

**Fayston Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**October 25, 2023, 5:45 - 7:30 pm**  
**Fayston Municipal Office**

Members Present: Andrea Henderson, Amy Dalton, Brian Litmans, Woody Dugan, Corrie Miller

Members Present via Zoom: Pete Colgan

Members Absent: Patty Pasley

Public/Guests: Sam Robinson, Mad River Valley Planning District Annual Data Report (30 mins)

**1. Minutes Approved**

Amy moved to approve minutes from September 27, 2023. Andrea seconded. Corrie and Brian abstained. No further discussion/comments. Amy, Andrea, Pete and Woody voted in favor and the motion was approved.

Note: Minutes & agenda to be shared via Google Docs so all can add/revise/etc.

2. No public input noted

**3. 2024 Budget Planning–Process, Timing, and FCC Needs**

Andrea and Corrie will meet to prepare the budget before the next meeting.

**4. Co-chair redesignation**

Corrie made a motion to designate Andrea and Brian as co-chairs. Amy seconded. All voted in favor.

**5. Project updates**

a. Knotweed – Andrea

Fayston Knotweed Pilot Project Report delivered to Selectboard 10/24/23. Shared summary of 2023 efforts, community engagement, and future plans at Selectboard's 10/24/23 meeting. The 2023 knotweed season is wrapped up.

b. Conservation & Recreation Visioning – Corrie

The SC has chosen [Arrowwood Environmental](#) as the consultant for Phase 1 work. RFP available for review for more information on Phase 1 scope of work. Our last CRV Steering Committee was on Oct 2 and we heard from recreational groups (Sugarbush, MR Riders, MR Ridge Runners, Mad Bush, MR Backcountry Coalition, MR Path) about their current trail networks and their plans for the future. We're planning a November Community Learning Session with one biodiversity speaker and one recreation speaker to share the state of biodiversity & recreation in the state/region. Date not yet determined.

Next meeting Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> with Arrowwood

c. Boyce Hill – Pete & Woody

Fall mowing underway by contractor Ed Read, Mad River Property Management. Work is going well except for an unfortunate misinterpretation of the map, resulting in cutting and some ruts across a seepage wetland as well as several other areas designated for natural succession. Additionally, Sugarbush was found onsite mowing without being requested by or notifying the FCC. Woody communicated with Ed Read and Jon Hammond to clarify map zones and determine which entity would do what mowing, based on their machinery and its alignment with goals set forth in the management plan.

Ross Saxton is expected to remove overgrown vegetation (primarily trees of 5" and larger diameter) from the pond embankment this week. Cost estimate: \$500

Another Stewardship volunteer group is being recruited for work October 28-29. Viewshed maintenance/renewal will be the focus, primarily concentrated on the artificial channel area.

The search for additional community members to serve on the Boyce Hill Committee is underway.

We are coordinating with the MRV Planning District and the Rural Resource Commission on design and content for the information kiosk (consistent with the others in the Mad River Valley) as well as the cultural history interpretive signage. They're providing a template and vendors. A new map creator is needed. We discussed the timeline for the info kiosk and the likely need for getting a new temporary signage in place ahead of the more permanent kiosk.

d. Chase Brook – Patty/Andrea

Serviceberry tree planted in recognition of Lisa Koitzsch's service to the town of Fayston on the Conservation Commission. We enjoyed a lovely party in celebration of Lisa's service and to honor her work on the conservation commission.

Pollinator corridor project proposal was submitted to VT Master Naturalist program, and chosen by seven of the 21 participants. Hoping to partner with Bee the Change and the Fayston School PTO to plant an acre of pollinator habitat and revive the nature trail.

Rec'd \$200 invoice from Ross Saxton for mowing (five mows). I asked him to keep us on his rotation next summer.

e. MRV Bear Initiative – Amy

Oct. 7 Farmers Market Tabling canceled due to weather

Amazing Bear Stories Contest subcommittee met on Oct. 24

Luke will promote contest at schools, K-12. Prizes for winning entries TBD. In addition to posting winning stories to website and print form in Valley Reporter, committee is pursuing ideas for presenting stories publicly/before a live audience. Committee would like to increase submissions (11 submissions last year)

Initiative would like to host a guest speaker for Spring 2024. Ideas are welcome

Amy amended her project proposal for the Master Naturalist Program. She will use this opportunity to work on updating the Management Plan for Chase Brook and has full support from Alicia Daniel

f. Other - MRV Master Naturalist Project: Pollinator Garden - Patty, Amy, Andrea connected with Fayston school and Bee the Change. Met with them on Oct. 24 and Bee the Change wants to take this project on (would include materials, equipment, and experience). Walked three areas around school (a number of options), and looked at mowed area, along fence, and in between McCullough barn and road at Chase Brook.

Corrie recommended Andrea check out the Fayston School stormwater master plan and see if it identified areas for possible rain gardens and consider those areas for doubling as pollinator gardens and rain gardens. Encouraged connecting with Ira Shadis from Friends of Mad River. Also noted that any work done near the Chase Brook parking lot consider the potential for future gravel wetland outlined in stormwater master plan.

## **6. New Consideration**

Corrie noted that a town resident expressed concern about a conditional use permit being considered at upcoming DRB public hearing and that the person asked if the FCC ever got involved in such issues. Corrie noted that she thought it would be a good idea for someone on the FCC to follow notices from ZA & DRBs so we can begin to understand the context for Town Plan and LURs.

**7. Guest Speaker:** Sam Robinson, Mad River Valley Planning District presented Annual Data Report

Motion to Adjourn at 7:30pm by Woody. Andrea seconded. All voted in favor.

**8. Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 29, 2023, 5:45 - 7:00pm