

**North Country Scenic Byways Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

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Attendees: Jayne O'Connor (WMAA), Betsey and Eileen Alexander (AANH).  
Guests: Dean Eastman (NHDOT)  
Staff: Mary Deppe (NCC)

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**Welcomes & Introductions**

The meeting began at 12:30 pm at the NCC offices in Bethlehem.

**Scenic Byways Program Updates**

Dean Eastman explained that NHDOT is waiting for the federal government to what projects will be funded from the 2009 Scenic Byways grant round. He said that it is likely that NHDOT will find out by the end of the year.

Mr. Eastman explained that currently, with Scenic Byways grant application process, the State Committee ranks projects and then sends the ranking to the feds. For the upcoming funding round, NHDOT has requested that letters of intent be submitted in advance for applicants, describing the project and the funding needed.

Mr. Eastman explained that there was a document developed in 1999 that shows all of the Scenic Byways in the State. He requested that North Country Council and the North Country Scenic Byways Council review this document and determine if there are any mistakes. This will help NHDOT update the document.

**Letters of Intent**

There was discussion about whether or not this committee should be reviewing/ranking the projects that are in the North Country Council Region, but outside of the White Mountain Trail / Kancamagus National Byway area. The members present decided that this group should review all letters of intent for projects in the North Country Region. There was also discussion about how to choose a "top priority" for the region as requested by NHDOT. Members present felt that some of the projects are very different, so it makes sense to choose a top priority for each category of projects. Mary Deppe said she would request input for the members not in attendance regarding the items discussed.

The group reviewed each letter of intent and provided comments about the projects.

***Sunset Hill Community Park and Scenic Overlook*** - There was discussion about how this is an important area in the region and it brings in tourists. This is the location of the very popular Lupine Festival. It is great that there are many other funding sources that have been identified for this project. There was concern about the "endowment" discussed and whether or not this piece is eligible for Scenic Byways funding. The letter also mentioned that funding is needed for "associated project costs", more information is needed regarding this.

***Iron Furnace Acquisition for Permanent Protection, Franconia*** - There was discussion about how the town has done a nice job of making this location a "waypoint". It is good that they have identified other

funding sources. Again, there is concern about how there is funding needed for an “endowment and associated project costs”. There are few iron furnaces left and it would be a shame to lose this one.

***North Country Council Corridor Management Plans*** – This project would develop Corridor Management Plans and recruit members for committees for the River Heritage Trail and the Presidential Range Trail. There was discussion about how the Bath River Store should be included in the process if funded. The group thought this was a good fit for byways funding and that the project serves a number of communities.

***McGee Farm Conservation Easement, Lancaster*** – This project seems to be within range of what the program funds and they are not looking for much money. There was concern about why they need money for the Legal Defense Fund. The group worried that the project sounded as if it is an endowment in case they need legal defense. There was discussion about how Tillotson may be a better fit to fund this project.

***Albany Property Acquisition and Conservation*** – This is a large funding request. There were questions about what the current pressure is to develop the land and is it already in its best use? The group felt that it looks like a good project, but that we would like to see if the US Forest Service supports the project and if there is other funding involved.

Dean Eastman explained that this project will need buy in from the USFS and other affected organizations.

### **Other Issues**

Dean Eastman explained that the Connecticut River Byway receives \$60,000/year from the general fund to run the byway. There was discussion about whether or not the North Country Byways Council could obtain some of this funding, as the White Mountain Trail is a very important National Byway.

There was some discussion about signage along the byway.

Mary Deppe explained that she would contact the rest of the committee for input on the letters of intent and send information to NHDOT in December.

Dean Eastman explained that there will be a State Scenic Byways meeting on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Next Meeting**

TBA

Minutes Submitted by:

Mary Deppe

12/7/09