

Present: Nona, Sandy, Carroll, Chip, Sue Riggen, Rick, Mary

- 1) **Minutes** of 9-19-06 read and approved... Sandy moved, Carroll 2nd, all yea
- 2) **Treasurer's Report:** Kevin had to be out of town and will catch books up for next meeting. Nona says that Kim Kendall is willing to resume her role as treasurer again. Nona will facilitate the transfer from Kevin to Kim. **Nona and Mary will also pursue the question of whether EMTI ever received a check from the town Carlton Smith Fund to reimburse us for the \$500 fee for the barrier rocks at Route 14.** Activity on the account includes a check to Greg Western for work done on the Mallory Brook trail. About \$2000 remains on the Forests and Parks grant, most of which will go toward continuing to upgrade the trail.
- 3) **New Board Member:** Sue Riggen joins EMTI with an interest in initiating and organizing volunteer labor on the trails for maintenance and new trail construction, and in reviving the spring walk through. She is welcomed by all. Sue set **Sunday Feb 18 for a snowshoe on Mallory Brook trail. Meet at 1 pm at Catlin Road.**
- 4) **Grant Applications:** Greg Western submitted a grant to Forests and Parks for work to continue on Mallory Brook trail.

EM elementary school explored the possibility of connecting their school trail with the Mallory Brook trail, but encountered a critical landowner who is not willing to grant an easement at this time.

Jamie reported by email that Geoff Beyer was not able to submit a 2-town grant to Forests and Parks for a YCC crew to work on the E Montpelier section of Sparrow Farm trail next summer. He also said that Kris Hammer is interested in taking GPS data for the Mallory Brook trail, and possibly others, for our maps.
- . 5)**Clark Grant:** VTrans grant for the acquisition of development rights and trail easements on the second Clark piece did not come through this year. Karen Freeman of VHCB wrote a beautiful grant which lost out to the pedestrian bridge across the North Branch behind Shaw's. She will resubmit it and Nona is confident it will eventually get approved.

Other Business:

Mallory Brook: After the wet summer and fall of 2006, Minister Road needs repair. Patrick McCoy did the initial work with his bulldozer 2 years ago, but feels that larger equipment is now needed to install more water bars to divert the flow off the roadway into the steep banks alongside the road. Since the road follows a stream and springs, this will be an ongoing problem which will be tackled by section as money becomes available.

Sparrow Farm: Rick met with Carl and Diana and they gave approval to the improvements and trail repair on the upper Sparrow Farm trail, a scaled down version of Dan Voisin's proposal. Rick also met with Shannon Morrison of the State Wetlands office, and hopes to hear this week on whether the work constitutes "minimal impact" and doesn't need a state wetlands alteration permit.

MAMBA (and hopefully with some campaigning for other volunteers) is committed to implement all or most of the needed uppermost sparrow farm trail maintenance needs this spring, summer and/or fall. Materials cost will be an issue. Hopefully EMTI and East Montpelier Rec Com'tee can provide \$\$ to pay for materials (essentially native untreated rot-resistant lumber, gravel). As was suggested last year, I can send a letter to the Rec Com'tee asking for funds.* from Rick's email sent 1-30-07

6) New Business:

1) Kris Hammer sent the following email to invite various area recreational and conservation groups to meet to get a regional perspective on the work that has already been done and to see where we can collaborate in the future.

Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2007 11:40 AM

Subject: Regional Trails meeting

Hi folks,

Montpelier seems to be the center of a lot of recreational trail activity these days. With the Cross Vermont Trail crossing through town, several connections to the East Montpelier trail system in place or in the works, increased interest in mountain bike trails on city lands, and the bike path due to expand to the east to Berlin, it might be productive to get a lot of the folks working on trails together in one room and hear what each of us is doing and find ways that our work can compliment each other. Since many of the recreational trails are designed to be multi-use, there are no doubt a number a ways we could combine forces to identify areas currently underserved by access to recreational trails, coordinate approaches to landowners about trail easements, and figure out how to provide connections between existing trail systems. I imagine that area conservation commissions, the Cross Vermont Trail Association, East Montpelier Trails, Inc, and Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association, among others, might be interested. I know there has already been a lot of collaboration on the local level, but I don't know of any regional effort.

The Montpelier Conservation Commission would like to propose a recreation trail "summit" to be held in some central location later this year (I'm thinking summer) where a group of folks can get together and celebrate what we've accomplished, share our dreams for the future, possibly enjoy some outings, and plan for future collaboration. What do you think? If you can think of any other organizations that might be interested, or have contact information for others in your organizations who might be interested, please feel free to forward this message or have them contact me

Kris Hammer, Chair
Montpelier Conservation Commission

Nona noted that in any discussion of future collaboration efforts, EMTI be aware of our mission to provide for *multiple* use, and cautions us not to compromise on the issue of diversity in representation of trail uses.

2) Rick described a new law recently passed which will allow for tax abatement on property donated or sold at a bargain price for trail easements. Rick will get more details, and Mary will call Steven Syz for more information on these new laws. It appears that the landowners would have to sign up for the program before 12-31-07. This may be a new opportunity to contact Martha Fitch and Todd Fitch about their 11 acre parcel on County Road.

Sandy described another program that was just written up as a bill which would allow for tax abatement on property which landowners open for public recreational use. This could be of great benefit for the VAST organization.

NEXT MEETING: Monday March 19 at Mary's house 7-9 pm.

