

Monkton Agricultural and Natural Area Committee Meeting—Minutes for 3/2/2011

In Attendance

Members: Sue Regier, Sam Burr, Laura Farrell, John McNerney, and Deb Gaynor.

Guests: Josh Phillips

Absent: Wendy Sue Harper

- 1) Sue called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.
- 2) We discussed forest aggregation in general; and in specifics. Sam had questions about the documents Marty gave us last week.
 - We have lots of little parcels; the land trust will rank them (ANAC's role is to raise money, help liaise with the landowners, and otherwise help the land trust as needed). Are parcels ranked by size?
 - The land trusts themselves, in the aggregation project, are ranked by lottery.
 - NEFF has not approached MALT. Marty had suggested working with Trust for Public Land. Josh said that if a group like that were involved, they would bring the vast majority of the money, raising it from big foundations. It would be interesting to see what Keith Ross from NEFF or someone from TPL thinks about the workable size of a project in Monkton.
 - Laura asked if we could do a forest aggregation project on lands that are not contiguous or aggregated? Josh thinks that in Massachusetts the aggregation project includes parcels that do not form a solid block. So, here, even a small linkage could provide wildlife corridors that would make this project viable for wildlife conservation needs.
 - John asked what the minimum parcel size for a project like this is; Josh agreed with our working assumption that there is not a specific size, but that smaller parcels (perhaps 25 or 50 acres minimum) might have to be donated easements--and they would probably need an endowment to support the easement. That might cost \$15,000 or so for appraisal, land trust staff time, the stewardship endowment, however, the owner gets a tax deduction for the endowment and for the easement.
 - Sam asked how much is a conservation appraisal? Josh: more than routine appraisals; typical conservation appraisals cost \$2500-5000.
 - Sue asked if Josh thinks there is something we should do. He thinks we should talk first to Bob Heiser to determine if VLT is truly interested, and if VLT is, we should we use the forest aggregation group, or NEFF, or TPL, or some other entity.
 - Josh is out of town from the 22nd-29th, but would like to join us at a meeting with Bob Heiser.
 - Josh thinks we should try to tie together anything we do all the way across from Boro Hill to Hogback; we should plan for as much as makes sense from an ecological resources perspective.
- 3) Sue listed next steps:
 - Laura will contact Bob Heiser and Josh to ask if both could come on the 30th?
 - After talking to Bob, we need to talk to the Carla's contacts and meet with them to give them whatever information we have. Laura will email Carla to see if they could meet with us on April 13th.
 - Sam will bring the ridgeline overlay map from the new proposed zoning regulations to our next meeting so we can look at the impact that could have on any potential forest project.
- 4) Our next meeting is March 30th.
- 5) Sam moved and Deb seconded that we adjourn; we unanimously adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted on 3/2/2011,

Deb Gaynor

ANAC Secretary