

Montague Conservation Commission

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MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 8, 2015 – 6:30 pm

Upstairs Meeting Room, Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Commissioners Present: Mark Fairbrother - Chair, Alex Peterkin, Sean Werle, Donna Francis and Justin Fermann

Commissioners Absent: Deb Picking, Addie Rose Holland

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey - Agent

Mark Fairbrother called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Approval of December 11, 2014 Minutes:

Approval of the draft December 11, 2014 minutes was tabled to the February meeting to make some editorial adjustments.

Agent Updates:

Discuss 2015 work plan:

- Sawmill River Recreation Area – mowing agreement. Walter will sit down with Ralph Taylor to discuss this license agreement in early 2015.
- Sawmill River Restoration – South Street Bridge. Finalize access agreements and seek implementation funding
- Monitor Utility Projects
 - Tennessee Gas Pipeline – This is now in the FERC process and feedback will be needed on a voluntary basis. There have been some changes to the gas pipeline route. In Montague it is following mostly the utility corridor for the route. The route will now not impact APR farm land. Feedback that will be shared includes: Aquifer zone 2 Hannigan Brook Well, Hannigan Brook water supply district, Lake Pleasant, The Plains, Rte 63 scenic byway and private wells within a quarter mile.
 - Cabot Taps Separation Project – came to the Conservation Commission, MEPA filing and town staff
 - First Light FERC relicensing – they just completed the first year of studies for examples of erosion along the river.
- Dry Hill Cemetery – establish well marked foot path and signage. Establish limited access for maintenance of the area.
- Millers Falls River access planning –A riverfront parcel is currently in tax title and on the Montague side (near the Millers Falls paper company) and would be a nice addition for water access.
- Justin suggested having a list of potential in-town mitigation projects in addition to the South Street and North Street projects.

Distribute DEP regulatory changes

- Agent distributed a handout of regulatory changes. The Board read over the handout. The regulations are currently effective.

Distribute Conflict of Interest Law packet

- Agent distributed the Conflict of Interest Law packets to Commissioners

Correspondance

- Cows sent a letter asking to exempt their land from public use (i.e trail systems) in the town of Montague. This letter went out to all area towns and conservation departments.
- MassDEP Letter sent a letter notify and advise that MassDEP has the intention to increase the level of review it gives all wetlands filings in Montague. MassDEP has selected 8 communities to receive file number comments on all NOI filings. Montague has been chosen to be one of the communities due to the fact that the community has been identified as an Environmental Justice Area and this effort will provide additional support to the commission in reviewing projects. It is NOT a punishment, rather it is free technical assistance.
- MACC has announced its Annual Environmental Conference on Feb 28, 2015. If any commissioner wants to attend please let us know.
- Kinder Morgan sent a voluntary request for information with maps of the proposed natural gas pipeline. The revised route follows existing utility lines. The plans now avoid all APR land in Montague. At this point it is unclear whether the Town would benefit by submitting response. Agent will investigate options.

Motion made by Donna Francis to adjourn the meeting Seconded by Sean Werle. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:17 PM.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____