



NORTHWEST VERMONT RAIL TRAIL COUNCIL

c/o Northwest Regional Planning Commission
75 Fairfield Street • St. Albans, VT 05478
Phone: 802-524-5958 • Fax: 802-527-2948

APPOINTED

Berkshire-MVRT
Vacant
Enosburg Falls-MVRT
Ellen Stanley
Enosburgh Town-MVRT
Vacant
Richford-MVRT
Vacant
St. Albans City-MVRT
Richard Stahl
St. Albans Town-MVRT
Robert Bessette
Fairfield-MVRT/LVRT
Jane Williams
Sheldon-MVRT/LVRT
Vacant
Swanton-MVRT/LVRT
Joel Clark
Bakersfield-LVRT
Vacant
Fletcher-LVRT
Vacant
Highgate-LVRT
Ty Choiniere

VAST

Mark Bushey

At Large

Don Mueller
Alisha Sawyer
David Stanley
Randy Chadburn
Diane Leary

Ex-Officio

* VT Agency of
Transportation

*Northwest Regional
Planning Commission

*VT Dept. of Forests,
Parks, & Recreation

*Franklin County Industrial
Development Corporation

Minutes of Council Meeting held Monday, September 16, 2024

Present: Dave Stanley, Mark Bushey, Don Mueller, Richard Stahl, Diane Leary, Ellen Stanley, Ty Choiniere, Bill Gray, Jackie Cassino (VTrans), Patty Porter, Jay Renshaw (Krebs & Lansing Consulting Engineers, Inc), Drew Pollak-Bruce & Brett Rannow (CRO Planning & Design and Amy Adams.

Chair Dave Stanley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Adjustment to the Agenda: Moved Memorial Bench and LVRT/MVRT 2024 Season to the beginning of the meeting.

Memorial Bench (Family of Mike Burke)- Jay Renshaw from Krebs & Lansing Consulting Engineers, Inc. and Patty Porter presented the design of the memorial bench to the Council. They are working with Champlain Monuments, the design was shared. The bench would have a small plaque with Mike's name. The Council and Vtrans discussed the placement of the bench (off from Sweet Hollow Road/Hilltop Acres, prior to mile marker 5) as well as how this would align with the Council's current amenities/inventory, which no change would be needed and the current table will remain. J. Renshaw will follow the Facility Guidelines that Vtrans has in place. M. Bushey made a motion to approve the installation of the bench along the trail; seconded by D. Stanley. Motion passed.

J. Renshaw and P. Porter will work with Vtrans on getting a temporary access permit to work within this area with equipment. They will also reach out to the landowner(s) of Hilltop Acres for permission to utilize the drive to access this area. They will coordinate an onsite visit prior to installing the bench with Vtrans and Champlain Monuments to discuss the placement and clearance so that it is not in the way of trail maintenance. The overall goal is prior to November for this project.

LVRT/MVRT 2024 Season- J. Cassino updated on the MVRT resurfacing project, the bids came in over budget, they are revising the scope of work and posting back out to bid in October, depending on bids the project may happen this season, but chances are it'll be next season. Mowing is done on both trails. The redecking on the LVRT bridge south of Bourdeau Bros will begin this season. LVRT flood recovery efforts continue, the trail is open from Swanton to Danville. The MVRT extension project with the City of St. Albans is in the permitting process, with construction possibly next year. D. Stanley asked about the crossing of the trail near MM 85-86 in Sheldon, B. Gray and J. Cassino said they have worked with the landowner for a crossing agreement. In Sheldon there is a sink hole that they are working to resolve. T. Choiniere brought up the new trail sign in Highgate only has trail information on one side, J. Cassino commented that they are working on resolving those sign issues. J. Cassino updated the Council that they are working with VHB on a Trail Management Plan and later this fall will be looking for public input for the Council.

MEETING MINUTES

R. Stahl moved to accept the minutes of the July 15, 2024; seconded by D. Mueller. Motion passed.

Interactive Mapping Project – CRO Planning & Design – Drew Pollack-Bruce and Brett Rannow shared the new interface of the Interactive Mapping that will be the same for all trails, keeping everything consistent. They have been working with the RPC's and Vtrans on the data that will be listed on the maps. Vtrans will provide the trail closures, parking and amenities and the RPC's will keep the Trail Friendly Businesses current. The platform will be with ESRI-ArcGIS online as the RPC's are already using this for GIS mapping. The project is still in the testing phase but MVRT's data is ready to go live in October, as well as the LVRT NW area. Councils will continue to reach out to businesses to join. In this first round, the NW side will list all eligible businesses and then reach out to give them an opt-out option. J. Cassino has the Trail Friendly Business program and application ready to go live. She will be asking businesses to fill out an annual survey to see the economic impact data from trail users.

Updates

- **Council vacancies: Berkshire, Enosburgh Town, Richford, Sheldon & Bakersfield, 5-At-Large** – A. Adams reminded the Council of the vacant seats in some of the towns. D. Stanley commented that maybe during some of the projects such as Sheldon Gristmill, we can remind towns of the importance of having Town involvement on the Council.
 - **Sheldon Gristmill Project** – No new updates.
 - **Sheldon Junction Trailhead Study** – J. Cassino commented that VHB closed the comment period at the beginning of September, they are wrapping up the final stages of the Study. In early 2025, she should hear about funding sources and will keep the Council updated.
 - **Swanton Trailhead Community Grant (LVRT)** – Joel Clark (Swanton LVRT Rep.) sent an email update that there were no bidders for the project and they will re-advertise in January/February.
 - **Highgate- LVRT Level 2 Trailhead** – No new updates.
 - **Franklin County Trails Alliance VOREC Grant** – No new updates.
 - **VAST-** Mark Bushey (VAST Rep.) gave trail stats on the number of patrolled hours, miles groomed and number of Clubs. They voted in a new President, Patty Companic. The trail passes are staying the same price as last year. A lot of the Clubs are not able to open for the season due to trail damage.

Other Business – M. Bushey commented that the Council should inventory the current picnic tables and see if any need repairs and work on those for the upcoming season. The Franklin Forty Gravel Ride is coming up on September 28th.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will take place on Monday, November 18, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 pm.

Minutes Approved: _____ November 18, 2024

