

FRANKLIN WATERSHED COMMITTEE
Minutes for Monthly Public Meeting
July 9, 2009
Felco Room, Franklin Homestead

Present: Jim Cameron, Larry Myott, Peter Benevento, Heidi Britch-Valenta, David Breed, Dick Benton, Lucille Rainville, Carolyn Rhodes, Howard Rhodes, Pauline Favreau, Brendan O'Shea, Paul Stanley, Ruth Anne Krayesky, Ron Paradis, Guy Breault, Susan Clark, Norman Kern, Bill Zuccareno, Economic Development Council of Northern Vermont (EDCNV), Sylvia Jensen, VT Agency of Agriculture.

The meeting was called to order by Jim Cameron at 7:00PM. Jim asked the group for flexibility to shift items on the agenda to efficiently handle a very full agenda and provide time for 2 guests who wished to speak to the group but were not on the agenda.

Tape recorder- The group discussed the issue of purchasing a tape recorder for the meetings to be used by the secretary to create accurate minutes. The board showed wide support for the idea. Sue Clark made a motion and Dick Benton seconded to have Heidi purchase a recorder for the Watershed Comm. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes- Jim suggested to the group that minutes of the previous meeting should be approved by the group each month. All agreed with this concept. Heidi had neglected to make copies for everyone of the minutes for the discussion so the issue was tabled until the next meeting.

319 Grant Update_ Jim announced the group had been approved for renewed funding for the 319 grant. The group was awarded \$45,000 for 2010 which was the maximum amount offered. A letter from Administrator, Rick Hopkins, was shared with the group.

Lay Monitoring Program- The group has received notification that the tributary testing will be funded through the La Rosa Grant. Peter Benevento, head of the project, was unable to make the meeting but Heidi shared information from Peter via email- testing is to begin July 22, no new sites will be added, effort will be coordinated with the MRBA to get the samples to Waterbury the same day. Jim noted that Peter Benevento's involvement and dedication to this program played a large role in securing funding. He should be commended for his contribution to the group.

AmeriCorps Volunteer- Jim shared info in Peter's absence regarding the pending application to secure a full time AmeriCorps volunteer for the FWC to work in conjunction Heidi to allow for greater productivity. An application should be ready for the next meeting. The cost is \$6,000 for a 10 month position. The plan is to apply for Clean and Clear funds for this expense.

Treasurer's Report- Susan Clark provided account information. She will send an invoice with the 319 grant to receive the next installment of funds for the 2009 funding.

Nominating Committee- Jim asked for 3 people to form a nominating committee for the upcoming annual meeting and elections. Seats up for election are Larry Myott- Vice President, Jim Cameron- President, and Chris O'shea-Director. Larry informed the group he would not run again and offered to be on the nominating committee. Pauline Favreau and Peter Benevento also offered to fill this role. Anyone interested in running or suggesting someone should contact one of the committee members. Brendan offered Chris O'shea for the committee as well. Jim said they only needed three but if needed they would contact him.

Stream Assessments- Brendan O'Shea, Lake Carmi Consulting was present to discuss his report. Brendan had emailed copies of the report to committee members the morning of the meeting but did not have any copies at the meeting. Brendan discussed the focus of his report which was 43 culverts and 3 bridges around the lake. He

developed a list of culverts classified as high priority for replacement because of the large amount of erosion caused by the present situation.

David discussed the need to reach out to other agencies, such as the Town, State, Better Back Roads, VYCC, and Clean and Clear for assistance with this project list. There is a need to determine if the culverts are located on private or public land and to determine a more specific location for each culvert.

Heidi commented on the importance of the culvert information but noted that this was not what the contract for stream assessments was for. The minutes of the March meeting were referenced for guidelines on this project. Three streams were to be assessed. Brendan said he had moved away from stream assessment because of the hesitation from landowners to allow the stream walks. Heidi clarified that only two land owners were hesitant to comply; Lucille Rainville and Dan Larivee. This did not preclude other streams or segments of other streams being assessed. It was also an expectation that a team, David, Dick, Peter, would work together to determine tributary names for future reference. This has not happened yet.

Brendan has submitted a bill for hours from Ashley and himself totaling \$1,000. The group agreed that the information could be useful but would need to verify that it was in compliance with the expectation of the grant. Heidi will discuss the report with Rick Hopkins and Susan Warren, and if they agree the report is adequate, it will be accepted.

Flex-Incentives Program- Paul Stanley reported on the progress of the model program at the Lothian Farm. He described a meeting with the Lothians, Paul, Ashley Kane, and Heidi where the P-Index base readings were shared and a \$600 payment for the first phase was due. Paul suggested holding the initial payment until Ashley could determine if the readings were low enough to register for a 'stewardship' payment and this could be issued at the same time.

Weeds- Heidi updated the group on the request to have Ann Bove, ANR attend a meeting to give an update on what is new in weed technology. She informed the group that the request had met hesitation from Susan Warren who cautioned the group from getting distracted from the phosphorus issue. Heidi had communicated with Dick Lang, LCCA, asking if they could also request a visit for this purpose. The group was firm in their desire to get accurate information on the latest technologies. The weed harvester currently used on the lake may be retired soon and the group would like to understand other methods prior to supporting a replacement for the harvester. Heidi agreed to continue to pursue the issue with Ann Bove and Susan Warren.

Shoreline Survey- Heidi said that the surveys are going well. She has been contacted by 10 people wanting to be surveyed and has received a few donations and new memberships. Ruth Ann Kravesky and Carolyn Rhodes also said they had been well received and were close to completing their surveys.

Jim and Heidi were taping a show at Channel 15 on the Franklin Watershed survey on July 13th. An application to be on 'Across the Fence' will be submitted to WCAX. It will take 4 approximately 4 months to get on the show so it can be about next year's goals.

Tom Clark, RCAP and Regional Planning have both offered to give us a shoreline erosion workshop. The group suggested the LCCA schedule the time for the workshop.

Septic Outreach Event- Heidi reported on the Septic outreach event at the Firemen's Barbeque on July 4th. 1,000 attended. Jim, Peter, David and Heidi were there to hand out literature, phosphorus free samples, and demonstrate the watershed model. Tim Lake, New England Biofilter was also there with advanced treatment system on a trailer. It was a very worthwhile outing.

Raingarden Event- Heidi reminded everyone of the raingarden excavation on the 15th and reminded volunteers of the plan for the day. The raingarden will be completed for the Historic Sites Tour on the 18th.

Agricultural Projects-

Cover Crops- Heidi mentioned the need for cover crop agreement forms to be completed by participating farmers.

Dewing Stream stabilization- She mentioned the Dewing project and the challenge that she and Jim Dewing have in connecting on the phone. A project agreement will be reviewed by Dewing. The project can't begin until the dry season and must wait for an OK from Chris Brunelle.

Aerators- Jim Dewing said he has covered 1,800 acres with the aerway aerator. 30% of that land was in the Franklin Watershed. Each of the selected operators were funded to do up to 2000 acres this year through the Farmers Watershed Alliance grant.

Coordinator's Report

Coordinator Heidi Britch-Valenta reported on the following:

- Julie Moore of Clean & Clear will attend the next regular meeting on August 13th.
- Wayne and Nancy Fiske hosted a conservation walk on their farm on July 18th. This was very informational and well attended. 5 FWC members attended.
- Megan Moir is leaving Clean and Clear Office in St. Albans to take a job with the City of Burlington. This is very sad as she was the contact for stormwater issues and could have been very helpful with the survey issues.
- Heidi asked if the group wanted to make an annual donation to the Homestead. The group decided to put it on the next agenda to discuss.
- Heidi will do a presentation for the LCCA meeting on Saturday. This will provide an overview and status FWC grant.
- Heidi met with Justin Kenney of VYCC and they will work to secure funding for future projects.
- The Felco room was booked for the Annual meeting on August 13th.

NUVAC Bactocharge- Sylvia Jensen, VT Agency of Agriculture, and member of the Friends of Missisquoi Bay Board, addressed the group. She explained that she became aware of the group through her work contacts with Brendan O'Shea and became interested in targeting the area for land conservation. She then met with Economic Development to discuss Agricultural statistics for Franklin County and realized that they were looking for a watershed to conduct a study so she suggested he consider the Franklin Watershed.

Bill Zuccareno, Economic Development Council of Northern Vermont, said that his conversations with Sylvia Jensen lead him to believe that the Lake Carmi Watershed might be an ideal location for a watershed wide study of a phosphorus reduction product that has been recently tested in the St. Albans Wastewater treatment facility with promising results. The size of the watershed make it attractive for a managed study. He explained the 'friendly' bacteria that can be added at cattle rations, septic systems and wastewater facilities to provide a substantial reduction in phosphorus levels. It cost approximately \$0.25 cents per day per cow to use. Cost for additions to home septics is also approximately \$0.25 per day. Zuccareno proposed to write a grant to Clean and Clear for the funding to conduct this study in Franklin. The group was agreeable to the concept and set a date to have an informational session with Zuccareno, and representatives from NUVAC. All residents of Franklin would be invited. August 6th at 5:00 in the Felco room. Home septic information will start at 5:00pm; Agricultural information will start at 7:00pm. Dinner will be served. **NOTE: post meeting, Zuccareno asked to change the meeting date to August 5th times will remain the same.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Heidi Britch-Valenta and Dick Benton,
Acting Secretaries in Peter Benevento's absence.