

MANCHESTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting December 5, 2015

Garry Hinkley called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. on February 5, 2015.

Present: Garry Hinkley, Deb Plengey, Shenna Bellows, Steph Ralph, Jeff Reardon, Jeff Janell

Guests: Jon Lund, Karen Tucker

A motion to accept minutes was made by Deb Plengey, seconded by Shenna Bellows and passed unanimously.

RALA Report

Karen Tucker from the Healthy Communities of the Capitol Area was present to discuss the draft of the Rural Active Living Assessment Report for Manchester. The Commission helped prepare data for the report. Karen wants the town to find the report acceptable and useful and asked if the Commission members had any corrections or suggestions. One purpose of the report is to help people in Manchester consider steps to provide better access to active living.

The discussion by Commission members brought out several opportunities:

- Provide a public boat launch for Cobbossee Lake or Stream at the outlet of the lake
- Promote walking to school perhaps by having a “walking school bus” similar to a program tried in Hallowell
- Investigate the reasons for and need for the deep ditches along roadsides that make walking more dangerous or difficult
- Publicize the many trails for walking, for example by posting them on the Healthy Maine web pages
- Work to provide better connectivity

Karen says she is willing to train someone to put the trails on the Healthy Maine web pages. The entry would include a description of the trail, the level of difficulty, and the access.

The Commission proposed to Karen that she present the report to the town at a Selectman’s meeting in March. Garry will set up a date.

Joint Project with Hallowell

Jon Lund represented the Hallowell Conservation Commission at the meeting so that we could discuss a joint project. He first suggested that we postpone any trail

cleanup project to June 13th. He indicated that the Jamie's Pond trails do not need a lot of work."

Jon proposed that the towns explore working with lands on the borders of the two towns. There is already quite a lot of public land along our border but we don't necessarily know the boundaries of public lands or the owners of private lands that fall between pieces of public land.

Jon is proposing that the two commissions work together to gather information and eventually build one or more loop trails if possible. Both steps could be supported by grants.

The ideas we generated included:

- Contact Tom Reeves who may have maps and useful information
- Identify more precisely the location of public lands
- Identify the properties that are located between parcels of public lands and learn who owns them
- Gather information from aerial photos, topo maps, soils maps
- Hire someone with grant funds to gather information
- Identify other groups who could help and whose contributed work might be match for any grant funding, for example the mountain biking group
- Consider whether we are willing to work with Land for Maine's Future which requires certain publicity about the project
- Get towns and groups to support a grant application
- As a first step produce a new map with the information acquired

Potential grant sources mentioned:

Quimby Family Foundation- deadline for concept submission April, full applications probably due in June, July
Fields Pond Foundation was source for a Hallowell grant

A subcommittee of the Manchester and Hallowell Commissions, including Jon Lund and Jeff Reardon, will convene in February.

Roadside Cleanup

Shenna shared a list of prior participants and local businesses or groups and has started to contact them. Lots of people are saving the date.

We suggested the following donation requests from local businesses:

Donuts from Orchard / Dunkin donuts
Coupons from Fielders' Choice per person / kiddie cone
Pizza from Pizza Stone
J&S - send a team; donate water, anything edible, chips

Garry has made arrangements with Pat.

Continued the discussion of getting more residents and local groups involved

Sponsored teams

Publicity ideas: Advertiser, town website, press release, Lakeside Orchard's Facebook page, Longfellows' newsletter, posters on local bulletin boards and business marquis

Ask business to donate a prize for team bringing the most people / coffee gift card

Focus on litter pickup in any publicity

Trails - Garry

Garry proposed trying to make the snowmobile trail a year-round trail. It would offer a half-day loop trail for walking. Jeff Reardon will talk with Jason Black to see whether he is open to public access across his property.

Reappointments - Garry

Garry will check with Tina whether individuals need to be reappointed now or whether this relates to new terms following the town elections.

Stephanie does not plan to continue for another term and will ask Sue Clain if she is interested.

Planning Board - Jeff Reardon

Hydric soils ordinance changes postponed for at least a year, but will probably be included with other changes to subdivision ordinances next year.

There is a proposal that the town adopt state timber harvesting standard, which would allow the town to ask the Maine Forest Service to provide enforcement in addition to a local official.

Other Business

Are new business lights, ex. Rite Aid, along route 202 in compliance with dark skies ordinance?

The Farm Bureau meet and greet for Legislators held at Longfellows was very successful with 4 Legislators from Kennebec County attending.

Family Mountain Bike Day will be June 5th or 6th at the RES.

Stephanie brought in a notice about an earlier Cobbossee Watershed District meeting about a recent lake survey.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.