

Conservation Commission
Meeting of April 28, 2009, Charlotte Town Hall, 7:00-9:30 pm.

In attendance: Linda Hamilton, Bob Hyams, Suzy Hodgson, Trafton Crandall, Anne Bijur, Howard Verman. Absent: Gary Pittman, Holly Sullivan

The Meeting started with an official thank you to Linda Hamilton and her many years of service to the Conservation Commission.

We next welcomed new member, Howard Verman. Howard was appointed by the Selectboard April 27, to fill the term which runs to March 2010.

Minutes of the March 24th meeting were approved as amended.

Action Item: Guidelines for future meeting minutes were established with the idea of rotating the minute taker each meeting. A draft of the minutes will be sent to each committee member for comments, additions, and corrections, within a week of the meeting and then sent back to the minute taker for a second draft.

Updates:

Suzy reported that the Selectboard had approved committing \$1000 to support her grant proposal asking for \$9,970 (total value of \$12,400 including \$2,430 of in-kind contributions) from Vermont's Department of Environment Conservation to assess and upgrade the energy use and controls of the Town Hall.

Bob gave a Charlotte Park and Wildlife Refuge update stating that trail work was continuing as well as efforts to control invasives within the Park. He spoke about the approx. 125 acre agriculture lease. The lease is coming up for renewal in 2010 and the Park Oversight Committee will modify requirements, subject to selectboard approval, that will encourage more sustainable (in terms of soil and surface water) agricultural practices.

UVM professor, Roel Bouman has brought his environmental studies class to the Park and they have a project going where they will come up with ideas on how best to manage and utilize the Park consistent with the values espoused by the management plan. The Conservation Commission will receive a copy of the project report.

Larry Hamilton, Park Oversight Committee member, is making arrangements with Mark LaBarr of the Audubon Center to do a grasslands birds inventory in the Park and possibly use the Park as a model for managing grassland bird habitats.

Linda reviewed the CCC Fiscal Report (see attached) with everyone.

Action Item: The Commission voted to pay the \$1470 invoice for Jesse Mohr's work since January 2009, from the Conservation Account, and to use the remaining \$1612 from the grant money to support Habitat Map work as needed. Linda recommended that the value of continuing as a member of Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions be reviewed at the end of this year, since they are now a less active support organization. However, she urged members to attend the AVCC annual meeting before deciding, since in the past these have been very stimulating and useful, especially for new Commission members.

On May 6th, the Habitat Map Update Team is bringing together interested members of SB and PC to clarify and if possible address concerns which are holding up acceptance of the map by SB.

Although Linda is stepping off CCC at the end of April, it was agreed that she will continue as a member of the Wildlife Habitat Map Update Team, and also continue to coordinate the monthly WILD LIFE articles in The Charlotte News at least through 2009. Trafton will take over the role of Habitat Map Team Leader. The habitat team will also ensure that other members of CCC have a more complete understanding of the map's use by holding a training session for the wider group.

Action Item: Election of Officers

Nominations were made and Bob Hyams was elected as the new Commission Chair. Trafton Crandall will be the Vice Chair and Bob will ask Holly Sullivan if she would agree to serve as Secretary/Treasurer. Members agreed on the need for a consistent record and archive keeper.

We then reconstituted our membership on the various town committees as follows:

Conservation Fund Advisory Committee- Bob or Trafton

Trails Committee-

Holly

Charlotte Park and Refuge Oversight

Committee- Bob

Educational Outreach- Suzy,

Anne, Howard

Energy Committee- Anne, Suzy, with Anne proposing an

organizational structure for the Selectboard to approve.

Groundwater Mapping- Gary

Subdivision Review Trafton, Gary,

Holly

Bob will notify Selectboard and Town Clerk of new officers and representatives, and ask SB to appoint Holly to Trails Committee (replacing Bob).

On Green-Up Day, there will be a bake sale at Charlotte Central School with the money raised going to the Conservation Commission or to Rutter Tree Fund. Suggestions for how the money would be used by CCC include a portable environmental education display case or bird boxes for the Charlotte Town Beach, with the latter being our first choice.

Anne will serve as point person.

Linda set the July meeting as her target date to finish moving her files from home into the Town Hall and to orient Commission members as to what they contain.

There are currently 2 CCC vacancies, both running from March 2009 to March 2013. All members are encouraged to actively recruit new members to fill these.