

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

CCC Members present: Michael Sheridan, Katherine Branch, Don Burns, and Mary Dodge.

Meeting Chair: Mary Dodge

Recording Secretary: Don Burns

Meeting recorded.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm and adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Approval of the minutes of June 13, 2023 and July 11, 2023.

Old Business

1. Inventory of Cornwall Habitat Connectivity Blocks. Discussion focused on defining the overarching purpose of the project. It was suggested that each member listen to the recording of Monica Przyperhart's interview prior to the meeting. The CC minutes (6/13/23) contain a summary of her comments. (Mary) <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/3y2fzo6m9RD5LziJ0WHk4Sf30xsZW5OyVy-Ft23S2e4QVmCdobX2QRiQBiq4Q55a.mxXfsEtspwEXQbjl> Passcode: X?\$Q%+6n

- a. Project Scope of Work

- i. Sophie Mazowita quote on three phase proposal (\$7,725)
  1. Phase I: Compilation and analysis of available data, public meeting and preliminary map preparation. (\$1,500)
  2. Phase II: Tracking workshop and follow-up training. Field verification of habitat blocks. (\$4,125)
  3. Phase III: Final report, maps and public forum. (\$2,100)
- ii. Discussion points
  1. Cost benefit? Success of fund raising and scale of community support will determine ability to complete the Inventory project..
  2. Value for the Town: Being able to identify existing habitat connectivity blocks, document their usage and describe their ecosystem importance for biodiversity vs just the existence of such habitat will result in more compelling arguments for conservation in Town discussions and decisions.
  3. Community-based donations and grants to finance.
  4. Camera data vs tracking data.
  5. Importance of field verification.
  6. Need to clarify techniques used for field verification.
  7. Examples of similar inventories being applied to zoning process? Burlington Open Space Protection Plan?

- iii. Unanimous (amongst meeting attendees) support of overall project. Approval to start fund raising to conduct Phase I of project. Mary and Katherine to initiate fund raising effort. Cornwall Trust for Public Funds may be a potential source of funding and will be pursued.

2. Projects for ARPA funding.
  - a. Community Native Plant Garden (Andrea)
    - i. Nothing back from the CORA group re: combining projects (recreation and native plant garden). Andrea suggests approaching Pollinator Pathways of Addison County to lead potential community native plant garden project. No decision was made.
  - b. Cornwall Swamp Bat “Condominium” Enhancement (Mike)
    - i. No response yet from VT Fish & Wildlife.
  - c. Community Science Kits (Mary, Don)
    - i. Fletcher Free Library program that may be a model for local after school program in Cornwall.
    - ii. Don to contact program coordinator for more information and report back at the next CCC meeting.
  
3. Review and discussion of blog options. (Andrea)
  - a. John Roberts is happy to have the blog be considered for the Town website. Andrea will be involved in the process of evaluating an updated website.
  - b. Tabled further discussion of changes to the Blog for future meeting.

#### New Business

1. Information Meeting with Ledges property owners. (Katherine)
  - a. Mary, Katherine, Marc Lapin and Ted Cotton will be meeting on August 10th to plan for an open meeting with residents who own Ledges properties. Purpose of the meeting will be to increase landowner awareness of the area’s special features and ecological importance.
  
2. Cornwall Planning Commission invitation (September 20<sup>th</sup>) (Katherine, Mary)
  - a. CCC accepted CPC invitation to attend September meeting.
  - b. Katherine to inform CPC.

#### Updates, Reports and Announcements

1. Reports from CSB, CPC and DRB (Don, Katherine, Mary)
  - a. CSB:
    - i. Appointment of Lynn Coale as Zoning Administrator.
  - b. CPC:
    - i. ACRPC Hearing for review of amended Cornwall Town Plan – August 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 pm.
    - ii. CPC invitation – September 20th CPC meeting.
  - c. DRB
    - i. No activity.
  
2. Alicia Daniel program. Reading the Landscape walk. Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-3:00 pm. 517 Snake Mountain Road, Cornwall. (Andrea)
  - a. Andrea will advertise Alicia's walk about 2 weeks prior to event date.
  
3. Status of herbicide treatment and planting of Swamp adjacent land. (Kristina)

- a. Field sprayed in early June. No activity since then except brush hogging of parking area a couple weeks ago.
4. The impact of Otter Creek Watershed (OCW) Insect Control District pesticide spraying on nearby bat colonies in Cornwall. (Mike)
    - a. Waiting to hear from Alyssa.
    - b. No issue on the Cornwall side of the swamp since the Lemon Fair Insect Control District only uses larvicide and applies along the Lemon Fair River.
  5. CC Website Update (Katherine)
    - a. No update or response from Emily May.
    - b. Consider looking for help elsewhere?
  6. CCC Response to new landowner inquiry (Mary)
    - a. No recent contact.
  7. Long-term Transfer Planning for Forest Landowners (Katherine)
    - a. Vermont Housing & Conservation Board program.
    - b. Goal is “to keep forests healthy and intact and reduce subdivision to combat forest fragmentation”.
    - c. Funding available for in-depth inter-generational transfer planning, workshops and educational training.
    - d. Property needs to have significant acreage, to be enrolled in Current Use program and be at risk for parcelization to qualify.

Save the Date: County-wide meeting of conservation commissions. Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> (9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) at Bristol’s Holley Hall

September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting: Andrea Landsberg, chair; Mary Dodge, recording secretary.

Newsletter: October ’23 (September – Mike), January ’24 (December-Andrea), April ’24 (March-????), July ’24 (June-????)

Rotation of chairmanship; chair will take minutes the month following the meeting they chair:

- Landsberg (September 12; Dodge recording secretary)
- Sheridan (October 10; Landsberg recording secretary)
- Branch (November 14; Sheridan recording secretary)
- Burns (December 12; Branch recording secretary)
- Dodge (January 9, ’24; Burns recording secretary)
- Landsberg (February 13, ’24; Dodge recording secretary)
- Sargent (March 12, ’24; Landsberg recording secretary)