



Conservation Commission
Town of Hinesburg
Meeting Minutes – Tuesday February 11, 2020
Hinesburg Town Hall, 3rd floor conference room – 7:00 PM

1. Call to order

Present: Meg Handler, Michael Bissonette, and Kate Kelly. Bob Hyams and Marie Ayer joined the meeting late by phone.

Absent: George Leclair

Visitors: Andrew Bolduc, Darcie Mumley

Mike B. called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Additions/Deletions to agenda

Meg H. wanted to add a pollinator garden at Geprags to the agenda. Kate requested to move board reorganization and Haystack Crossing discussions to later in the meeting so Bob Hyams and Marie Ayer could participate.

3. Pollinator garden at Geprags

Meg H. mentioned a provision in the management plan that we can use some portion of the park for educational/public function. She'd like to do this as a Master Naturalist project to encourage people to plant pollinator gardens. She and her partner are proposing three sites next to each other for demonstration purposes: one will be mowed, one planted with VT Wildflower Farm seed mix, and one that will naturalize on its own: easy to compare, and could have signage to describe. Her partner has an initiative to get people to stop mowing. Darcie mentioned ticks at Geprags. Kate asked about mowing; Meg H. felt they could leave enough space to mow easily. Budget discussion will be at next meeting. Labor to prep site could be volunteer. Members of CC present were supportive. Mike B. suggested making this volunteer effort tie in with (the first weekend of May) Green-up Day.

4. Review policies

Kate reviewed open meeting law and conflict of interest policies provided by Renae Marshall, and will forward these documents to the Commission.

5. Review workplan and add ideas to task list

The Commission reviewed the Excel spreadsheet workplan we created some time ago. They reviewed ideas for projects. Kate will send out documents to review for next meeting, for further discussion and decisions about which projects to pursue this year.

6. Updates

Kate reviewed recent Geprags habitat management, a partnership between Audubon Vermont, Habitat Stamp money, and the HCC, which was successful at removing invasive species and improving native species habitat for rare warblers in the park.

Kate reviewed dates for a municipal committee vernal pool walk in the Town Forest, in conjunction with the Town Forest committee, Apr. 11 9 AM, or Apr. 26 as a back-up date.

Meg H. proposed two dates for the grassland bird talk to be given by Vermont Center for Ecostudies. The Commission chose to set the date for April 6. Marie to create and send flier to large landowners. Meg will set the location and time.

Kate K. mentioned that the natural resource inventory draft presentation (for the working group) will be held March 9. The Commission decided to set it for 6-8 PM.

7. Review Haystack Crossing revised plans

The Commission discussed how best to review the Haystack Crossing plans, as we already submitted a letter on an earlier version of the plans. Mike B. recused himself but requested that the Commission re-submit their letter with their names at the end of it. Because the review starts at the DRB next week and the Commission won't have time to meet before then, the Commission could designate a committee to speak to the DRB. Because the Committee doesn't have a quorum tonight, we couldn't designate a committee to speak to the DRB, but committee members could submit individual letters/comments.

8. Board reorganization

Marie A. and Bob H. called in to the meeting, and were placed on speakerphone.

Meg H. **made a motion to appoint Kate Kelly as chair.** Mike B. **seconded the motion.** The **Commission voted 5-0.**

9. Forum: Nothing to discuss.

10. Nature Notes

Mike B. has been seeing a bobcat. Meg did tracking with Master Naturalists at Carse property, saw many tracks. Kate had many Goldfinches at her feeders during the snowstorm. Red fox near Darcie's house.

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Kelly

DRAFT