

Charlotte Conservation Commission
Draft Meeting Minutes
February 25th, 2020
Charlotte Town Offices
7:00 PM

Members in attendance: Mel Huff, Roel Boumans, Willie Tobin,
Mary VanVleck, and Susan Blood.

7:00. Welcome to Willie Tobin who was successfully interviewed by the Selectboard and is now an official CCC member. Katrina Bianchi will come to the March meeting.

7:05 We discussed Conservation Commission google drive access. One has to login using the conservation commission google email and password. Susan sent that out this evening to members. Then go to the google drive and you should have access to everything.

7:10 Read and approve January minutes.

Minutes were read and approved.

7:20 Discuss collaborating with Energy Committee re: land use on their solar energy site - POSTPONED

7:30 Appoint Energy Committee and Planning Commission coordinators -
POSTPONED

7:20 Discuss setting out game cameras, protocols; recording data: Derk and Roel

Willie had some questions about the goals of this project. Roel responded that one or 2 times a year a larger development project comes before the Selectboard and we are hoping to get current good information about wildlife in Charlotte. The idea is to get an idea of where more animals are and then use that information to advise and make recommendations to the Planning Commission.

For each camera put in a position what kind of data will we get? Eventually, we will have an excel spreadsheet that shows the location and what animals were spotted there. Is there a better way to enter data than putting it on paper and then entering data manually into a spreadsheet? Someone will need to go through the pictures manually. Willie has used iNaturalist for this and he volunteered to put the pictures onto iNaturalist. We can obscure the actual location of the camera so the public cannot see that.

How do we determine which places to focus on first? We thought we would start with 100 random points. Or maybe there are critical places that we're worried about and we start there?

We also need to think about the seasonality of it. Winter seems a little easier because there are fewer leaves moving which will trigger the cameras. Will we put the cameras back in the same places when it's warmer? We're not sure yet.

We can do a before and after experiment if we know development is going to happen in a location. We can place game cameras in the same spots before and after and see if there are changes in the amount or type of wildlife. That would be interesting!

Also Jens Hilke uses Biofinder - we can do that!

If we have an idea of what is the most important places are in terms of possible future development we should start there! We could also break the landscape into different landscape types and try and make sure we put cameras on different types of land.

We have the residents who volunteered to have cameras on their land. And Willie suggested that if there is a place we really want to put a camera we can call people.

What do we do when we're done with the camera? Put the pictures on the google drive! And once they've been gone through, put the good ones into SmugMug.

We also have our wildlife signs! We need to circle back to Junior Lewis about these.

One of the big outstanding questions in terms of the cameras is about placement location. Willie will think about this more and it would be great to have Roel, Willie and Derk together at a meeting.

Willie has land (not here in Charlotte) that he's monitored continuously for 5 years and there are seasonal patterns in the wildlife the cameras pick up.

8:20 Presentation of potential forestry program and grants: Roel - POSTPONED!

8:50 Nature Notes - POSTPONED!

8:14 - Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and the motion was approved. (note that the meeting was adjourned early because it was the evening of a Democratic debate)

Minutes submitted by Susan Blood.