

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

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

Meeting Chair: Andrea Landsberg Recording Secretary: Mary Dodge

Minutes from September 12, 2023 approved.

Old Business

1. Inventory of Cornwall Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Blocks. Tracking Connections RFP was accepted. Project funds raised or requested to date were reviewed. December 7th was set for the first public form and names for informational contacts were discussed.
2. Projects for ARPA funding. Don reported that the SB-ARPA subcommittee had met and will recommend the approval of the CCs request of \$2,500 for partial funding of the Habitat Connectivity Inventory.
3. Review and discussion of blog options. Andrea said that Instagram posts were an acceptable option for Natalia Perchemlides who writes the Birding posts on the Blog. Andrea recommended having the *Get Wild!* blog be a part of an updated town website and suggests that we do not pay for more space on WIX and use Instagram, where any new Blog posts can be added without a space issue. She has offered her help to the town in its design of a new Cornwall website.
4. Winter Wildlife Tracking Workshop. The CC will sponsor 2 Tracking/Camera workshops in January. The first workshop will be an introduction to tracking and trail camera documentation. The second workshop will prepare residents to assist with the field-verification in Phase II of the Inventory. Dates to be determined.

New Business

1. Fish and Wildlife planned acquisition of West Street property. The draft minutes of the SB meeting at which this was discussed are at: https://cornwallvt.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/SB_2023September19_Draft.pdf The CC discussed the restrictions on the use of the property, as a wildlife management area. The CC is very interested in the planning for the property, its purpose and usage by F&W. We considered how we might participate in this.
2. Correspondence from Gioia Kuss, Weybridge CC. She is proposing Weybridge and Cornwall join with perhaps one other town to submit a Municipal Planning Grant application that would identify “a list of zones, but specifically perhaps three properties highlighted for each participating town as important for conservation. In this way each town could explore the funding and potential to affect conservation

goals in each zone by working with willing landowners.” Because we are very busy getting the Wildlife Inventory up and running and the deadline is close for this year’s round of grants (Nov. 1st), the CC did not commit its support for the proposal at this point, but felt that it did warrant further consideration for the next funding year.

Updates, Reports and Announcements

1. Reports from SB, DRB and CPC. The CPC is working on forming a housing committee.
2. Alicia Daniel program. Reading the Landscape walk. Reschedule date not yet set. Looking at Apr/May ‘24.
3. The impact of Otter Creek Watershed (OCW) Insect Control District pesticide spraying on nearby bat colonies in Cornwall. Mike still has gotten no call back from Alyssa Bennett (F&W Small Mammals Biologist) about the species of bats that inhabit the Cornwall Swamp Bat Boxes, whether it is possible for the CC to put an informational sign nearby, and whether a protective guard against predators could be added by the CC. Mary suggested another F&W person to contact: travis.hart@Veromnt.gov.
4. CC Website Update. Emily May has the information to be added but, at this point, this work has not been done.
5. Information Meeting with Ledges property owners. Rescheduled to January.
6. Community Science Kits. Mike reported that there was interest from one teacher in backpacks with contents that match and extend the science curriculum. The teacher would design their content, but the CC would need to be the requesting group. They were also interested in having an erosion kit. Don had a positive conversation with Sue Johnson about the Library developing backpacks for borrowing. He will continue to work on this.
7. Addison Co CC Summit. Katherine reported on the plans for the Summit on November 4th (8:45-12:30). Most AC towns have at least one person registered. Registration closes on October 20th. Agenda includes breakout sessions and keynote presentation by Amy Sheldon.

November 14th meeting: Mike Sheridan, chair; Andrea Landsberg, recording secretary

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