

# CHARLOTTE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

*Roelof Boumans, Joanna Cummings, Mariana Du Brul, Robert Hyams, Gary Pittman, Holly Sullivan, Fritz Tegatz, Howard Verman*

## Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2013

Special Meeting to investigation into obtaining a Class 1 status for the wetlands Town Farm Bay.  
prepared by Roelof Boumans and Mariana DuBrul

Invited was Alan Quackenbush; State Wetlands Section Chief

Conservation Commission attendees: Roel Boumans, Joanna Cummings, Mariana Du Brul, Fritz Tegatz, Howard Verman

Guest Attendees: Alexa Lewis (area landowner), Peter Swift & Diana McCargo (area landowners), Mollie Klepack (TNC), Heather Manning (SB)

### 1) The petition process:

- a. The Conservation Commission has been working with Alan Quackenbush for over a year, collecting information on the Town Farm Bay wetlands.
- b. The Conservation Commission has not submitted a petition yet and the process for re-classification is changing. Previously, the a petition had to go through the “rule-making” process and be considered by the Water Resources Board. In the future, Class I designations will be made “in-house” by the Agency of Natural Resources, as they are for Class II wetlands now.

### 2)The plan:

- a. Fold the Town Farm Bay wetlands into a short list with other areas that seek to become Status 1
- b. Argument, Town Farm Bay is irreplaceable for the Vermont Heritage  
Extent is from the lake to Williams woods.

### 3)Work that needs to be done:

- a. A site visit early summer to gauge extent of area that might qualify as Class I.  
Including 1 or 2 ANR staff and representation of the Conservation Committee.  
(Mariana to schedule in coordination with LCA and Alexa Lewis for boat visit, will need to contact landowners for stream-walking visit).

### 4)Working with the landowners:

**Town of Charlotte, 159 Ferry Road, P.O. Box 119, Charlotte, Vermont  
05445**

- a. Buffers of 100 feet are usually standard for Class I wetlands (as opposed to 50 ft for Class II).
- b. Under Class I status, only non-permitted uses will be allowed.
- c. There are going to be grandfathered in uses.
- d. Future buildings or reparations are only allowed, to benefit the public good.
- e. Wetlands should be taxed at a lower rate than other land (no idea on how this is approached in Charlotte)

#### Questions of landowners

Q Does class 1 status mean “help” with improvements?

A1a Alan Quackenbush: No, but larger buffer zones should help limit further degradation.

A1b AQ: Impact is mostly caused by activities upstream

Q2 Are rules on pervious surfaces more enforceable?

A2 AQ: No future projection

Q3 Is there a source for additional funding?

A3 AQ/Cons Comm speculation: No, but the Status 1 will carry more clout in future grant applications

Q4 Is there going to be a lot of impact from changing the status?

A4 AQ/Cons Comm: Buffer zones will go from 50 to 100 feet and new permitted uses not benefitting the public good will not be allowed in the wetlands or in the buffer.

Q5 Where is the line for the designation going to be?

A5 AQ/Cons Comm: No idea yet. What is required is a field trip. We only want to include the wetlands that are in good shape

#### Question by the Nature Conservancy

Q Are we allowed to use pesticides in controlling invasive species

A AQ: Yes, but you will need a permit. Currently, AQ provides permits for herbicide use for invasives control on other TNC properties.

The first list of Status 1 wetlands will primarily address public owned wetlands  
Missisquoi will be nominated for Ramsar Status

#### What is out there now?

- 1) South of the area is a farm without buffering
- 2) Lots of evidence for bank erosion

#### Potential future Impacts

- 1) Highlights the best of what Vermont has to offer in Wetlands
- 2) Public Relations
- 3) Future protection
- 4) Early designated areas did stop development projects
- 5) Would be great to have the farm land restored into wetland (specifically Town Line Road LLC property, field near the lake)

#### Permissions from Landowners

- 1) Land owners will be contacted
- 2) Unknown who is the individual owner of Town Line Road LLC property, though Bob Hyams has spoken with their lawyer who suggested wetlands protection should be voluntary rather than regulatory.

#### On the Health of the Wetlands:

- 3) Are there many invasives?
- 4) Who assumes stewardship (Lewis Creek, or the Town) on controlling the Frogbit?
  - a. Q What is the impact of the volunteer effort?
  - b. A Volunteers are reducing the population back to about 15 20%
  - c. June is Frogbit removal time;
  - d. Where will the money come from to continue this work?
  - e. How to recruit volunteers for about 120 hours of labor?
  - f. Frogbit is great for composting, are there other uses?
- 5) Are there problems with Milfoil. No answer
- 6) As stewards what should we be looking at?
  - a. There are funds available to do water analyses for water sample monitoring.
  - b. Alan is going to look into testing the Frogbit for protein content. Roel mentioned that high-protein fodder makes good chicken feed. A potential for funding stewardship work????
- 7) When is the best time to visit the wetlands?
  - a. When water is high enough for paddling access;
  - b. Summer may be better for walking streams
- 8) What are the functions of the wetlands?
  - a. Fish spawning areas
  - b. Birds Birding
  
  - c. Several wetland community types, e.g. Silver and Red Maples