

Manchester Conservation Commission

January 2, 2020 meeting

Convened at 7:04 pm

Members present: Jeff Janell, Jeff Reardon, Shenna Bellows, Fred Snow, Jean-Luc Theriault, Garry Hinkley (guest), Sara Kingdon.

1. Minutes from November 2019 and December 2019 reviewed and approved

2. Town Forest trail planning: The MCC subgroup met tonight at 6 pm and will meet again just prior to next MCC meeting. Current focus is on considering pros/cons of various access points and understanding neighboring properties better. The preferred access point would be in Manchester. Once access point determined, goal will be to start core trail development. (Further trails in future might be developed with help of Mountain Bike Club.) Garry will work on getting more information about possible use of the CMP corridor for recreational use and will continue to add more detail to the map. Garry also noted that Augusta owns an obsolete radio tower on 0.2 acre lot in Manchester (at the end of Beacon Way) and has agreed to give this lot to Manchester—this area would have some parking potential.

3. Fiberight: Sara spoke with Shelby Wright (Director of Community Services for Fiberight) and with Mike Carroll (Executive Director MRC). Per Ms. Wright, there is no public drop off option at Fiberight facility and no public tour available (although town officials would be allowed to tour). Ms. Wright is available to come to a future MCC meeting if invited. Mr. Carroll stated that MRC has decided to accept new members (beyond the 115 initial Maine communities that initially formed the MRC), but MRC has not yet finalized contract terms or fees for newly joining towns. He anticipates tipping fees to be \$80-85/ton for newly joining towns. He is also available to come to a future MCC meeting. MCC agreed to consider possibly inviting him to speak after MRC finalizes contracts/fees for newly joining communities. Using Fiberight/joining MRC would likely involve either a local transfer station and/or defined hauler arrangement, to bring combined MSW/recycling the hour north to Fiberight's facility. The annual MSW/recycling tonnage for Manchester is not currently known. Information gathered from haulers by the town of Manchester might help estimate tonnage. Possible information from the city of Augusta about the tonnage from Manchester residents who bring their own permit-based trash/recycling to Hatch Hill could be useful. Sara will ask Mr. Carroll from MRC if he has estimates on tonnage from towns of similar size to Manchester and will ask him for update when contracts/fee schedule for new towns become available.

4. Silver Bullet (ecomaine) / recycling grant update: Currently Augusta is allowing small haulers to bring recycling to Hatch Hill, so there has been no further move forward with developing a site in Manchester to have a Silver Bullet for haulers. Garry notes the recycling grant money was designated for capital investment, and the grant is to be addressed/used in the next 1.5 yrs.

5. MCC approval of MEACC annual dues: Approved by the group.

6. Wood harvest in Allen Whitney Memorial Forest: Garry reported that this seems to be a small harvest planned along Scribner Hill Rd, likely a clean-up/thinning type harvest.

7. New member/volunteer outreach: Garry found that a prior town newsletter, sent via email, was not widely read and was discontinued. Garry will discuss with the Selectmen possible future options (newsletter/ Facebook, etc) to enhance communication between the town/town organizations (including MCC) and local citizens. Shenna will also contact the local school to offer to meet with kids to discuss recycling and to discuss MCC activities.

8. Planning Board update: Jeff R. reported that a strengthened wetland ordinance is likely to be approved at an upcoming meeting. This will include 'hydric soil' clarification and a requirement to demonstrate mitigation/lessened impact on wetlands. Jeff also noted that there are areas in town that should be in resource protection but are not, and the Planning Board and Town Manager would like to address this. Jean-Luc will take an initial look at town information with GIS. Eventually, zoning maps would need to be updated, and public hearings will be needed. Jeff reviewed the outcome of the recent special Town Meeting during which the Planning Board's proposed 6 month moratorium on cannabis growing facilities was passed, in order to give the Planning Board time to develop relevant regulatory rules.

9. Legislative update: Shenna noted the legislature is not in session currently, but action on extended producer responsibility for product packaging is expected in the upcoming session. Also, movement on the Municipal Conservation Commissions bill is expected. Fred will forward to MCC members the current language of that proposed bill. MCC voted to approve a motion supporting this bill, and MCC recommended to the town of Manchester Selectmen that they support the bill also. If the Selectmen vote to support the Municipal Conservation Commissions bill, Garry will assist with drafting a letter of support to forward to the legislature.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Next meeting February 6, 2020 at 7 pm at the Town Office.