

Draft

Cornwall Conservation Commission

Thursday, January 21, 2016

12:00-1:30 pm, Cornwall Town Hall

Members present: Brian Howlett (BH), Rene Langis (RL), Mary Dodge (MD), Bethany Barry (BB), Marc Cesario (MC)

River Watch petition was able to get enough signatures and will be voted on at the town meeting.

Community Values Mapping Proposal

An updated version of the Community Values Mapping proposal was discussed. It was decided that the first contact should be with the chairs of the PC to ask if they feel this is something that would be helpful to the town. The CC would offer to attend a PC meeting to explain the project and ask the PC for its support and joint sponsorship of the event. Target event date: summer/fall. Next step: MD will contact PC co-chairs.

Wildlife Corridor Documentation Project

A draft of an invitation to townspeople to help collect data on the town's wildlife and travel corridors was reviewed. How the data might be collected and used was discussed. iNaturalist was suggested as a possible data collection tool for this. Ron Payne, who recommended the program, will be contacted to see if he would be willing to help us set up the site. RL, BH, MC and MD will continue to work on this. Next step: MD will talk with Ron.

With support from the CC, the teachers at the school have submitted an application for an Otter Creek education grant to support a wildlife tracking and travel corridors unit for grades 3-6.

Updates:

- Regarding the Conservation Fund, the SB has established a new policy of "Guidelines and Principles" for all funding requests. For a project to be considered and funded by the town, 5% of the town's voters must sign a petition supporting it and consideration will be given only to individual projects or specific purpose with no blind funding. This means that a Fund as proposed by the CP and CC that would accrue money using town funds for possible future use will not be possible.
- Letters to all landowners of significant sites have been mailed. Next step: MD and RL will begin to share the Inventory information with land trusts and other conservation groups to develop conservation options that could be considered by landowners.
- Subdivision applications notification process was clarified.

- Shapefiles are not yet complete, but Brett is intending to finish them.
- The Recreation Committee is just beginning to plan its activities and, while they expressed interest in a pamphlet showcasing Cornwall's important natural places, they have other activities that they are working on now. Next step: CC decided not to pursue the idea at this point.
- Guided outings: Snowshoe hike in Swamp (late February) is on track, but still without co-leader knowledgeable in tree and plant ID. Currently, the ground is not frozen. A decision will be made three weeks before the late February outing about whether the conditions will allow it. Closer to the date, the immediate weather conditions will be considered. Next steps: BH will coordinate walk with organizational support from the CC. Brett has agreed to lead a springtime paddle on the Lemon Fair on the weekend of April 9-10.

New Business

Town Forest: The purposes of a town forest were briefly discussed. We will continue to talk about this at future meetings. Next step: BB will continue to research Community Forests and will share this information at the next CC meeting.

Town Meeting (Monday, February 28th): CC members will present information on the CC's plans for the April guided flotilla and the invitation to townspeople to help with wildlife and travel corridor documentation, dependent on whether a data collection mechanism is in place.

CC Social Gathering: Wednesday, March 23rd from 7-9 pm at Salisbury School.

Date for Next meeting: Thursday, February 18th, 12:00-1:30 pm. RL will chair meeting.

Submitted by Mary Dodge

Draft notes From SB January 5, 2016 meeting

Draft Document of Funding Principles - Continued discussion on draft of a set of principles for review of new funding requests that may come from citizens who are not part of an official town board or committee. Principles would not apply to appropriations that have already been through a vetting process, or governmental functions in an ordinary course. Based on suggestions tonight, Magna will edit the document, will talk with the Trustees of Public Funds, and send the draft back to the board for review before the next meeting.

Conservation fund request - Holly Noordsy discussed with the board. The written request has clear goals, but no specific project or dollar amount is specified. It was agreed to table the issue until the board has a chance to talk with Dave Anderson. The board would like to separate the legal issue from the funding issue.

Development Review Board (DRB) developments – Meeting held with Jim Carroll to determine next steps. Resolution document is being prepared, based on a model from the Town of Chester. DRB members - 5 minimum, with 2 alternates. Will need to adopt Municipal Administrative Procedure Act (MAPA). Title 24 VSA Chapter 36 – MAPA specifies development review procedures (rules of procedure) for quasi-judicial boards. A decision will need to be made on the process for appeals of DRB decisions. Most DRBs in Vermont use “de Novo” as the simpler process. Board members should generate list of questions to ask interested candidates, before the next meeting.