

Town of Monkton
Agricultural & Natural Areas Committee
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 15th, 2022, at 6:30pm
Zoom/Phone Meeting

Members Attending: Laura Farrell (Chair), Susan Mahony (Vice-Chair), Jaime Schulte (Clerk), John Mejia (Digital Czar)

Members Absent: Whitney Leighton (on leave), Sam Burr (Alternate)

Guests: John McNerney, Ann Johnston-Miller (Conservation Commission)

Laura called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

The committee would like to thank Sam Burr for his long service to ANAC! Sam has been part of the committee since it was formed in about 2006. Sam will continue to be available to us as an advisor/member emeritus.

Discussed additional engagement with the Planning Commission (their request to ANAC and Conservation), as a follow-up to the Act 171 materials ANAC submitted to Planning in September 2021. We could attend some of their upcoming meetings and vice versa. Particular questions on the materials would be helpful to have in advance. Ann will be attending tonight's Planning Commission meeting and will bring up the topic.

1) Planning Commission recommendations short file

- a) Revisited the recommendations that were approved to be posted at our last meeting. Discussed that they were created jointly with the Conservation Commission last summer.
- b) Laura moved to post the recommendations as created jointly with the Conservation Commission, pending their approval. Susan seconded. No further discussion. All were in favor (4-0-0).
- c) Continued review of the document and added a description of the context for the project.
- d) Laura moved to accept the revisions and post the document to the ANAC webpage. Susan seconded. No further discussion. All were in favor (4-0-0).

2) Raven Ridge: parking & signs, bobcat denning dates

- a) Update from Susan
 - i) No Parking signs needed on both sides of the road for safety reasons. Discussion on-going with The Nature Conservancy. The other concept is no parking on the north side of the road.
 - ii) John McNerney visited to discuss this topic. It was noted that there is a state statute prohibiting parking in the traveled portion of roads, which would apply to essentially any parking at Raven Ridge aside from the designated parking lot, no matter how far from the parking area/corner.
 - iii) The easement states that a 3-4 space parking lot is allowed. The parking lot appears to be surrounded by wetland so a wetland permit would likely be needed, even if allowed for by the easement. John McNerney recalls that the small size of the existing

- parking lot was intentional, to manage the amount of foot traffic at Raven Ridge and the easement language supports that recollection.
- b) Upcoming meeting with Select Board - re parking. Should we write a letter?
 - i) We will send a written statement to the Selectboard:
“ANAC would like to express our concern that expanding parking at Raven Ridge beyond the current parking area (which is defined in the easement) would support an elevated degree of foot traffic at Raven Ridge that will adversely impact its ecological integrity. We are also concerned about the safety of current and future on-road parking.”
 - ii) Laura moved to send the above statement to the Selectboard. Jaime seconded. There was some discussion. All were in favor (4-0-0).

3) Chris Ajello, Field Naturalist, update

- a) Chris gave a quick overview of his report, which found an outstanding variety of natural communities in Monkton. He will be giving a talk at UVM in April and in Monkton on May 4th.

4) Plan Chris Ajello town presentation May 4th

- a) Presentation will be on May 4th, 7:00pm. Will consider whether to have it be online, in-person, or some combination.
- b) Susan will reach out to Monkton Central School about getting the school gym for Chris Ajello’s presentation from 6:30-8:30. Need tables, projector. Jaime will also book the Town Hall as an alternate venue.

5) Other business

- a) Work on advertising.

6) Confirm date(s) and locations/zoom

- a) Tuesday April 12th, 2022, 6:30pm-8:30pm
- b) Tuesday May 3rd, 2022, 6:30pm-8:30pm

7) Review Minutes

Adjournment

John moved to adjourn. Jaime seconded. All were in favor (4-0-0). Adjourned at 8:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jaime Schulte
Clerk