

Minutes: Bethel Business Association meeting – June 4, 2008

Chair Rick Benson called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

The minutes of the 5/22 BBA meeting were accepted as submitted. 2008-2009 membership is up to 52 members.

Old Business

Welcome sign restoration: Bev Washburn received a bid from Paul Margison on the sign restorations. It came to \$3,450, which is right around the level of the “basic” refurbishment in the previous bid from Scott Fisk. No decision was made on whether to proceed at this time. Davis Dimock suggested that some of Wendy Wells’ art students might be good candidates for working on the signs as part of their community services projects. Nick Nikolaidis recommended a thank-you letter to the school for organizing the student cleanup last week.

Comprehensive Business Inventory grant: Neal Fox said that GMEDC (Green Mountain Economic Development Corp.) would get the grant written and charge the BBA a reduced fee. He provided copies of survey forms that were used in a recent survey in Bradford, which is working on challenges similar to the ones Bethel and the BBA are working to address (economic development). The objective will be to adapt the surveys to Bethel’s needs, collect as much feedback as possible from individuals and businesses in town, and use the gathered information as the basis for an action plan.

Davis Dimock noted that much of the information collected by the Planning Commission in its 2006 survey would be helpful to the survey process, as it has already been compiled and is relatively recent. Neal noted that the survey process is likely to bring up many substantive issues linked to the future development of the town. He cited water as an example, as the bridge repair is going to force a decision about how to re-route water lines.

A move was made and seconded to proceed with the grant process, and the motion carried unanimously.

There was some discussion about whether a brochure about Bethel would be helpful to bring tourism business to the downtown and other parts of the town. Jamal Kheiry will compile an inventory of attractions to include in a brochure.

Catamount Health Program – June Mixer: A press release has been sent to the Randolph Herald about this event. BBA members volunteered to put up fliers for the talk; Jamal said he’d come up with a flier and send it to Rick for distribution to those who want to post them. Nick will provide light snacks and beverages at the event.

Recreation trail through town forest: The July 17 BBA meeting will consist of a joint event with the Bethel Historical Society, including a trail walk on the proposed recreation trail followed by a barbecue. Details on the starting and ending points will be announced later.

A discussion followed about various types of trails uses. Bev noted an organization called Kingdom Bike Trails (888-283-3430) can provide information on securing bike trails in Vermont towns. Jamal asked whether consideration had ever been given to creating horse trails in Bethel and making the downtown “horse-friendly” for those who would like to ride horses or drive buggies or carts into town, or even link with nearby GMHA (Green Mountain Horse Association) trails. Neal and Nick noted that linking trails isn’t necessarily feasible, and Neal said that although the GMHA isn’t the kind of equestrian organization that appeals to Bethel residents, a club in Bethel has recently formed to focus mainly on driving horses.

Davis said that the town’s decision-making process on Class 4 roads could take the horse-trail question into account. Bev noted that some establishments have inn-to-inn horse rides. Neal said that there is indeed a market for people who want to distance-ride through Vermont and have access to secure pasture and tack rooms while they enjoy a town’s hospitality offerings.

Burying Cables on Main Street: Nothing to report.

Improving cell service: Rick reported that a major corporate purchase is taking place that has put the siting of new cell towers on hold until the deal is completed.

Bylaws update: Some changes have been made and Rick will compile them and get them out for review before the changes are warned and voted on.

Other business: Neal said he received comments regarding sparse attendance at the concerts put on by the Council on the Arts. There was a short discussion about whether the concerts were attractive to a wide enough audience, and how the Council on the Arts works. Due to a lack of information among attendees, it was decided to ask a member of the Council to attend the next BBA meeting to discuss their activities.

Rick said that he planned to attend the Select Board’s next meeting and discuss the matter of the benches on Main Street, which are in pretty bad shape.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. The next meeting will be June 19.

Jamal Kheiry
Secretary

PAUL MARGISON
MARGISON'S SIGNS & DESIGNS
347 N. MAIN ST.
BETHEL, VT.

NOW TO THE SUBJECT OF REFURBISHING OF MY FOUR WELCOME TO BETHEL SIGNS. THAT HAVE SERVED BETHEL WELL FOR 17 YEAR SO FAR.

I WILL NOT GO INTO THE PROCESS I WILL USE BUT IN GENERAL IT WILL BE THIS:

- 1) SANDING (EVERYTHING)
- 2) WASH & RINSE
- 3) CLEAN OFF WHEN DRY
- 4) STAIN 3 COLORS
- 5) RE-LETTER ALL

I DO NOT MARK UP SUPPLIES SO THE BBA WILL PAY FOR ALL SUPPLIES.

\$3320.⁰⁰ MY EST. FOR ART & LABOR
130.⁰⁰ SUPPLIES

\$3450.⁰⁰ ESTIMATE

PLEASE MAKE
CHECKS PAYABLE
TO: PAUL MARGISON

THIS YEAR OR NEXT WILL BE FINE
1/3 DOWN BALANCE WHEN DONE, BUT
I CAN BE FLEXABLE.