



Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

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Hinesburg Conservation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Via Zoom

1. Call to order: Kate, Meg, Tobi, Summer, Bill, Bob and Liz 7:00 PM
2. Nature Notes
3. Additions/Deletions to agenda: none
4. Public Comment for non-agenda items: none
5. Review minutes of October 10 and November 14, 2023 – No discussion -- Accepted
6. Land preservation fund – Kate developed a statement to bring before the Selectboard to justify our request for increased funding. Reviewed and discussed this statement.
7. Updates
 - a. Development review: Discussion about Haystack Crossing, Hinesburg Center II etc.
 - b. Geprags management: Kate talked with Bill Marks about the sign which needs repair. He talked to Joy and the Town has agreed to fix the sign. Bob spoke to the challenges of building a bridge over the wetland/stream. That seems like a lower priority than work on the higher-traffic area at the base of Ted's Hill. Tobi gave report from discussion with Marc LaBarr: He has match funding to do some further shrubland management along with more brush hogging. Bob pointed out that we need to be careful about preserving the wetland, now that it has been delineated. Marc can probably get permits if needed. Tobi made a motion to spend up to \$1,000 on this project. Kate seconded. Motion passed with unanimous approval. Tobi will follow up with Marc.
 - c. Education subcommittee: Two new ideas: using iPhone apps in nature; using your iPhone for nature photography. Liz will talk with the UVM Field Naturalist Program to see if there are students interested in leading workshops like this. Tobi also thought we could be doing more to cross promote programs run by other organizations. Kate offered to do a program on stormwater for homeowners, using a new manual developed by the Lewis Creek Association. Subcommittee: Meg, Tobi and Summer with consultation by Liz.

- d. Watershed grant (beaver mitigation): Bob applied for and received a \$3,500 grant from Fish and Wildlife to address a culvert near Geprag's. Beavers took care of that culvert themselves (no need for human intervention) by building dams both upstream and downstream. Fish and Wildlife agreed to let the CC use the money in a different location. Bob has been looking for a different location. Hayden Hill East has a culvert with an active beaver colony and neighbors have been dismantling dams there for a long time. Fish and Wildlife agreed to an extension, so the CC still has access to the money. Hayden Hill East might be a good location for a beaver deceiver. Bob will continue working on this.
10. CC mission statement: Meg raised the issue of whether the CC's current mission statement sets limits on what the CC can do. Perhaps it should be a broader and more inclusive statement. Discussion of changes to the mission statement. We will discuss this further at the next meeting.
11. Annual report: Kate made some comments. Meg will send it in.
12. Check-in re: CC activities & direction: Bob raised the issue of whether the CC might propose new regulations for the Planning Commission to review. Liz suggested River Corridor Protections. Maybe we could play a stronger role by proposing specific regulations. Kate suggested Conservation Overlay Districts might be another tool for us to promote. The Town Plan offers plenty of justification for us to increase our involvement.
13. Starting July 1st, we will be required to attend meetings in person. Hybrid is ok, as long as one person is present in the published location.
14. Adjourn 9:09 PM