

**Town of Monkton  
Agricultural & Natural Areas Committee  
MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:00pm  
Zoom & Phone Meeting**

**Members Attending:** Laura Farrell (Chair), Susan Mahony (Vice-Chair), Jaime Schulte (Clerk), Whitney Leighton

**Members Absent:** John Mejia (Digital Czar), Sam Burr (Alternate)

**Guests:** None

**Laura called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.**

**1) Minutes**

- a. **Whitney moved to consider the minutes of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Jaime seconded.** Some review took place. **Whitney moved to approve the minutes of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as written. Jaime seconded.** No additional discussion. **All were in favor (3-0-1), with Susan abstaining (not present at our last meeting)**

**2) Updates:**

- a) Covid assistance progress - no new updates
- b) How do we go into executive session if needed – practiced with Zoom breakout rooms
- c) Potential project 2019A
  - Continuing to evaluate the options and future for the property with the owner, prior to a potential application to ANAC.
- d) Potential project inquiry (would be 2021A)
  - Assisting the owner with options and whether ANAC would have a role.
- e) Town Forest progress
  - The Town Forest Committee is assessing a potential project.
- f) Document storage space
  - Selectboard is working on the topic. Possibly using Dropbox.
- g) Raven Ridge use – TNC video
  - Part of the loop has been closed for bobcats. TNC posted a video about the planned closure and the reasons why.
  - The parking lot is a good indicator of how many people Raven's Ridge can support at any one time. If the parking lot is full it is appropriate to return at another time.
  - One of our members will walk the open portion of the trail to assess signage, number of cars, dogs, etc.

**3) Field Naturalist application**

- a) At least one student is interested in a project to inventory natural areas in Monkton focusing on the balance of the town that was not previously assessed by Lyra Brennan a few years ago. Looking at funding sources for the project.

**4) Request from The Planning Commission**

Input for revisions to Monkton's Unified Planning Document (zoning regulations) by June 1, 2021 to incorporate into another round of updates later in 2021. We can contribute recommendations for improved zoning and subdivision regulations, and to support Act 171.

- a. From ANAC's perspective what is important to have accounted for in the Unified Planning Document? Need to account for the Pond Brook Management Area, wetland

complex extending from Rotax Rd/Raven Ridge, improve reference maps for different layers like soil types and habitat connectivity, and consider how the UPD could better reflect the Town Plan on these topics.

- b. Here is a little bit on the pressure that Monkton could be facing in the near term, and why ANAC might be concerned that there might be significant development before ecological concerns are addressed properly.

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/the-new-vermonters-fleeing-covid-19-newcomers-find-temporary-or-permanent-refuge-in-the-green-mountains/Content?oid=31176261>

- c. We have ~2.5 months to consider recommendations.

- d. Samples of how to word concerns for the UPD. Check out Appendix B on p 36:

<https://anr.vermont.gov/sites/anr/files/co/planning/documents/guidance/Act171Guidance.pdf>

- e. We could collaborate with the Conservation Commission who is drafting an Act 171 map and related maps. (Jaime, Laura)

- Connectivity: riparian and hedgerows
- Forest blocks
- Include carbon sequestration in forest management plans
- Natural Communities (revisit Conservation Commission map 6)
- Discussed a map that clearly shows the science-based priorities for habitat, etc.
- Consider ways to work with agricultural land to improve hedgerow connectivity, etc.
- We will review the Act 171 guidance document and language used by Ferrisburgh for their Town Plan and Zoning (hedgerows, Act 171, etc.)
- Review the Monkton inventory compiled by Lyra Brennan (2016?) for visuals, ideas, natural communities, and other key resources.

**5) Confirm next meeting dates**

- a. Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm
- b. Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm
- c. Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm (if needed)

**6) Review Minutes**

- a. Minutes were reviewed.

**Adjournment**

- b. Jaime moved to adjourn. Susan seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0). Adjourned at 9:13pm.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jaime Schulte  
Clerk**