

Charlotte Conservation Commission

Draft Meeting Minutes – April 28, 2015

In attendance: Howard Verman, Holly Sullivan, Roel Boumans, Derk Bergquist, Melrose Huff

Guests: Jeannine McCrumb, Meg Berlin, Katherine Bock, Mary Van Vleck, Isaiah Kiley, Susan Blood

DECISIONS

I. Acknowledgement of Bob Hyam's long time service to Commission

--Howard made a motion to take a vote on awarding Bob the David M. Brown Wildlife Conservation Award. Roel seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to award this to Bob.

DISCUSSION POINTS

I. Prospective/new commissioners

--Current commissioners introduced themselves

--Prospective member introductions:

Meg Berlin-wildlife and plant photography

Katherine Bock—nature advocate concerned about environment

Mary VanVleck---interest in conservation, taught biology, working on town trail through co-housing and frogbit

Isaiah Kiley—long-time resident, healing arts practitioner,

Susan Blood—interested in invasives

--Howard presented recent history of Commission.

Started in 1988 trying to educate themselves on what issues were affecting town and sought partnership with planning commission. Began organizing green-up day with 300 volunteers. Worked with Lewis Creek Association. Testified in use of lampricide. Helped with frogbit removal. Participated in Arbor Day activities. Quinlan School Project. Created Champlain Valley Alliance to share ideas and data. In 1998 idea of a habitat map started coming to fruition. Got grant and began with wetland then forest maps. A lot of wetland resources developed. CCC was recognized as Vermont's Outstanding Conservation Commission. Started creating maps of natural and cultural features, and is still ongoing.

Involved in Thorpe Barn project and velco powerlines. A groundwater mapping project was completed. Charlotte town sign contest. Developed checklist for how new developments relate to town significant habitats. Worked with many other committees, land trusts, funds, taskforces, etc.

--Jeannine McCrumb presented major conservation issues facing Charlotte

See addendum: "Meeting Notes 4/28/2015"

Mel asked Jeannine to discuss Shoreline Protection Act which requires a permit to do anything within 250' of mean high water.

--Roel presented the CCC present and future

Things we have to do: send commissioner for site reviews of development where a checklist is used to assess areas of public interest based on seven ecological principles.

Upcoming issues: determining which maps (of resources, human activities, etc.) can be used for assessing each of seven ecological principles of Town.

Determining what decision-making resources we have at our disposal. Last Town

Plan indicated that Town needs an Economic Development Plan. Establish liasons with other Commissions and Committees.

Holly indicated that we need to figure out how to better connect to and engage the community.

--Questions for Commission

Isaiah asked what time commitments were outside of meeting. Holly answered that it is easy to fit the commitment to your schedule and it is your choice when to be highly involved or back off. Mel stressed that it is important to make a minimum of 8 meetings a year to ensure a quorum. Howard mentioned that it is upo to the commissioners to participate in what he/she is most interested in.

II. Conservation Currents

--Holly discussed the purpose of Conservation Currents

III. Review of KR Properties Sketch Plan

--Various Commissioners questioned why so many long driveways were needed when shorter one could be added off existing roads or multiple driveways could be combined. These long driveways increase forest edge and provide prime habitat for the spread of invasive species. The effects on forest cover, especially near the State Park was a concern. A forest/wildlife corridor from the State Park across Mt Philo Road to Pease Mountain was noted and that the proposed development would affect that corridor. One of the driveways ended at a wetland. The area of development is known to have no groundwater, so wells would have to be drilled at a significant distance from the area. The number of tributary crossings is a concern as the needed culverts will focus flow and likely enhance erosion and sediment/nutrient runoff.

Next Meeting Agenda Points:

None

Nature Notes:

Meeting adjourned