

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026

The meeting was held at the Public Safety Building (PSB) and was called to order by Patrick Calecas at 5:34 p.m.

Attendance:

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

Absent: Matt Paggi and Charles Snedecor

Visitors: Remy Crettol – Vermont River Conservancy (VRC), Chas Salmon, Dorothy Kinney-Landis - Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District (FCNRCD), James Wall (interested in joining the MCC) To accommodate visitors' schedules, topics relevant to them, noted with * below, were covered first in the meeting.

Additions/Changes to Agenda: Addition: Farmer's Market – MCC presence this summer

Approval of Minutes 04/01/26: Cliff made a motion to approve the minutes; Marielle seconded. All present voted in favor of approving the 04/01/26 minutes. Motion passed.

Budget/CD Update/Treasurer's Report: No update.

Events/Projects:

Recent:

- Town Land – status assessment – 4/12; mowing & tree marking – 4/25 – all went well
- FCNRCD Tree sale and Green Up Day – 5/2 – all went well
- Town Forest – meeting with engineer re: bridge design – 5/5 – Matt, Kip and Joan were there and it reportedly went well. Site visited, relevant measurements made.

Planned:

- Town Land – planting of trees from FCNRCD Tree Sale – 5/9 at 10:00 a.m. – all set
- *Town Land – FCNRCD and MES students – focus on stewardship – 5/22 - 9:45 – 2:00
Dorothy described the event and there was discussion of tasks to do with students, including possibly mulching, weeding, marking trees, watering.

Proposed/Discussion/Updates:

a. Town Land (TL):

i. * Status Update - Vermont River Conservancy (VRC) – potential project– Remy Crettol of VRC provided a review of the proposed project which was discussed at the 4/1 MCC meeting. The goal of the project would be for the Town to purchase the Salmon property, and for VRC and Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) to hold the conservation easement on it. A key question discussed at the 4/1 meeting was re: the existing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) contract which covers a portion of the parcel. Remy shared an update, clarifying that a conservation easement can be placed on land enrolled in CREP. In addition,

two options re: CREP were shared and discussed. All in attendance readily agreed that the following option should be recommended: The Town would succeed to the CREP contract, continuing all restrictions but receiving no annual rental payments. Contract obligations would be unchanged, and no management activities would be allowed on enrolled acres until the contract expires in 2032. It was agreed by those in attendance that this 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. Joan made a motion, seconded by Kip, that the MCC should recommend to the Selectboard that the Town proceed with the steps necessary to acquire the Salmon parcel, utilizing funding from VHCB and VRC, and that the Town assume the CREP contract. Cliff abstained from the vote; all other MCC members in attendance voted in favor; the motion passed. The Selectboard will be notified of this recommendation and a request will be made for this topic to be included on a Selectboard agenda ASAP so that Remy can present the proposal there, answer questions, and engage in discussion. If the Selectboard agrees, they would then be asked to write a letter of commitment re: the project. Remy also noted that the appraisal on the parcel should be completed by July 2026.

ii. *Status Update - L-T Management Plan – Dorothy will be developing the plan. She suggested that the MCC review templates of other plans in order to get ideas for key areas of focus. Kip offered to share with everyone a table of contents which had been reviewed by the MCC previously, too, and it was agreed that there would be further discussion at the June meeting. Dorothy suggested that we need to determine what we specifically want and don't want re: the property. There will also need to be an inventory, mapping and assessment of existing conditions as a part of the process of developing the plan.

iii. Mowing Plan, Planting and Care of 24 Trees Ordered from FCNRCD Tree Sale– Derek brush hogged the property, and existing trees were marked on 4/25. The intention is to maintain the mowed paths during the warmer months, and brush hog again in the fall. All agreed that this plan makes sense, at least in the short-term until we are clearer re: the long-term plan. The 24 new trees will be planted on 5/9 at 10:00 a.m.

iv. Award of Community Tree Fund Grant - The Town/MCC was awarded a grant for the planting of up to 24 additional trees at the Town Land. All agree that this is great news but would like to plant the trees in the fall, if allowable. Kip agreed to check.

v. Knotweed Project Update – Kip reported that there continue to be issues re: obtaining the approval by the EPA of the Quality Assurance Plan. He will have an additional meeting to work on resolving this and will keep everyone informed re: the status. Everyone expressed appreciation for all of the work Kip has put into this.

vi. Flood Resilience Project - Update – There was a presentation by FCNRCD re: the status of the project at the Selectboard meeting on 4/6/26. No other updates, but clarification is being sought re: the boundaries for the proposed soil removal area.

vii. Purchase of Stakes, Flagging, etc. for Trees at TL - There was discussion about the need for these supplies. Following an informal discussion with a quorum of MCC members at the TL on 4/12, it had been agreed that these items were needed and costs were estimated. After that, Lynn kindly purchased some stakes and flagging for use during the planned mowing and marking of trees on 4/25. Additional stakes will be needed as well. After discussion at this meeting, Cliff made a motion to spend up to \$400.00 on stakes and flagging for tree

marking/support at the TL. Marielle seconded. All present voted in favor and the motion passed. In addition, Kip plans to explore options for mulch for the trees.

b. Town Forest (TF) –

i. UMATR Grant – Bridge Design –see “Recent Projects/Events – Town Forest” above for progress

ii. Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant – A grant of \$49,953 has been awarded to the Town/MCC for the construction of a bridge and trails. Kip, Patrick and Joan provided a brief overview including next steps in the process. All agreed that this is exciting and that it will be a busy time ahead for the MCC and other volunteers as the project proceeds.

iii. FCNRCD – Possibility of Wildlife Tracking Program with MES – No update - tabled

iv. Idea of Bird Habitat Project through Cold Hollow to Canada (CHC)/Cornell Lab of Ornithology/ Audubon – Kip reported having been in contact with Audubon staff re: a meeting about this at the TF and potential dates. All agreed on the afternoon of June 19th option. Kip plans to confirm the time and let everyone know.

c. MCC Board Membership - Update – James Wall is interested in joining the Board and all agreed that this would be great. Cliff made a motion, seconded by Lynn, for the MCC to recommend to the Selectboard that James be appointed to the MCC. All present voted in favor; motion passed. Kip mentioned at least one other community member who might be interested as well. For anyone seeking information re: Board membership, please feel free to contact any current member of the MCC and/or e-mail: MontgomeryConservation@gmail.com Please note that visitors are always welcome to attend meetings as well.

d. Logo Design Project – Kip enlisted the assistance of his son in making a color change and had provided MCC members with a number of options. All agreed on the same version and are appreciative of Kip’s and his son’s efforts on this. Kip also priced stickers of the logo and shared info re: this. After discussion, Cliff made a motion to spend up to \$150 for the printing of 3.5” stickers. Lynn seconded and all present voted in favor; motion passed.

e. Brochure for MCC- Update – Now that we have the logo color changed, it can be added to the brochure. Kip suggested that the brochure should be edited to reflect new projects which are underway as well as any other changes which have occurred since the draft brochure was developed. All agreed. Kip offered to review it and get back to everyone. Everyone also agreed that it would be great to have the brochure ready for the Farmer’s Market this summer.

f. Replacement Tree for MES 2025 Graduating Class – Cliff plans to work on this and coordinate with Sandy Alexander at the MES.

g. Tree for MES 2026 Graduating Class – Marielle offered to contact Sandy Alexander re: plans for this.

h. Pollinator Friendly Yard Signs - available through ECC – All agreed that the signs are a nice idea but did not think that the MCC should purchase any at this time. However, the MCC will gladly spread the word about their availability to those interested. Patrick plans to follow-up with the ECC as well.

i. Ideas for Future MCC Projects/Events - All tabled for now given the many projects currently underway

Additions to Agenda –

Farmer’s Market – All agreed that the MCC should attend three times this summer – once each in July, August and September. Patrick plans to let Patty Perl know.

Marielle made a motion, seconded by Cliff, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m. Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth