

Fayston Natural Resources Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 31, 2008

Present: Jane Lazorchak, Patti Green-Swift, Peter Forbes, Mary O'Leary, Ned Kelly
Absent: Stellan Wollmar, Ky Koitzsch

1) Minutes from last Meeting were approved.

2) State Wildlife Grant Update – Over the last four weeks, we met with the winter program at Fayston twice out on the Chase Brook parcel. Jane, Patti and Ned were present at both outings and Stellan joined us outside for the second week. In cooperation with Tara, Jens Hilke from Fish and Wildlife, Caitrin Noel from Friends of the Mad River, Carol Thompson from the Mad River Path and some volunteers from the Mad Birders, we led two exploratory outings on the Chase Brook Parcel. The first week we explored different habitats and species in three different groups: seeps/wetlands, upland habitat, and birds of the forest. At the end of that trip, students were asked to sum up what they had learned and to begin to think about a species they might want to focus on. The second week we spent a shorter amount of time hiking through the woods with the goal of looking more closely at the habitat Chase Brook provides for a few key species that we may want to zero in on for more study. The second half of the outing, students were asked to identify some species of greatest conservation need (the term used in the SWG grant) that utilize Chase Brook. Approximately 8 species were identified ranging from black bear to dragonflies to the mink. As we narrowed it down further and further based on interest in the kids, we finally landed on the mink as our animal of choice.

The next step, as outlined in the grant, is to have a community gathering to celebrate the mink. The group discussed ways to engage the community around the species and ideas for hosting the event. Most Committee members felt like we did not have enough time with the kids and that we would like to have another opportunity to visit the forest with them to exclusively discuss the habitat needs and ecology of the mink. The committee agreed that an afternoon field trip with the kids and their parents followed by a potluck at the school would be the best way to proceed. The first two weeks in May were the best times for everyone. Jane agreed to follow-up with Tara about this idea and report back to the committee. In addition, Committee members thought it would be fun to publicize this project by creating a “Think Mink” bumper sticker.

2) Ancient Roads – Mary provided the committee with an overview from town meeting. Although her time was cut short by lunch, she felt our work was well received by the town. We need to remind the Select Board to publically warn the meeting. Patti will work with Ky to meet with the Select Board again to discuss this topic and will report back to the committee. In preparation for that meeting, the committee needs to research the landowners and abutters where the ancient roads are mapped. The list of roads and who is responsible for gathering landowner information is as follows:

1. n/a

2. Ned
3. n/a
4. n/a
5. Peter
6. n/a
7. Jane
8. Mary
9. Ned
10. n/a
11. Mary
12. Mary
- 12a.12b. Patti
13. Peter
14. Jane
15. Peter
16. Patti

For our next meeting, we will all gather the landowners and abutters names and addresses for the roads we are responsible for. Stellan and Ky will be responsible for drafting a letter to these landowners informing them of our ongoing work around ancient roads and will be clear that we have not done any legal research yet and that this is a preliminary meeting.

3) Town Picnic – Peter has offered up Knoll Farm to host the event. He will check with Helen about dates and will let us know at the next meeting. An idea for that day includes a walk to Burnt Rock from Knoll Farm with dropout points along the way.

4) Other News –

Ned will work with Leo to mark the boundaries of Chase Brook.

Don't forget about the Values Mapping Forum at the Big Picture on Monday, April 7 at 7:00. Help get the word out and please try and attend.

Next meeting is April 28 at 7:00.