/Discussion/Updates:

a. Town Land (TL):

i. * **Status Update - Vermont River Conservancy (VRC) – potential project**– All of the above visitors attended in order to participate in a presentation/discussion of a proposed Town land conservation project which could include a parcel currently owned by Chas Salmon as well as the Jewett Property Town Land (TL) and Riverwalk Park. The following partners would be involved in the project: the Town/MCC, Chas, VRC, CHC, and Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). Remy Crettol of VRC presented an overview of the proposed project and there was opportunity for Q&A and discussion. Remy noted that additional relevant information will soon be gathered and then presented/discussed at the next MCC meeting on 5/6/26. It was agreed by those in attendance that the project is well worth

pursuing, that it would provide significant benefits to the Town in terms of conservation as well as enhance recreational and educational opportunities for community members.

ii. Status Update - L-T Management Plan – The Town/MCC was awarded the full funding of \$4,950.00 requested through a VT Watershed Grant for a L-T Management plan for the TL - “Stewardship Planning for Montgomery Community Land.” The MCC is pleased that Dorothy Kinney-Landis of FCNRCD will be developing the plan.

iii. Planting and Care of 24 Trees Ordered from FCNRCD Tree Sale and Potential for Additional Trees – 24 trees were ordered from FCNRCD at a total cost of \$210.00 and will be picked up on 5/2/26. A plan was made to plant the trees on May 9th at 10:00 a.m. Cliff is exploring the possibility of enlisting Enosburg High School students to help. Dorothy will also be invited. In addition, a Community Tree Fund mini-grant application was submitted by the Town/MCC with assistance from Charlie Hancock, requesting funding for 24 additional trees as well as some mulch. Notification re: the application is expected by April 10, 2026. If funding is received, plans re: ordering, planting and care of those trees will be made at the May MCC meeting.

iv. Knotweed Project Update – Kip reported that he had recently received a response from the EPA re: the Quality Assurance Plan. There were some minor requests by the EPA which will be addressed. One is that they do not allow one person (in this case, Kip) to assume the roles of both Project Manager (PM) and Data Control Manager (DCM). After discussion, it was agreed that Kip would be the PM and Cliff would be the DCM. Kip plans to work on the necessary changes for submission to the EPA this week.

v. Flood Resilience Project - Update – There will be a presentation re: the status of the project at the next Selectboard meeting on 4/6/26. Those who are interested/available are encouraged to attend. It is expected that FCNRCD staff and SLR engineers will be there.

vi. Assessment of Condition of TL Including of Existing Fruit/Nut Trees – It was agreed to have an MCC walk at the TL on Sunday, 4/12/26 at 10 a.m. for this purpose. Dorothy will also be invited. This led to discussion of the need for poles/markers for trees. Dorothy will be asked for ideas and various options will be researched by everyone.

b. Town Forest (TF) –

i. UMATR Grant – Bridge Design – Update -Tabled until next meeting. Matt was unable to attend this meeting.

ii. Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant – Update on Application – Submitted 2/1/26 – As of this meeting, the MCC had not been notified of the decision re: the application.

iii. FCNRCD – Possibility of Wildlife Tracking Program with MES – Tabled for now.

iv. * Idea of Bird Habitat Project through Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC)/Cornell Lab of Ornithology/ Audubon – Charlie provided an overview of the project which would occur at the TF. It would focus on 5 to 6 acres total, and would improve bird habitat via small gap development in specified appropriate areas. There would be no cost to the Town thanks to funding from the above sources. Charlie suggested a walk with MCC members at the TF to allow opportunities for further discussion and to provide a better understanding of what the project would entail. He plans to provide the MCC with some possible dates for the walk, hopefully within the next few weeks. After discussion, Kip made a motion to move forward with the Bird Habitat Project. Marielle seconded. Cliff abstained from the vote; all others present voted in favor of approving the motion. Motion passed.

c. Vermont Conservation Plan – Update re: Zoom Meeting – 3/17/26 – It was noted that it was helpful to have the opportunity to hear more about the plan and to ask any questions.

d. MCC Board Membership - Update – Openings remain on the Board. Kip reported that the person he knows who might be interested was unable to attend this meeting but plans to come to the May meeting. Another person is interested in volunteering for some MCC projects, particularly re: trail work. He has had extensive experience with this and all agreed that would be very helpful. Please note that any members of the Montgomery community who might be interested in joining should feel free to contact any current member of the MCC and/or e-mail: MontgomeryConservation@gmail.com. Visitors are always welcome to attend meetings as well.

e. Logo Design Project – There has been no luck yet re: finding a way to change the color from orange to green. Kip offered to explore another option for this.

f. Replacement Tree for MES 2025 Graduating Class – Cliff has been in contact with Sandy Alexander at the MES re: replacement of the dead tree. A new location will be identified and the replacement will occur when the conditions are favorable for transplanting and when it works for Cliff's and the school's schedule.

g. Tree for MES 2026 Graduating Class – Tabled until next meeting.

h. Brochure for MCC- Update – Awaiting color change of logo prior to printing/distributing. All agreed that it would be great to have brochures available at the Farmers' Market this summer.

i. Ideas for Future MCC Projects/Events

(i) Projects –

-bird houses for TL – assess need, making and installing. - Tabled for now

-game cameras at TF/TL to capture wildlife activity – Tabled for now

(ii) Proposed Events – none currently

Additions to Agenda –

1. FCNRCD Field Trip with MES 7th Graders to TL on May 22, 2026 to Focus on Land

Stewardship - Dorothy Kinney-Landis contacted the MCC re: this, asking if there were tasks which the students could help with while at the TL. All appreciated the offer and agreed that a list of tasks could certainly be developed. Dorothy plans to attend the May MCC meeting and this will be discussed further at that time.

2. Pollinator Friendly Yard Signs – The ECC has ordered signs and has offered some to the MCC if interested. All agreed this sounded like a great idea but, in the interest of time given the full agenda for this meeting, it was suggested that further discussion occur at the next meeting.

3. Kursch Nature Preserve -Cambridge - Ideas - Joan reported having visited this property and being impressed by it. It is similar in size to the TF and has many appealing features. All agreed that it would be worthwhile to learn more about it and to visit, if possible.

Lynn made a motion, seconded by Marielle, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth