

Charlotte Conservation Commission

Draft Meeting Minutes – December 30, 2014

In attendance: Fritz Tegatz, Robert Hyams, Howard Verman, Roel Boumans, Holly Sullivan, Mel Huff, Derk Bergquist

Guests:

DECISIONS

I. Minutes:

September:

- It was suggested the commission should revisit who should run the meetings
- There was a brief discussion of revising the CCC bylaws to more accurately reflect the Commission's changing direction and emphasis.
- A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and carried, and the minutes were approved

October:

- It was noted that some presentation assets are available for the Commission.
- A motion was made to accept the minutes with corrections. It was seconded, the motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

DISCUSSION POINTS

II. Stormwater Efforts (Bob)

- Several stormwater initiatives are developing in the Town.
 - 1) One is centered on public outreach and engaging public in mitigation efforts
 - 2) Another is aimed at getting Justin Kinney of DEC to work with Town on stormwater practices. A meeting is set up with planning commission, watershed coordinator, and others. The goal is to see what the Town is interested in in terms of options for stormwater control/treatment. Bob indicated that the ditch network is the main conveyance of stormwater in our area. Mel brought up that riparian buffers are a key mechanism for improving water infiltration and get an added bonus of creating wildlife habitat.

III. Habitat Maps Demonstration (Roel)

- It uses Quantum GIS, an open source software. In order to work with the maps, one would have to download and install the program; Roel recommends this. There is an organization in the state that supports this software.
- The map layers that are unique to the Town (parcel maps, conserved land, etc) are stored on the CCC Googledrive
- Additional layers include flood maps, geology, hydrology, etc.
- It allows the user to focus on a parcel within the Town and then apply the other maps over top of it.
- It was asked how accurate these maps are. Roel indicated that we could use site visits to update maps.
- Roel showed how maps could be overlaid in order to assist with site visits. Each map has associated meta-data to help understand what it is showing.
- The Commission discussed a potential issue involving public access to the maps. With the exception of the habitat map, all of the maps are fully open and available to the

public. If the Commission ever decides to make a change to a map, however, there could be problems associated with making sure Town residents have access to that unique information.

--We have seven "ecological principles" upon which we are supposed to assess sites. We could determine which maps most represent each of those principles in order to simplify assessment.

--It was suggested we ut time into interpreting these maps and reviewing the ecological principles in the near future. This could be done as part of the Conservation Currents; it could be helpful to have these articles run prior to the presentation of the Town Plan.

--These could also be covered in a single article.

--The Commission may also need to spend some time reviewing the principles and what maps are most pertinent to each

IV. Commission Role in Shoreline Issues

--The state has some very strict and quantitative rules about things like seawalls

--Question is where should and can CCC weigh in on shoreline modifications

--It was agreed that we need clarification on this issue

V. Liason with other Conservation Commissions

--The Monkton CC invited us to meet with them on January 7 about common interests and issues.

--Roel, Mel, and Bob will try to go.

VI. Recruitment Committee

--There was a suggestion to try to develop a list of potential commissioners to maintain sufficient activity on the Commission

--Different strategies were discussed for identifying and engaging the public.

Nature Notes:

Howard's wife saw six bobcat cubs crossing their driveway.

Bob indicated that Audubon has an upcoming program on the Cougar coming back to VT.

Holly saw a red-tailed hawk swoop into a wetland near the interstate with its talons out.

Derk saw several dozen two-inch grubs creeping across the snow during the big December snowfall.

Mel saw a red-bellied woodpecker at her feeder.

Meeting adjourned