

LVRTC
The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail
Management Committee

MEETING MINUTES - MAY 13, 2009

Stonegrill Restaurant & Pub, Morrisville, Vermont

ATTENDEES

Members

Laird McDowell (<i>Chair</i>)	Mike O'Hara	Steve Larrabee	Al Spitzer
Bethany Remmers	Dan Zucker (<i>Sec'ty</i>)		

Non-Members

Bryant Watson (VAST)	Al Robertson	Dave Guilderdale	Ken Heoppner
Jim Hill	Todd Sumner	Jesse Hudson (VAST)	Greg Backus (VHB)

Call To Order: 6:35pm by Laird, who determined that we have a quorum.

Secretary's Report (from April, 2009 meeting):
Moved by Mike O., Seconded by Steve L.

Financial Report:

Danny H. not present, submitted via email. Bryant and Jesse submitted review/overview that stated that there is about \$15k remaining the available balance (approximately 6 weeks operating expenses). There is still about \$134k for in-kind expenses (legal, VHB, etc.). See that document for details.

Bryant Watson's Report:

Categorical Exclusion (CE) is ongoing. Have not heard on Act 250 Jurisdictional Opinion (JO). The Land Use panel of the Environmental Board recommended that the project falls under federal jurisdiction, not state. This went to all three district coordinators.

Jesse working on Morrisville Bridge (Rte 100) for pedestrian traffic during it's replacement and other issues such as culverts.

Subject returned to the JO and problem with unjustified delays from district coordinators. Bethany asked about possibility of asserting pressure. Bryant described that each coordinator is charged w/ writing up different analyses. Two have completed the task but there is no forthcoming response from the third - and that political pressure is unwise due to lack of oversight via the Act 250 process - which lacks sufficient chain of authority. While the sec'ty of Agency of Natural Resources

(J. Wood) oversees the activity of the district coordinators there is no direct chain of command regarding the process of issuing a JO. Outside pressure would likely be seen as personal and the likelihood of retribution (“vendetta”) against the LVRTC suggests the advantage of a wait-and-see approach. Mike O. expressed impatience. No action was taken. [Note from Sec’y: as of this writing on 6/2/09 the JO has been issued, determining no Act 250 jurisdiction is required].

Guest Speaker Breg Backus of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB):

Backus delivered his and Al R.’s engineering report as one. Engineering Report has been submitted to VTRANS w/ detailed plans, historical & archeological analysis. Todd contributed that some agency comments have been finished - waiting for environ. specialist & historical analysis for final report (reply) back from VTRANS.

Greg reported that the CE requires the environ report back from VTRANS, hopes that we’ll get reply in 4-6 weeks. Then final report submitted to VTRANS and the FHWA (which could cause a delay) for the CE review. The estimate is that we’ll get the CE so won’t need an environmental assessment.

VHB design team is waiting for ACT250 JO.

Greg reports productive ANR mtg - ANR determined that no stormwater permit is required - but not in writing yet. Next mtg (late May) w/ Army Corps who believe that trailheads are part of the project and impact wetlands. We believe that there are 21 existing trailheadas (Like Marty’s 1st Stop, Danville) that are out of the AC’s jurisdiction - already exist.

LAC Report:

Bethany reports LAC took May off. Will meetin in June to continue mapping project and discussing Management Plan (MP).

Friends of the LVRT:

None present, No report. LVRTC members were aware that Friends did not get major requested grant.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Law Enforcement - NTR

Communications - NTR

Maintenance: Al reported nationally \$1k → \$2k per mile for estimate of maintenance costs. Al reports that fees and/or donations are primary funding sources.

Policy - NTR

Fundraising: Ken H. waiting on Act 250 JO to begin publicity push. A Chester,VT snowmobile club donated \$500 and place and ad challenging other snowmobile clubs in VAST to do the same.

The roundup program has yielded about \$20 in cash and rumors that another \$100 have been donated so far.

New Business:

Zucker: Board acknowledged survival of avalanche Dan Z.

Management Plan Revisions: The MP, including draft wording, VTRANS edits, Mike O's edits, was reviewed partially. All edits were considered up through page 28. Committee agreed that when edits are all completed, entire revised MP (w/ our edits) will be voted on as one single motion. Bethany requested that it be noted that the LAC recommends VTRANS (Trini Brassard's) edit on page 18, item f) which restricts use of the trail by maintenance and other vehicles.

Mike O' moved to table discussion and complete review at the June meeting. Al S. seconded. One 'nay' vote, five 'aye' votes.

Adjournment: Bethany moved to adjourn at 8:57pm, seconded by Mike O.