

Cornwall Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 14, 2022 (7:00-8:30 pm)
Held via Zoom due to snowstorm

CCC Members in attendance: Michael Sheridan, Katherine Branch, Don Burns, Mary Dodge, Kristina Sargent, and Andrea Landsberg

Meeting Chair: Don Burns

Recording Secretary: Andrea Landsberg

Old Business:

Minutes of Feb 14th meeting approved with one change – date of the get-together with the Cornwall, Weybridge and Salisbury Conservation Commissions at the Pitch Pine Trail in Salisbury is April 30th not March 30th. Andrea to request for Sue to update minutes filed on website

1. Updates

- Connectivity Map and February CPC Meeting review and status (Mary/Katherine)
 - The PC thoroughly reviewed all comments submitted during and after its February public hearing.
 - In terms of Marc Lapin's suggestions: 10 suggestions were revised per his comments and 3 not updated.
 - Wildlife corridor phrase will be replaced with habitat connector, as appropriate
 - Changing forest blocks to habitat blocks will not be made as the PC felt the term forest block appropriately described the areas that were forests
 - While the PC agrees that a habitat connectivity map reflecting the new Vermont Fish & Wildlife Habitat Blocks is important, rather than delaying providing the PC plan draft to the Select Board, the decision is to revisit this and use as a test case for 'small scale amendments' to the Town Plan. Mary requested the PC not delay too long to do this as there is always risk of the membership changing, need to re-educate and review the proposal, etc. Katherine noted that she and Don will push for this to happen, including pushing for the request to develop the map to be sent by the PC to the Regional Planning Commission
 - Changes to other maps that were requested by Marc Lapin and Mary will be made
 - Recommendation by CC to update Item H Action 3 of the Implementation section was accepted
- Amphibian Crossing & Logistics Training: 3/12/23 (Mary)
 - Training occurred with 13 people on Sunday – safety reviewed, ideal weather (wet, 40ish degrees), where to park, etc. There were both new and experienced volunteers, adults and kids - with 3

families who heard the announcement at the extinct mammal presentation!

- Don asked how we tell people when the conditions are likely to cause crossings; Mary replied that a group email will be sent out ~5pm to current and past volunteers with the hopes of at least 3 people/family groups be present
 - Ledges property (Mary)
 - Letter to owner that Mary wrote was discussed at length and final decision made to instead first walk the property with the realtor to assess it and also try to determine if the owner might be interested in pursuing a conservation-friendly option vs selling as a building site. Mary, Don, and Mike will find a date in mid-April to do this.
 - Invasive Management Day Letter of Support (Andrea)
 - Agreement to send revised letter to Bernie Paquette and to Cornwall's state legislators; Andrea will do this week
 - CCC Blog (Andrea)
 - Updated information on site to clarify how to sign up for email alerts as well as sent an email to existing subscribers to explain this. Andrea concerned that new subscribers may have to subscribe to site first before being able to follow specific forums - Kristina will try with a new email to see if this is needed or not
 - Herbicide treatment of Swamp adjacent land (Kristina)
 - Amy offered dates for a visit with VF&W team and members of CC – Kristina, Mike, and Andrea will meet with them at the site afternoon of April 4th to get more details and answers to our concerns
 - Firefly Event with Greg Pask (Kristina)
 - Kristina reported that Greg would love to do an event on July 1st (being good timing for the insects) at the Swamp Meadow or Bread Loaf View Farm
2. Review –Extinct Mammals program – March 9 (Mike)
 - About 75 people ~20 kids attended; program went very well. Should consider doing again sometime in the future
 3. Trail Camera Project - Next Steps (Mary)
 - Mary will bring the project to a close late spring/early summer
 - Next issue to what to do with information especially in relation to new habitat mapping – can this data be used to confirm the connectivity blocks
 - Mary believes we might want to conduct a more comprehensive inventory of the town. There are many considerations/decisions that need to be made regarding next steps.
 4. We will form a sub-committee at next meeting to review data and determine an action plan
 5. ARPA Fund Project Proposals (Don/CCC)
 - There is more time to develop proposals for these funds
 - They need to be approved by end of next year
 - Then approved funds need to be spent within the following 2 years
 - Discussed some ideas for potential proposals from CC:

- Afterschool conservation education programming in coordination with Friends of the School (Mike commented that the school already has a fund for enrichment programming)
 - Bigger thinking - Land acquisition?
- Team should think about other ideas to be discussed at next meeting
- 6. Other Suggestions for Town Website Update (CCC)
 - No concrete ideas – readdress next month
- 7. Outreach Programming for '23 (CCC)
 - Fireflies- July 1st, Alicia Daniel's walk – June or August, Sept – pending her schedule – AL will follow up; Field trip in Autumn (potentially a joint land conservation initiative with MALT)
 - Mary – concept of program on carbon sequestration – Mary will bring something for us to react to at next meeting
- 8. Expanding CCC Membership (CCC) – need to keep this in mind and recruit!
- 9. Reports from CSB, CPC & DRB (Don, Katherine, Mary)
 - SB – budget setting was primary activity - was passed at Town meeting; Town Meeting ~60 people present, went well, great to be together again in person
 - PC – already covered
 - DRB – CC gave input on last subdivision (MacFadden) to increase importance of the forest there; Pyle property sold in total, not subdivided

New Business:

1. Wildlife Protection Bill (House Bills H.323 and H.191) (Andrea) – will review next meeting
2. Green Up Day Table 5/6/23 (Andrea) – will focus on EAB and invasive plants (and have the tools checked out of library with the instructions)
3. Select Meeting Chair and Recording Secretary for April meeting – Katherine volunteered to Chair, Don will be Recording Secretary following our recent practice that prior month's meeting chair responsible for minutes

Newsletter: April '23 (March-Kristina) –Content: Extinct mammals event review, Green Up day table & Swamp clean up; and advertise Firefly event.
 July '23 (June-Katherine), October '23 (September – Mike)