

CHARLOTTE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

*Mariana Du Brul, Suzy Hodgson, Robert Hyams, Gary Pittman, Tiffany Shaw, Holly Sullivan,
Howard Verman*

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday April 24, 2012 7:00-9:00 pm Charlotte Town Hall

Planning Commission - town plan update

Bob and Mariana relayed the proceedings of the last PC meeting. In attendance was the PC, Town Plan Consultant, and Charles Russell. Though the scope and schedule for the update are still in the works, we did agree to the following: the plan will be more concise, 'Charlotte Today' and 'Charlotte Tomorrow' sections will go away, and much of the information deemed 'background' will be moved to appendices. Individuals at the meeting volunteered to review and outline sections of the plan. We signed up for 'Natural Resources'. Bob will draft and circulate in anticipation of the May 3 PC meeting.

Town Signs (Howard)

Howard is working with John Owen of the Select Board to organize a design competition, with town-wide vote at town party in July. We are hoping to get details worked out, and the competition announced in the next issue of Charlotte News.

Applications to Conservation Fund - Kate Lampton

Reviewed two applications that will be considered by the Select Board on April 30. Both are located in the valley bordered by Spear St on the east Guinea on the west, Bingham Brook to the south, and Hinesburg Rd to the north. The land is characterized by good soils, and open, visually appealing vistas. The parcels contain some small patches of clayplain forest (bordering a larger polygon to the north). The land is within the Bingham Brook drainage, a tributary of Mud Hollow Brook and the LaPlatte River.

Merits - good soils (many prime), diversified agricultural operations, visually appealing

Questions - Special Treatment Areas (STA) is the Vermont Land Trust designation for resources that require different land management practices to afford better protection. The areas as depicted in the Nichols proposal appear to be minimal. Does the boundaries and STA practices afford meaningful protection? Ag lands adjacent to Bingham Brook have no restrictions. Could these lands be designated as no-till zones to minimize sedimentation and nutrient loading? Kate will convey these concerns and questions to Alan Karnatz at VLT.

CCC Consideration - the Commission voted to support both applications, Fritz to write letter to SB for meeting April 30. The discussion raised the following process questions: can the Conservation Fund be used for acquisitions beyond agricultural land? (habitat, ecological functions, trail easements). Can applications originate with entities other than the land trusts?

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

Town Farm Bay update

Discussion with Liz H. regarding coordination of TFB stewardship work and water sampling -

The discussion began with the introduction of Liz Hollenbach, the Town Farm Bay Stewardship Coordinator. Liz is originally from Ferrisburgh, graduated from Paul Smiths College with a degree in Environmental Studies. The Stewardship program will represent a continuation of the work performed over the past two years. Logistics will remain essentially the same. The season will begin the week of June 11, and continue for eight weeks, with volunteer crews on the water T/Th, 8am - 2pm. Volunteer recruitment will be a big challenge for Liz, the CCC committed to help get the word out, and to volunteer for work crews as well. Liz is working to develop her command of the sampling program and water quality science. In light of the uncertainties regarding funding, We will revisit this work in more detail at a later date.

TFB Protection - Mariana updated the commission regarding these efforts. Two landowners are 'local', TNC and Katherine Arthaud. Mariana spoke with TNC, who is generally supportive. Bob is working to set up a meeting with Katherine. The absentee owners will have to be contacted by mail. Mariana has the beginnings of a letter, Holly offered to complete it.

TFB Kayak Tour (Charlotte 250 Celebration) - Bob learned from John Owen that Louise McCarren is planning to lead a series of trips, including one to TFB. Bob to contact.

"Bloom" Event - CCC and Transition Town are teaming up to present the film series. Details forthcoming.

Nature Notes

Particularly vocal American Bittern, overrun by Gold Finches, Redtail Hawk taking advantage of field mowing, snake den revealed on warm March day.