



FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE
100 East River Road – Squire’s Tavern
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Approved Minutes of Regular FRCC Meeting
Monday, November 22, 2010
Squire’s Tavern
100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley

Present: Tim Anthony (MDC Rep), Tiffany Caisse (SCA/AmeriCorps Apprentice), Eileen Fielding (FRWA Alt), Liz Lacy (NPS Alt/FRCC Director), Alison Murdock (New Hartford Rep), Susan Peterson (CT DEP Rep/Secretary), Cherie Robinson (Canton Alt), Edna Travis (Colebrook Alt/Chair)

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Chair Travis at 7:04 p.m.

Introduction: Tiffany Caisse was introduced as FRCC’s new SCA/AmeriCorps Apprentice. Caisse is a junior at Westfield State University where she is majoring in biology. She has been a part-time intern for FRCC for the past two summers and, among other things, has assisted Betsy Corrigan on the invasive plant project. Caisse has taken a sabbatical from college for 10 mos. while she serves in this apprenticeship. She will be assisting Lacy with both the Upper Farmington River and Westfield River W&S areas.

2. Approval of Minutes of October 18, 2010 meeting: The Minutes were approved with the following corrections/changes:

- p. 1 – Under Treasurer’s Report – The scholarship fund should just be referred to as the “scholarship fund”, not as the “Pat Keener Scholarship Fund”
- p. 2 – Under Old Business/Resource Stewardship/Still River Watershed Study – cost should be \$6,000, not \$3,200
- p. 2 – Under Old Business/Resource Stewardship/Still River Watershed Study – replace “low hanging fruit” with “good opportunities”
- p. 4 – Under New Business/Other/ Main Stream Canoe & Kayak – replace “Main Stream Canoe & Kayak” with “boating issues”
- p. 4 – Under Town Reports/New Hartford – Replace “the” with “they”; Strike “she”

Lacy was also given permission to retroactively go back and change “Main Stream Canoe & Kayak” references in previous meeting minutes.

3. Treasurer’s Report: Fielding gave report as Roberts unable to attend meeting. The balance in the new checking account is \$10,348.25; the balance in the new scholarship fund is \$4,372.21.

The Money Market account which had been charging a high fee has been closed out, and the money in this account has been transferred to a FRWA Restricted Funds account where it will be tracked as the FRCC Scholarship Fund. (See note on “Treasurer’s Report” sheet.)

The largest cash outlay (\$6,000) during this period was to the Colebrook Land Conservancy for the Kitchel property purchase expense.

4. Old Business:

Resource Stewardship

Anthony provided the following updates.

Invasives Plant Management Project – There are three stiltgrass eradication projects in New Hartford. Discussed goats and whether they can be used at Greenwoods. Betsy Corrigan has been discussing this with Carol Youell (MDC).

Still River Watershed Study – Fielding clarified proposals for best management practices proposed in Winsted. There is approx. \$6,000 for construction and supervision. Fielding spoke with Steve Trinkaus (consulting engineer) to confirm that the Town is on board with the proposed projects. Trinkaus does not have anything in writing but both he and Sean Hayden (Northwest Conservation District) have received spoken confirmation from Town staff associated with the wastewater treatment plant, and drinking water treatment plant. Trinkaus said that if FRWA/FRCC is okay with this, then he would like to do field work next week. FRCC agreed that it would be okay for him to proceed.

Water Quality Monitoring – On-going; November is to be last sampling for this year.

Land Protection – More discussion about targeting \$50,000 in funds currently set aside towards riverside land protection. Lacy has spoken with Madeline McClave of the New Hartford Land Trust. Lacy explained that FRCC is very concerned about the fate of riverside parcels currently on the market. The New Hartford Land Trust is currently occupied with fund-raising for another project. However, Sinish agreed to do some research on the topic. Lacy asked that if the land trust has any further information for us by the next Resource Stewardship meeting on Dec. 6th, to please let us know.

Aimee Petras (FRWA) has also been contacting land trusts within the Upper Farmington W&S area to make them aware of the \$50,000 FRCC is offering to the W&S land trusts to stimulate land protection projects.

Meanwhile, the Hartland Land Trust has submitted a request regarding two properties - the Bassett property on Mill St. in West Hartland; and the Root property on South Lane in East Hartland – for acquisition costs and perpetual stewardship costs. If these sound promising to FRCC, then Liz will request further information from the land trust on their proposal(s). The land trust will need to explain how this meets our criteria.

Greenwoods Anglers' Trail – Anthony read an e-mail from Andy Butler, FRAA President. FRAA has recently performed some clean-ups, and they are waiting on signs. Anthony said that he had had to put aside the sign project because of other MDC work priorities. However, he felt that there would be time to work on the signs over the winter, so that they would be ready for the spring. Anthony would like to see a sign created and placed at the beginning of the trail that summarizes and explains the project.

Since this communication indicates participation by FRAA, Anthony felt that FRCC can now proceed with funding this project. From his MDC perspective, Anthony also said that he is willing to stay involved in the project since things now seem to be moving forward again. We have to let FRAA know that they need to stay in communication with FRCC, and keep us informed of their activities. Paul Pinette was not copied on Butler's e-mail but perhaps we can also ask him to help keep track of this project. Anthony will "cc" Pinette when he responds to Butler's e-mail.

Land Cover Analysis – Fielding to follow-up on this proposal vis-à-vis previous FRCC discussions with Jeff Bolton (FRWA) with regard to: build-out analysis; integrated resource analysis, and mapping of greenways. Lacy asked about the possibility of refining this to one project that might be useful to land trusts when they are making potential acquisition decisions. How much overlap is there between this potential project, and what Petras is already pursuing with land trusts, and/or other activities already underway (ie. – HVA's Litchfield Hills Greenprint project)?

Education and Outreach

Lacy provided update on Education and Outreach. Since Fred Jones has had to step down from FRCC due to over-commitment and health issues, David Sinish has agreed to become the new subcommittee chair. (Note – In light of Jones' departure, FRCC will now be looking for a new Hartland representative.)

River Etiquette Package – Suggested edits have been made which have improved the current draft of the map and text.

Website – The website will be going on to new server. Lacy has been working with Richard English on this. This switchover should not otherwise affect anything else on the site.

Outreach to Local Boards, etc. – As part of her apprenticeship, Caisse will be doing some outreach activities.

Memorial Bench (Church Pool) – The Randall Pease memorial bench is finally in place and ready for plaques. Fielding said that she has had a request for yet another plaque. There are now requests for two potential plaques in addition to Randy Pease’s. The Committee discussed how to mount plaques on benches. Murdock and Mario Santoro had agreed at the previous Outreach & Education Subcommittee meeting to assist with this. With regard to bench installation, Anthony noted that instead of installing a concrete pad, MDC ended up using 12” sonotube footings – dug out by hand – so as to minimize site disturbance.

Newsletter – Next newsletter will be in March. FRCC needs a new “champion” for the newsletter since Jones has left.

Outreach DVD – “ditto” ... Need a new “champion” for this project, as well. (Note – FRWA is looking to create a DVD for the upper Farmington watershed in Massachusetts. Is there a possibility of combining these two projects?)

Land Trust Outreach – Petras (FRWA) is working on an end-of-the-year summary. From her work thus far, she has concluded that what might work best with the land trusts is to organize gatherings for them (perhaps 3x/year), allow them to network, and provide other resources.

There will be a gap in Petras outreach activities while she is out on maternity leave. FRCC and FRWA need to discuss how this is going to work out. Lacy mentioned that Kai Starn will be coming in as an FRCC intern, and he may be able to do additional pieces related to this. Lacy noted that the same funding amount may not be directed to land trust outreach each year – amounts may differ based on what projects are involved in land trust outreach. Fielding agreed that this coming year needs to be discussed further and/or clarified, as to how it will be handled. Petras needs to be given an opportunity to report, and then a decision can be made.

Executive

Travis provided the following updates:

Management Plan Update – The retreat provided a lot of good information, and was a productive session. Lacy is going to try to “massage” the input gathered into a more workable form for Joyce Kennedy Raymes (NPS) when she starts working with FRCC part-time in January on the management plan update. Several Committee members/invitees who could not attend the retreat sent comments. It was decided that the Executive Committee would be the subcommittee assigned to work on the management plan update project with Lacy and Kennedy Raymes. However, others may join in on the project, if interested. The draft management plan update will eventually be presented to the full Committee for consideration. It was suggested that Anthony, as Resource Stewardship Subcommittee Chair, also participate in the subcommittee working on the update. He agreed to participate. Sinish as lead of Outreach and Education should be invited as well.

Travis is interested in seeing a five year strategic plan put together, as a follow-up to the management plan update.

Grants

Land Trust Fund (\$50,000) - Discussed earlier in meeting during Resource Stewardship Subcommittee updates.

Land Trust Rally Reimbursement – FRCC partially funded attendance of several land trust representatives. The Committee discussed another reimbursement request received but decided it did not meet the criteria of things we were willing to fund.

Barkhamsted Drainage Retrofit – This project is running into greater expenses than anticipated, and the Town of Barkhamsted is looking to reduce costs. The Town has also requested additional funding assistance from FRCC. Lacy had asked the Town to compare the cost of the proposed retrofit project with the cost of a more “traditional” approach and associated long-term maintenance needs. FRCC might consider providing the Town with additional funding on the condition that they will proceed with the design provided by the Northwest Conservation District (NCD). Anthony also noted that MDC has already done a lot of work in relation to this site, and MDC is allowing the Town to do this project on MDC land. It was suggested that Sean Hayden be invited to an upcoming FRCC meeting to discuss this project.

5. New Business/Other

Lower Farmington River/Salmon Brook W&S Study – Fielding has drafted a letter to Bob Moore (MDC), requesting that he confirm in writing that MDC is okay with the proposed change of the upper W&S designation's boundary in Canton from the New Hartford –Canton town lines to the mouth of the Nepaug River.

Appreciation of Former FRCC Members – Among other things, Fred Jones and Jean Miller will be invited to the holiday potluck, to thank them for their years of service to FRCC.

River Outfitters and Put-in/Take-out Concerns – As requested at the previous meeting, Peterson provided the name of the appropriate CT DEP staff person to whom FRCC should direct a letter of concern. The letter should be directed to: Matthew Fritz, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

Trail Behind Squire's Tavern – Lacy has had discussions with Paul Hart of the Barkhamsted Historical Society regarding re-establishing the old project to establish a trail leading from the river, Squire's Tavern and the Stone Museum, and including interpretive pieces.

6. Town Reports

New Hartford – Murdock is trying to get the River Protection Overlay zoning district re-established on Town zoning maps.

7. Next meeting dates: The Holiday Potluck will be December 20, 2010 (not December 21); Subcommittee meetings on December 6, 2010; Full Committee meetings January 31, 2011 and March 21, 2011.

8. Adjourn: 9:23 p.m.