

Cornwall Conservation Commission (CCC) meeting, 3/30/16  
Cornwall Town Hall

Members present: Mike Sheridan (MS), Marc Lapin (ML), Mary Dodge (MD), Marc Cesario (MC)

Sadly missed: Bethany Barry, Brian Howlett, Rene Langis

Special guests: Cornwall Selectboard members Brian Kemp and John Roberts

Minutes written by Mike Sheridan

After introductions, the 2/18/16 meeting minutes were approved

#### Old Business

- 1) School Wildlife Observation Grant and Coordination with CC  
MS summarized the wildlife observation and tracking project at the Cornwall school. The first camera was set up on 3/30/16 on MS's property on Clark Road. MS and 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Mindy Harvey will set up a track station sandbox at the same site on 4/12/16 or 4/14/16.
- 2) Wildlife monitoring/iNaturalist website  
MD reported on the Cornwall Vermont Wildlife Observations project that has been set up on the iNaturalist site for residents to record sightings, which now is linked to the town homepage.
- 3) Paddle Excursion April 9 on Lake Lemon Fair  
MD distributed a poster to promote the event. Participating CCC members will arrive early, about 8:45 am on 4/9, so that they'll be able to help others unload canoes and kayaks. The fleet will proceed north from Rte 125, and the natural history of the clay plain forest will be discussed by ecologist Brett Engstrom. We discussed additional publicity for the event and decided to post the event on Front Porch Forum and at the Cornwall School. If the armada is too large, they will split into two flotillas led by Brett E and Marc Lapin.
- 4) Community Values Mapping Forum  
We discussed how to plan for this town-wide event. The project's aim is to help clarify the positive aspects of the town today, assess community support for ongoing projects, and consider possible new future directions. For the CC, we hope that this project will help us expand residents' understanding of our natural resources and their need for conservation in the wake of our successful Cornwall Biodiversity Inventory.

It will be facilitated by Jens Hilke from the VT Dept of Fish & Wildlife. In order to plan for this event, we will organize a planning session, likely, 4/27 at 7 pm in Town Hall. This planning meeting will include Mr. Hilke, representatives from Cornwall Planning Commission, and possibly representatives from the major institutions of Cornwall, such as the Congregational Church (MC), the Cornwall School (MS), the Volunteer Fire Dept. (?), the farming community (MC), the Recreation Committee (MD), and so on. CCC members will contact these various groups.

- 5) County-wide Conservation Commission Gathering in Salisbury  
MD and ML described their 3/26/16 meeting with Conservation Commissions from Bristol, Ferrisburg, New Haven, Ripton, and Salisbury. These groups have diverse funding strategies and projects, which we found both interesting and inspiring. We discussed ideas for collaboration among these CCs, such as working on habitat connectivity across the towns, starting a monthly (?) newspaper column in the Addy Indy, and addressing what we perceive as a disconnect between the Regional Planning Commission and town Conservation Commissions. We discussed the idea of inviting the Cornwall members of the RPC (Jim Duclos, Holly Noorsday, Colin Kriwox, and/or Stan Gryzb), to meet with us. MC will initiate this invitation.

#### New Business

- 1) Responsibilities of the new DRB Board  
The Cornwall Planning Commission is giving over the tasks of reviewing subdivision applications to the newly created DRB, which will start its work on 5/1/16. We discussed establishing a link to the DRB. Brian Kemp suggested that we wait for the DRB to complete its internal organization and preparations, so we asked Brian to inform the DRB that the CCC is ready to advise them when they are ready.
- 2) Outreach to Nature Conservancy, VLT, MALT, etc.  
What should we do with our Biodiversity Inventory? MD and ML will meet to discuss outreach to these conservation NGOs.
- 3) Site #10's New landowners: Complete inventory of site? Ledges project?  
The area of the Cornwall Ledges north of Route 125 was only briefly visited in Brett Engstrom's field work for the Biodiversity Inventory, because 3 of the 11 landowners had not given their permission, thus cutting off access to a majority of the site. 2 of the 3 properties are now under new ownership. We discussed the possibility of asking the town for the funds – perhaps about \$1000 – to get Brett to visit the area and complete an ecological inventory of an area that we know to be one of the most important ecological features of Cornwall. We will check with Brett about the idea, contact landowners, and write a proposal for discussion at the next CCC meeting.
- 4) Route 74 Culvert Problem – tabled due to the late hour
- 5) Cornwall Trails and Recreation Pamphlet – tabled
- 6) Spring projects (Green-Up Day Plant Swap (MD), visit to Marc C's Farm)  
We discussed having a town map on display at the school during the 5/7/16 Plant Swap, but decided not to pursue this. The tour of MC's farm will be in May, date TBA. MC will send a brief description to Rene for the April newsletter.

Date for next meeting: 4/21/16, 1 pm at Cornwall Town Hall.

April Newsletter update to be written by RL