

Bartlett Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

7/11/23

Present: Chris Fithian (chair), Colleen Ryan, Steve Frackleton, Craig Billie

Guest: Steven Libby, representing Annette Libby and Bartlett Athletic Recreational Association (BARA)

Meeting called to order at 6:05

Morrell property update

Steven Libby gave the Commission an update on plans for the Morrell property.

There has been a proposal to add a building near the tracks to house the historic (80-year-old) Flying Yankee diesel train that Stoney Morrell owned. The Morrells bought it and put \$4 million into restoration; a nonprofit continued restoration, then went bankrupt. The train is now owned by the state, but no progress has been made in about 15 years. Because the train is too long, it can only be turned around at a Y. There is one in Bartlett village and one at Sawyer River. The one at Sawyer River is being cleared for use by Conway Scenic steam train tours. The one in Bartlett village is owned by the state. It needs a 100-foot-long space in a building.

The proposed building would allow for restoration work to take place with a viewing area for the public to watch. The benefit to Bartlett Rec would come from the train nonprofit would sharing in costs of well, parking, and driveway.

Overall site plan for Morrell: So far, nothing has been approved by select board or planning board. Community gardens and pavilion were approved verbally by select board, with the understanding that the town would not contribute any funds.

The site layout is still not final; it could be possible to rotate the soccer field to avoid cutting any sugar maples. The timeline is also uncertain. Most likely the building will now be built before the fields, because rental of the building could provide income to fund the rest of the development.

Next steps for Morrell:

BARA is seeking to get a MOA with the town to allow BARA to formally manage the Morrell property, or possibly transfer ownership of the land to BARA.

The Flying Yankee Association is still assembling its board and fundraising for the building. Their earliest timeline to begin construction of the building would be 2 years. BARA likely needs even longer than that to work out an arrangement with the town.

Action items:

Chris will ask Annette to send the Commission a copy of the land deeds for the Morrell property.

Everyone will review the proposed warrant articles that Chris sent around to discuss at next meeting.

Colleen will look into resources for invasive species management.

Colleen will post on the Facebook page for volunteers who would like to help with easement monitoring.