

Cornwall Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 10, 2023 (7:00-8:30 pm)
Cornwall Town Hall

Conservation Commission members present: Katherine Branch, Don Burns, Mary Dodge, Kristina Sargent (chairing this meeting), Michael Sheridan, and Andrea Landsberg
Recording Secretary: Katherine Branch

Minutes from December 13, 2022 approved

Old Business:

1. Update and discussion of the Conservation Commission's presentation for draft Town Plan public hearing, which is Jan 18, 2023. Andrea and Mary will re-draft a brief statement for presentation at the Planning Commission hearing, with emphasis on the need for incorporating the most up-to-date language and data regarding habitat blocks and connectivity. The CCC will stress that it wants to work with the Planning Commission in any revision.
2. Update on progress for public programs for winter/next year
 1. Kristina contacted Amy Alfieri of ANR, who said that staffing challenges make it impossible to schedule another ANR staff-led walk in the Swamp. Mike contacted Alexis Mychajiw, professor of paleontology at Middlebury College, who will be presenting a family-friendly program (working title Extinct Mammals of Vermont: What was Here?) at the Cornwall School, tentatively scheduled for March 9th 7 pm. Mike will handle set-up logistics and determine whether the Friends of Cornwall School wants to also host a bake sale or similar event that evening. Andrea sketched out a future program focusing on one chapter in *Our Better Nature* with an accompanying walk or event on Andrea's property.
3. Joint meeting with Salisbury and Weybridge Conservation Commissions. Get-together with the 3 commissions. Katherine suggested starting with an informal summer get-together, with a potluck picnic and potential location of the newly-completed Pitch Pine Trail in Salisbury. She will contact the chairs of the other commissions to determine their interest.
4. Letter from Bernie Paquette, Jericho, about advocating for an officially designated Vermont Invasives Day. Andrea will assess the form letter to determine whether the time needed to write the letter is reasonable. If the time is manageable, she will write the letter.
5. CC website updating. Katherine has a phone call scheduled this week with Emily May. The only addition not already discussed by the CCC is adding the Trails Committee chronology/report under the Other Resources section.
6. Blog update. The group briefly discussed the length of blog posts and also suggested having a blog icon at the top of the CCC web page. Katherine will ask Emily if she has a blog icon, and if not, Andrea will provide Katherine with an "icon/widget" for the blog.
7. Reports from Town boards and commissions. The Select Board is investigating a re-design of the Town web site, as well as regular updates. At the next CCC meeting, we will discuss ideas for the Town website update.

The Planning Commission public hearing on the draft Town Plan is at 7:00 p.m. January 18th 2023 in a hybrid meeting. The CCC submitted a review form to the DRB for the Pyle subdivision proposal at 2846 Route 30.

New Business:

1. Swamp Brochure Update. Kristina passed out a draft of the brochure and reported that Marc Lapin has made some suggestions as well.
2. Middlebury College Lands Planning. Katherine will draft an email to Marc Lapin, for review by the CCC. The email will state our strong interest in being involved in the initiative and suggest Mike Sheridan, a CCC member and also a College employee, as a member of any advisory group that may be formed or advisory process to be put in place.
3. Choose next meeting date. Next meeting, Tuesday February 14th, with Andrea chairing the meeting, and Kristina recording secretary. The CCC will have regularly scheduled meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. for the foreseeable future. We agreed that, for each meeting, the person who chaired the prior meeting will be the minute-taker.
4. March/April Amphibian Rescue Work. Mike will try to identify a College contact/expert to assist Mary with managing the Amphibian Road Rescue program this spring.
5. Ledges Property Sale. Mary and Katherine reported that they have had either telephone or electronic communication with various individuals, including representatives of Vermont Land Trust, MALT, and the North East Wilderness Trust about this property.
6. Use of herbicides in Swamp-adjacent meadow. After some preliminary investigation, this topic will be discussed at next meeting. Kristina will contact ANR to ask what the plan for this meadow is.

Newsletter (according to Dec. '22 minutes): January '23 (December-Andrea), April '23 (March-Kristina), July '22 (June-Katherine), October '23 (September-Mike)

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.