



Minutes
Moretown Legal Trail and Class 4 Road (LTC4R) Committee
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
-Draft-

The meeting was held in person at the Moretown Town Office and online via Zoom.

Members Present: Martin Cameron, Paula Mastroberardino-Woods (Chair), Craig Oshkello, Bob Sargent, John Schmeltzer, Dave Stapleton, Chris Stephenson, Callie Streeter (Vice-Chair), Don Wexler

Staff Present: Carol Chamberlin, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Sharon Cote, Mary Larsen, Mark Pfister, Deb Sargent

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Introductions

Those present introduced themselves.

Officer Selection

It was unanimously approved that Paula will serve as Chairperson and Callie as Vice-Chair.

Bob Sargent expressed interest in being part of the committee, and was invited to join.

Purpose, Process, Schedule

Paula reviewed some background information, noting that the Selectboard (SB) had asked the Planning Commission (PC) to take a look at the current Town policy related to LTC4R, and provide a draft update for the document. She indicated that this document, as well as related maps and other documentation is available on the Town's website. (Road maps and lists, trail maps, a CVRPC report about projected development, etc.) Paula explained that an initial task for committee members is to familiarize themselves with this information so that upcoming conversations will be able to move along from an informed basis. Dave and Paula both felt that this work could be completed by July, and it was agreed that this was a suitable/preferable timeframe. Public comment opportunities will be available, both through these meetings as well as through upcoming Town Plan conversations; the Town Plan is currently being updated, and will incorporate some of these road discussions as the update is drafted.

Paula outlined that the intent for the committee is to meet twice a month, with members completing work in between meetings so that progress can be made during the discussions that take place.

Identify and Discuss Issues

Martin spoke of difficulties he has encountered with identifying exactly where LTC4R are located, particularly as he has walked properties with potential buyers. He expressed concerns regarding development of driveways along what is believed to be legal road or trail ROWs but later turns out to be private property, and noted that he anticipates that some verbiage will be included in official documents coming out of this committee that will forewarn potential property owners of the potential inaccuracies. Don noted that the SB has allocated some funds over the past couple of years to be used for completing related surveys of trails and roads. Martin confirmed that he does not anticipate this committee's work leading to a reduction in the current practice of annual grading of Category A Class 4 roads.

Martin also spoke of receiving calls, particularly after a heavy snowfall or during mud season, from residents on Class 4 roads who either had anticipated being plowed out or who have concerns regarding the ability of emergency vehicles to access their homes. He pointed out that it needs to be made clear to people when they move to these locations that they are responsible for this maintenance.

Dave spoke of the current work taking place on updating the Town Plan, and explained that the PC is consistently aware of the need to balance the expected demand for development with consideration for natural resource preservation. He indicated that many of the trails/roads being discussed provide access to pristine forested areas, and wondered if there are certain areas where development of these roads, and the associated development of housing, should be restricted or limited in order to provide for continued access to these forested areas. Deb mentioned that the Town's policy has been to not throw up any roads or trails, but that it is something to consider in order to protect natural resource areas.

Chris raised the point that the current policy requires input from the Town's Road Commissioner, a position which is currently vacant.

Next Steps

It was agreed that one of the first tasks of the committee will be to determine the accuracy of current maps, as well as a review of the current A and B designations for Class 4 roads.

Learning what other towns have done regarding this issue/what other policies include was agreed to be useful information.

Ancient Roads work which was done by the state/town was mentioned as something that should be looked into, to see what information was gathered in that process.

The use of motorized vehicles and of bicycles on trails and roads was mentioned as an issue to be addressed; Callie and Rae Washburn have previously done some work on this issue.

Dave suggested reaching out to all residents of LTC4R, notifying them of the mapped location of these roads and asking that any discrepancies be brought to the Town's attention, after which an official map

can be designated. It was agreed that this may be a potential future action, but that the committee should complete some related research initially.

Clarifying the levels of reimbursement available for disaster damage to LTC4R is necessary, particularly related to what is in the current policy and what may be outlined in state statute (Title 19).

John offered to look into the official road map provided by VTRANS as well as Ancient Roads information.

Callie, Craig, and Paula will look into other towns' policies; John will forward along the information he has already found for a few towns.

Paula will look into removing the road lists that were determined to be inaccurate from the Town's website.

It was agreed that future meetings will run from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, ZA