

Shelburne Open Space Committee

June 24, 2019

Shelburne Town Hall

Present: David Schochet (chair), Larry Flaccus, Jim Perry, Tom Johnson, Norm Beebe (7:10), Joel Dwight (7:20)

Guests: Whit Sanford

1. **Grant Opportunities for Mahican-Mohawk Trail Extension**

Whit Sanford is looking at grant prospects which enhance the economic viability of the SF village area. Of particular interest is a “place-making grant” that might address a number of project areas in the village such as the Singley property, the Senior Center, the Buckland Rail yard, the Mahew property, a Pothole deck and the riverfront trail and bring these and other projects together under a common application. Grants up to \$3m which enhance arts and education are available from the organization Artsplace America which coordinates dollars from many private companies (not governmental) has granted over \$100m so far in this round which goes to 2020. Sanford sees the potential of putting a grant application together for \$2.5-\$3m for the 2020 round of funding after the Town and the organization clarifies how to proceed.

Questions were raised about whether these projects would meet the criteria of enhancing arts and education.

Action:

- Sanford will pursue defining a project list. The OS committee will have a better idea of trail costs once the feasibility study is completed.
- Members will review the Artsplace America website.
- Beebe will informally explore options with Mahews.

2. **Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm by David Schochet once a quorum was present.

3. **Minutes:** Minutes of the 6/3/19 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Action: Motion by Perry, second by Flaccus to approve minutes, approved unanimously with abstention of Johnson.

4. **Mahican-Mohawk Trail Extension Feasibility Study**

Members who walked the proposed trail with Patterson (FLT) and consultant Josh Ryan from Timber and Stone on June 6th spoke about the challenges and opportunities of the trail route. The terrain on the Hanford property is conducive to a trail on the ridge above the river; it is fairly flat and according to Perry could be easily cleared for a significant length from the FLT property upriver using volunteers. However, there is significant erosion below the Sweetheart from improper drainage and inadequate storage ponds washing fill from the developing parking lot into the river. Perry suggested it would be possible to bypass the erosion by rerouting the trail northward. In addition, there is a question of soil stability on the upriver end of the proposed route causing potential challenges to completing the entire trail. Cost of completing the westward end would potentially be hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Traditionally it has been seen that the trail would start at the end of Deerfield Avenue, tying it into the village. Flaccus suggested looking at it from the other end, building the easy portion first, and ending the trail at the former tennis courts with a picnic/rest area. Johnson expressed concerns and potential opposition of the neighbors with ending the trail at the Topolski property. However it could be a dead end trail first, ending at the tennis courts, just as the other end terminates in a dead end at Wilcox Hollow, then in later stages, connected to the village.

The consultant study with cost estimates should be completed in early summer, which will inform the committee of best next steps. At this point there was general agreement that the best options would be to stage the construction: focus on completing the portion from the FLT property to the tennis courts first. Once this was completed, evaluate the usage and develop grant proposals (such as the Artsplace America) to complete the trail to the village, looking at a soils study (?\$50k), the Mahew property and route challenge issues.

The route for Stage I would cross the Hanford property, the electric company and town land. Key issue for stage I would be an easement from Jane Hanford. FLT has some easement acquisition programs which may help. The Town has allocated \$4000 for the initial stages of the project and this could include easements. Also, the FRCOG - DRC Grant was actually funded for \$6,000, more than required for the consultant study.

Action: Schochet will contact FLT regarding next steps, including taking a lead on the easement acquisitions.

5. **Maps**

Perry reported that he had replenished trail maps at the FLT trailhead, on the Mt. Massetat trail and at the Visitor Center. He turned in \$37.07 to the town for the 148 trail and walking tour maps sold at the Fire Tower trailhead for deposit into the open space revolving fund and reported we are getting low on the Shelburne Trail Maps.

6. **Tree signs**

Perry reported he had cut invasive vegetation around the Locust tree on Water Street. He contacted Carol Angus at 120 Bridge Street to see if she had the missing White Fir sign post top and ID tag and whether she was willing to have it replaced. He has the missing America Basswood sign.

Action: Dwight will attempt to clarify the Basswood species and Perry and Dwight will look at whether the sign could be modified to eliminate "American" and reinstalled.

7. **Wooded Loop Trail**

Perry reported that he had cleared up the Wooded Loop Trail, however the tree signs removed during logging need to be reinstalled.

Action: Flaccus will contact Helen Payne to set up a walk of the property with her and Curt when she is here in July to review the trail and see about potential route to connect to Sunset Ave by Route 2.

8. **OSC Membership**

Membership of the committee is short of where it should be with 7 vacancies of the 15 statutory requirement. This makes it challenging to attain quorum or complete the work of the committee.

Action: Johnson will contact Nicole (Topolski)
Beebe will contact Andrea Griswold and Faith Williams

9. Conflict of Interest Training

Action: You know who you are and what you need to do.

10. Reports of Committees:

- **Recreation Commission:** Rec Committee has acquired a ping pong table and is developing use rules and fees.
- **Planning Board:** Presentation of proposed zoning changes at Town Meeting was challenged and most proposed changes to village zoning were withdrawn.
- **Conservation Commission:** no member present.
- **Agriculture Commission:** no member present.

10. Next Regular Meeting: Next meeting will be 7/22/19.

11. Adjournment:

Action: Moved by Flaccus, seconded by Beebe to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclimation at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Flaccus, Secretary pro-tem