

## **Meeting Minutes for July 22, 2014**

Present: Joanna Cummings, Roel Boumans, Mel Huff, Howard Verman

- I. No quorum, June minutes not approved.
- II. Discussion with Laura Billingsley of CVU High School: Laura is a natural resources teacher at CVU and would like to partner with the conservation commission to develop projects for students to work on during the school year.
  - a. There are four classes, two in the fall and two in the spring.
  - b. Parameters for the learning goals of the course include:
    - i. Size of project depends on how many students would work on it. Five to six students per project; there are usually 12 students in each class each semester.
    - ii. There are certain biological science targets they need to meet by working on projects; will also learn larger connections to sciences through the projects
  - c. She is working with Hinesburg on a stormwater project and on the town forest.
  - d. Ideas for projects that the conservation commission could partner with Laura on included ecological site assessment; add the ecological report data to the town habitat map; water quality outreach; grassland bird outreach.
  - e. Laura will meet with us again in August to firm up the projects she would like to work on; we will plan out the goals and timing together.
- III. Met with Jeannine McCrumb regarding workshops she is organizing around the town plan.
  - a. Working with a planning consultant, the workshops will be more targeted to spark discussion with Charlotters about the town plan updates.
  - b. The natural resources workshop will be held in early August.
  - c. Land use planning workshop on September 4.
  - d. The planning commission will begin to look at comments gathered from these workshops and offer a responsive summary afterward.
  - e. Regarding the natural resources section of the plan:
    - i. Identify the key planning considerations.
    - ii. Soil erosion, forest fragmentation, invasive species, phosphorus TMDL, shoreland stabilization, public access.
  - f. Targeted discussion questions: protect corridors, battling areas of high public value (?), planning that considers a village pattern with more open space around it.
  - g. May mean changing zoning rules.
  - h. The town needs data – can the conservation commission hire an ecologist to get the needed data? Can the planning commission budget be used for some of this as well?
  - i. Significant and critical habitat maps – add GIS info to enhance the significant map.
    - i. Critical map was created pre-GIS; used paper maps to map wildlife habitats. Year 2000 update with data when decision was made to create significant habitat map.
    - ii. What are the authoritative and trustworthy sources of data that can be used for the habitat map?
  - j. Land use – look at town as a whole, what are the current uses, decide what they will be in the future.
    - i. Combination of land cover and land use.
    - ii. Utility of the land – natural resources is a utility and assign to land cover.
    - iii. Assign different uses and assess if there are enough of certain uses.
    - iv. Trade-offs – does the town think the trade-offs are good?
  - k. Get people in the community involved – the iNaturalist connection with the map is a good start.