

East Montpelier Trails Committee meeting

April 23, 2020

Present: via ZOOM, Mary, Jennifer, Rick H, Lauren P, Nona, Maddie, David W, Sue C, Josh

Minutes from February approved

COVID-19 - Rick put up signs for people to keep social distance on the trailheads. Update on Lollipop trail - a couple of trees down on Lollipop. Charles was on the Minister trail and it wasn't in bad shape. No bikes until June 1 sign had been taken down.

Select board meeting discussion:

The meeting with the select board was difficult. Seth was resistant to the idea of us joining the town and he felt like it would put more work on the town's shoulders. We were looking at having a paid position at some point in the future under the town administration and this was not met with enthusiasm. Bruce Johnson said not to worry about the response that they got, but that we would likely be moving ahead anyway. Seth was faced with the ambulance having a lack of volunteers and now they want to be part of the town and have positions. It seems overwhelming.

Bruce needed info for the town insurance company so Maddie produced 2 charts with pertinent info on all the trails, landowners and basic easement requirements. Mary will send these to the town who will then have to assess the structures on the trails, such as bridges, etc. for the insurance.

Seth was suggesting that the town should just give us money so we could buy our own insurance. We could join the Land Trust Alliance to get insurance through them and there is a lot of red tape involved with this so this doesn't seem like the right idea for our committee. Maddie sees the red tape as a major hurdle. In order for us to qualify for the liability insurance, we would have to join the alliance and it doesn't seem worth it. The ballpark was about \$1500 for liability only. The trouble is that getting insurance without joining the Alliance was prohibitive in the past.

Nona will take on talking to Richard Brock and looking into liability insurance. Nona was wanting to make sure what kind of insurance we needed, do we need "board insurance"? Or do we just need liability insurance? Mary took charge and designated a committee of Nona and Maddie to take this on.

Mary feels like we are not keeping up with our management plans our conserved trails. She feels that if there was a position within the town this person stay on top of easement requirements.

Sue asked who would want the appointed position of overseeing the EMTI and it would also be connected to the newly formed Conservation Commission.

Mary said that she came away from the meeting feeling differently about our joining the town under the conservation commission auspices.. She will see if Bruce and Charles will join us to help us to understand how the CC would affect EMTI.

Bobolink:

Josh got an unexpected call from Nick Benoit of the Gullyjumpers to move VAST trail off Mike Brown's property and put it onto Bruce Howletts property. The VAST trail behind Mike Brown's property is in a serious state of disrepair. They were hoping that there could be a "shared use path" and asked him if he could ask us if we could combine and then build a bridge that would accommodate snowmobiles as well. Historically we have worked with the VAST trail and the Gully jumpers. Josh told him that we are heading north towards Chris

Pratt's land and not necessarily in the direction they want to be headed. Bruce's brook crossing was supposed to be "small, quaint and picturesque" which would not be the case if VAST combined efforts with us on this project. Our needs and their needs are different in this case. Josh will reach out to Bruce to restart the Boblink process and he will mention that VAST reached out to him and he was encouraging them to talk with Bruce H directly.

Ormsbee Trail:

Mary, Rick and Jennifer came up with a re-route around the logging operation and now we just need to get the okay from Richard Hall. Rick spoke with him briefly, but he was preoccupied and on the phone and couldn't talk about it. Richard has a backhoe and the bench could be moved with the backhoe. Somebody needs to be there when he is ready to move it. There is an ideal spot, and an alternative spot. We want to try for the ideal spot first. Rick can call him tomorrow morning and hopes that he can get through. Mary is also comfortable just letting him know that unless we hear from him we will assume that the reroute is okay.

Sparrow Farm north: Mary will send landowner info to Lauren and she will pursue establishing a trail on the property.

National Trails Day:

Whatever we do will be in small crews. Some ideas are bench setting, clearing Ormsbee trail, Signs on trailheads may need cleaning and repainting. Additional clean up to do at Mallory if needed... Mary had an idea of putting a bench at the new crossing site and we could ask Chris if he would like to make a bench to be placed there. Josh's take is that Chris is thankful that the bridge is all cleaned up and seems to be done with it. He spoke highly of what Josh and his crew had done. Now that the snow is gone Josh plans to go down to just make sure that nothing was missed that wasn't visible. We have budgeted for this and it will be paid for and Josh will not go over the budget we planned. Josh will send an updated budget to Mary.

Signpost - Mary doesn't want to be the contact person. Most of what we do is on our website or FB, Nona will talk with Loring Starr about this.

Next meeting: May 21st, 7:00 PM via ZOOM

Thanks everyone!!