

Town of Warren
Conservation Commission
Meeting Location: Warren Library
November 10, 2015

Present: Kate Wanner, Jito Coleman, Jonathan Clough, Damon Reed, George Schenk, Rocky Bleier, Carolynn Schipa

Guests: Will Flender & Mac Rood from Mad River Path (MRP)

1. 7:04 PM CALL MEETING TO ORDER

2. **Discussion with Mad River Path Association- Project Update:** They are interested in our input on building a bridge from Top Gas station over to new town property (proposed name = Warren Corridor Conservation Area), and input on potential location of a path and what to avoid. Potentially considering a suspension bridge, single pylon, which could cost at least \$100K. Particularly nice area to have a bridge because there is already space for parking on Rte 100. Gas station itself is within floodplain fringe/fluvial erosion hazard zone. VT DEC didn't see any major hurdles, but would have to do some specific survey work (hydrologic analysis). Their main focus is to eventually have a connected path from Warren village to the Warren/Waitsfield Town Line, and this new town property could bring them significantly closer to that goal.

Our concerns include a potential bridge to nowhere if the Path does not get connected to Eaton Town Forest, and negative effects on some significant wildlife habitat. Our charge is to find balance between needs and interests of people and need and interests of wild. What about staying low, along the bench, close to the river, where there is already human influence on the west side of the river?

It will take a long time. MRP wants to explore getting it designed, permitted and priced, and then decide on whether to do a capital campaign now or later, when a fully connected path is more of a possibility. They are not imagining it would take public funding. Will can send us the results of trail counts on some particularly popular sections of the MRP so we can have an idea of current use.

WCC needs more information on the natural history of this particular parcel and also its value within the larger context of a wildlife corridor going east-west across Route 100. Kate will talk to Aaron Worthley of Arrowwood to see what they might be able to do and the timing. Is the river corridor most sensitive along shoreline? Does human activity that parallels river create some kind of barrier?

Kate **makes a motion** to immediately discuss with Arrowwood about studying the natural history and conservation values of the Warren Corridor Conservation Area and the stretch of Route 100, from seasons to riverside park. **Rocky seconds. All in favor. Motion passed.** Kate will call Aaron tomorrow.

Jito proposes we buy a few wildlife cameras, employ them, and ask Arrowwood to interpret data.

3. Discussion of Management Plan Language and maps for Riverside Park, A/R parcel, Seniff/Rewinski

- Review language specific to mowing and mowing maps.
- Riverside: Ask Corrie to flag trees in spring so don't get mowed and find a volunteer to mow around the trees with a smaller mower, not what the town uses.
- Alderbough Roe: mowing in area and along mad river path. Eventually plant trees along Route 100. No opposition to formalizing parking area with boulders or split rail fence. Try to physically limit cars getting closer to river
- Rewinski-Seniff: mowing to maintain simple path to river, monitor spreading of japanese knotweed
- **Signs:** Will recommends simple signs for Conservation Areas from Voss in Williston. \$35 for 12x18. Metal with plastic core. Jito's wife could do design fairly cheaply. Name and educational topic, with image or map. Make it consistent with other valley signs. Damon is going to find out about brown sign with white lettering for all Conservation Areas, similar to Long Trail. Rocky will follow up with Mad River Glen sign shop

4. Chapter 3 Town Plan Language: Planning Commission is still reviewing language. Next meeting they hope to take some action, or at least have specific suggestions for improvement. Kate plans to attend. Nov 23, 7 PM.

5. New Business

- Carolyn is on Warren Tree Board. They had a forum, approached landowners in Warren village and created a free streetscape program. Raised \$22,000 and has been pretty successful planting trees within town ROW (where it is illegal to cut down trees). Arbor day is on May 1st. Would Conservation Commission be interested in donating \$500 to plant one substantial tree in village of Warren. This is something we will consider when we are putting together our budget for next year.
- Damon will send around email from Camilla Behn regarding forest grant opportunity
- Damon will submit town land names to select board before he leaves on Nov 22nd and also follow up with Cindy on this year's budget and timing of Arrowwood invoices.

Next meeting's agenda: Dec 8th, Tuesday, 7 pm. in library

- Potentially engage Arrowwood in study of new town land
- Review language produced by Amy and Jonathan for 3 Conservation Area signs: Native American history for Wabanaki Conservation Area, include watershed map at Quayle Point, importance of wildlife corridors at Warren Corridor Conservation Area
- Next year's budget

Motion to adjourn meeting by Jonathan. Damon seconded. **All in favor.** Adjourn at 9:23