

Cornwall Conservation Commission Minutes

Monday, October 19, 2015, 12:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Present: Brian Howlett, Rene Langis, Marc Cesario, Marc Lapin, Mary Dodge, Abi Sessions and Jens Hilke

Jens Hilke, Conservation Planning Biologist with VT Fish & Wildlife, shared ways other commissions have gathered public support for the conservation of a town's natural resources. He described "Community Values Mapping" as an effective process that embeds conservation within a larger discussion of what residents want for their town. He offered his help with such an activity as well as his willingness to do presentations on topics such as using Biofinder, a mapping database that provides information about natural resources in Vermont towns.

Jens also encouraged us to continue with educational outreach efforts such as the guided talk/walks and newsletter contributions. As work is done on the updating of the Cornwall Zoning Regulations, he counseled that the natural areas that the town wishes to protect be clearly identified. Jens suggested that we contact VNRC (Jamey Fidel) for technical advice on regulation wording. (Marty Illick from Lewis Creek Association, at our March 2015 CC meeting, also emphasized that a town's conservation goals must be clearly defined, the ecological principles which reflect these goals need to be clearly stated, and zoning and subdivision criteria and regulations for protecting significant habitat need to be clearly described. Each of these parts needs to align with the others.)

Some ideas for future guided walks were: visit to an organic farm (Marc suggests this happen in the spring,) a winter ski/snowshoe into the Swamp, a springtime flood canoe/kayak trip on the

Lemon Fair floodplain, a driving tour of town culverts, walks in Dr. Bingham's Woods and/or Douglas Pond and Woods, a tour of farms highlighting erosion mitigation projects.

Submitted by Mary Dodge