

Monkton Agricultural and Natural Area Committee Meeting—Minutes for 5/5/2011

In Attendance

Members: Sam Burr, Laura Farrell, John McNerny, and Deb Gaynor.

Guests: Ray Huizenga, Joe Boisse, Justin Huizenga, Jeff Wood, Bill and Carla Whitney, John Padua

Chuck Huizenga

Absent: Sue Regier

- 1) Sam called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
- 2) Introductions
- 3) Sam gave an overview of the forest aggregation project model, emphasizing wildlife corridors and the role of Monkton's features contributing to east-west connectivity (the first area south of Burlington that offers east-west connectivity). Laura expanded on wildlife crossing issues, and John M. talked about New England Forest Foundation.
- 4) The landowners asked, what are reasonable financial expectation that they can have if they pursue a conservation specifically for forested land?
- 5) Jeff asked about a "timber trust"; does anyone know of an example of a group of landowners creating a jointly managed forest that is set up to throw off a modest income and stay protected as working forest? We talked a little about Little Hogback Community Forest.
- 6) We talked about easements, and flexibility in how they are written.
- 7) We looked at a variety of maps that John M. has been working on to display the forested areas of Monkton.
- 8) We answered questions from the guests regarding how an agricultural conservation project works. First, the appraisal, which gives the landowner two numbers—the conserved value, and then the non-conserved value. Then the description of the conserved piece, based on the appraisal, which lets the landowner tailor the size of the easement to fit the available funding. We described how and when fundraising can be a large part of the process.
- 9) We agreed to send another letter (a questionnaire, perhaps) that includes more relevant details, for instance: "would you be interested if....you don't have to give away your ownership, you can maintain your lands in current use, you can maintain management of your property, you can continue to operate your farm/forest as you do now....would you be interested in learning more about a forest conservation project in your neighborhood?" Chuck H. said we should include the NEFF map also.
- 10) Laura moved and Deb seconded that we adjourn; we unanimously adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted on 5/5/2011,

Deb Gaynor
ANAC Secretary