

## East Montpelier Trails Meeting Minutes

2/27/19

Present: Mary Stone, Rick Hopkins, Madeleine Mongan, Richard Brock, Nona Estrin, Dave Webb (Minutes)

- Treasurer's Report
  - Richard had the following suggestions:
    - organize information (statements, payments, receipts) by year, and eliminate after 6 years
    - have central repository for Deeds/Easements
    - set up PO Box, maybe at Capital Copy. He will look into.
  - Non-profit paperwork filed with IRS & Secretary of State
- Mary reported that a regular format has been established for the Town Meeting report
- Minutes from December meeting were approved.
- Mallory Brook Update
  - Nathan Phillips has been out to site and made following observations:
    - Reluctant to make any determinations about safety. 1 or 2 pedestrians fine but not sure beyond that. Nathan wondered what load rating desired is. We had general discussion about per person loadings and distributed vs. concentrated loads.
    - Railing as designed will not improve stability
    - 6 bolts per joint as previously recommended would be improvement
    - Cables as proposed will improve strength
  - As a result, Chris Pratt:
    - Was going to create test scarf joint with 4 bolts
    - Chris will talk to Josh about modified railing design
  - Rick Hopkins proposal:
    - \$2,500 overall payment to Chris for hiring help **IF** he agrees to 6 bolts per joint and tensioning cables installed
    - Staggered 4 payment plan based on confirmed progress
    - Board members present were in agreement this was a good approach
    - Before any action on this, Rick will get additional status update from Chris in early March and report to Board.
  - General discussion about having done our best as a board to obtain structural assessments, require renderings of proposed design, and tie this all together so we have better assurance of final product. However, we noted difficulties with CP insistence on completing the bridge in this manner. How would this all play out in a claim/liability case? Does paying Chris affect liability concerns?

- Bobolink Easement
  - Richard/Madeleine will prepare Word version based on previous meeting comments/edits working off the Clark easement.
  - Will need the routing description from Bruce/Josh incorporated
  - Discussed possibility of doing as more informal agreement due to limited term. Richard said easement would not cost much more to prepare. Nona relayed that it must be legal document that is filed. Based on these points, all agreed to stay with easement.
- Insurance
  - Land Trust Alliance
    - Cross VT Trails and VIMBA are members so would be resources for information.
    - Subcommittee likely next step to go over details, pros/cons of membership and insurance purchase. Madeleine and Richard agreed to investigate more.
    - Richard stated requirement to follow their business practices which needs closer look to decide on implications.
    - General liability insurance (would create broader protection for board from legal fees in event of a claim) vs. volunteer-only insurance was discussed. Should we create waiver form for volunteers to sign at work days?
    - Madeleine said she would send Conserv-A-Nation and LTA booklet out to board to peruse.
  - Town Insurance
    - General consensus that being covered under Town policy would be good option but want to understand ramifications.
    - Maintaining non-profit status: Could there be a split where trail building/maintenance activities are covered under town umbrella while maintaining the trail development efforts as non-profit? Mary felt it would be difficult to do without having two separate groups (i.e. which hat would group be wearing when discussing issues at board meetings). General consensus that maintaining our 501C.3 is very important.
    - Four Corners Schoolhouse was brought up as example where this type of arrangement was figured out.
    - All agreed that a group of board members (the more the better- Mary, Nona, Rick, Madeleine expressed interest) would meet with Bruce Johnson to further understand this option. Bruce subsequently offered several time options for meeting the week of March 11.
    - General discussion about how to manage current funds with this option. Most of endowment money is set on development side.
    - Using town insurance option, and setting up Town-based organization would shift our annual appropriation to a line item in the budget.
    - Possible paid position in Town?
- Vermont Trails System
  - Josh had spoken to Randy Richardson who head Greenways Council which oversees VTS. Benefits:
    - Award certification

- Inclusion on statewide trails list. Increased exposure to trail-using public. Is this pro or con? Rick expressed some concerns about the increased publicity of our trails network within a statewide trails website. Has remained mostly local use up till this point. Nona noted that some of the easements were set up with broader exposure in mind. Sparrow Farm easement, for instance, has clause about pursuing VTS membership.
  - No insurance availability but some increased liability protection for “landowner” with membership, which EMTI would be considered for Clark and Ormsbee trails. It has been noted how VT has fairly strong landowner liability laws.
  - Act 250 10-acre exclusion for trail projects.
  - VTS is in some flux. Members may in future have some additional benefits. This are not known at this point.
  - GPS and mapping format requirements. Need to understand. It was noted that Jennifer has been GPS mapping for the trailhead sign project.
  - Application is quite involved. Dave agreed to run through application with Jessica Savage with FPR, who administers the VTS and report back.
  - Some issues of note- our trails are often narrow and not clearly navigated in all seasons. How does this mesh with expectations of trail types/public mapping within VTS? Also, as trail managers how do we protect ourselves from liability with the broader exposure?
- Next Meeting – April 17, 6:30 at Richards