

Town of Monkton
Town Forest Committee
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, September 20th, 2023, 7:00pm
Monkton Town Hall & via Zoom

Members present: Callie Brynn (Chair), Jaime Schulte (Vice-Chair), John McNerney, Peter Dufault
Members absent: Molly Parren, Peter Dufault, CJ Buzzy (Alternate)
Guests: Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)

Call To Order - Jaime called the meeting to order at 7:08pm. Jaime will continue as acting chair for a while longer as Callie eases back into the Committee (following maternity leave).

1. Reviewed the Agenda

- a. John added an item to the agenda: Paul Fournier, a logger working with A. Johnson, would like to use the parcel to access the Twenge property, to harvest some blowdowns.

2. Public Comment - There was no public comment.

3. Old Airport Rd updates (if available)

- a. Road maintenance & access - Jim Carroll (town attorney) is reviewing the draft and will provide feedback.

4. Grant/funding updates

- a. The federal grant was awarded to the project in August and additional paperwork has been submitted for it.
- b. With 95% of the project budget lined up it is time to form the fundraising committee to work on the last 5% (\$50k). The fundraising committee:
 - i. Sasha Vaut (Vermont Land Trust)
 - ii. Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)
 - iii. Hilary Casillas (Monkton resident)
 - iv. Joan Holloway (Monkton resident)
 - v. Marilyn Cargill (Monkton resident; Planning Commission)
 - vi. John McNerney (Monkton resident; Town Forest Committee; Selectboard)
 - vii. Callie Brynn (Monkton resident; Town Forest Committee)

5. Community input/outreach next steps

- a. Management Plan planning & community engagement
 - i. Management Plan meetings and initial development would begin in the December or January timeframe. We anticipate a series of meetings with residents to discuss different uses in the town forest, such as bikes, horses, hunting, timber management, etc. Need at least an interim plan by closing (late spring or summer 2024) with a finished plan a few months after closing.

- b. UVM Landscape Inventory & Assessment class in the spring semester
 - i. Walt Poleman is a UVM professor who has taught many graduate students in Natural Resources, including two who have done great work in Monkton (Lyra Brennan and Chris Aiello). He will be bringing a class of 6-8 graduate students to study the town forest parcel during the spring semester, which we anticipate being very helpful for the management plan process. They will provide a lot of information about the property, a report, and a community presentation. Need to discuss the \$1-2k cost involved with the Selectboard, to see where it should come from in the existing project budget.

6. Other project updates & timeline review

- a. There is a right of way on the parcel, covering about 0.5 acres, benefiting Mark Bowman with extensive rights to use that land. To resolve this, before closing, the proposal is for A. Johnson to convey the approximately one half acre to Bowman. This is agreeable to A. Johnson, Bowman, the Vermont Land Trust, and the Town Forest Committee. We will discuss it with the Selectboard next.
- b. Discussed that the appraisal of the parcel needs to be updated for time (approximately a year ago) and to have a yellow book appraisal update and review. Need to adjust slightly from last year for an area around a shared well, Bowman ROW, etc. Bob will connect with the appraiser.
- c. Paul Fournier, a logger working with A. Johnson, would like to use the parcel to access the Twenge property, to harvest some trees that blew down in storms. Paul asked Vermont Land Trust about it, due to the Option To Purchase. Vermont Land Trust's forester and a member of the Town Forest Committee walked the proposed route with Paul and discussed it. The proposal will be reviewed with the Selectboard, to see what feedback or concerns they may have.
- d. The Committee discussed whether a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment would be of interest. We feel like the history of the site is reasonably well understood, so this step is not likely to provide new information.

Callie needed to depart the meeting at this time.

7. Review minutes of August 16th, 2023 - Postponed

8. Set next meeting date(s)

- a. Regular meeting: Tuesday, October 17th, 5:30pm, pending confirmation that Walt Poleman can join us at this time. Jaime to coordinate with Walt and update the Committee.

Adjournment - John moved to adjourn. All were in favor (3-0-0). Adjourned at 8:54pm.

Minutes taken by Jaime Schulte.