



Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

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Hinesburg Conservation Commission Meeting

Tuesday, October 13, 2020 - 7:00 PM

MEETING HELD REMOTELY

Due to closure of Hinesburg Town Hall

1. Call to order:

Present: Darcie Mumley, Kate Kelly, Robert Hyams, Marie Ayer, Meg Handler

Public Attendees: Pat Suozzi

2. Additions/Deletions to agenda

Add Lake Iroquois Association working relationship with HCC to agenda number 5.

3. Public Comment for non-agenda item

Nothing added.

4. Presentation by Lewis Creek Association on water quality

Kate shared the "Saving Our Watershed" presentation with the board. The need for all parties to help save Lake Champlain. All in the watershed must help mitigate the phosphorus that ends up in the lake. Restoration of the rivers and streams to their natural paths is one important way to help prevent flooding and phosphorus from ending up in the lake. Ways to help restore rivers and streams: move buildings out of flood zones to help connect the river back with its floodplain and leave the natural sediments in the stream beds. Kate shared examples of how LCA has been working to restore rivers and mitigating run-off through rain gardens. She also shared ways the Hinesburg boards and private landowners can help with improving the water quality in the Lake Champlain Watershed.

Pat had a question about the issue of private roads and how the lake association is struggling with this. She inquired about funding and how LCA might be helping to support the private landowners.

5. Discussion of potential future projects, and land conservation fund

LIA Collaboration-LIA was a little concerned about there maybe being some misinformation out there about their purpose and other projects besides milfoil that they are working on. CC was in support of inviting Chris in for a presentation. Possibly at the November or December meeting.

NRI Training-Monday, October 19 at 7:00 pm with Jesse. An overview of the map will be done and then a chance for others to use the system to give feedback. Jesse will be sending out a link and hopefully the maps prior to the meeting.

Land Conservation Fund or Future Projects- Should we be funding more of this and asking for tax money to put aside for future projects. Charlotte used a property tax assessment to fund the conservation fund. The suggestion was for HCC to maybe use a conservation fund to help with the restoration of river corridors. Darcie is going to look into this fund and the uses of it.

Kate and Bob met with Mitch and Alex to look at the Patrick Brook corridor based on the Haystack and Hinesburg Center II projects that are putting potential pressure on that area. They were sharing the issues that are already happening there and to ask who in the future will fix any erosion issues that occur due to the developments.

Bob is going to check on what are the restrictions on the use of the Vermont Gas Money. Kate is going to send out the original agreement with the town and VG to see if it says anything.

6. Discussion of Hinesburg Center II preliminary plat application

The Hinesburg Center II is in the review process of their preliminary application. There is concern over the 10 feet of increased grade proposed for parts of the development. CC is wondering how this is potentially being allowed in a floodplain. Meg and Kate will continue to follow this development. CC discussed how do we possibly share our concerns over the filling of the floodplains. Maybe contacting DEC Floodplain to answer questions about the ability to build in these fragile areas.

Meg made a motion to register our concerns with the Town of Hinesburg and DEC Floodplain Manager over filling in the floodplain and the potential impacts upstream and downstream of the Hinesburg Center II application. Marie seconded the motion. Everyone voted in favor.

Next steps: Meg will follow up with Mitch, Alex and DEC to get more information to bring back to the board. At our next meeting, we will discuss the information and the action steps the CC can take moving forward.

7. Review minutes of September 29, 2020 meetings

The notes under the discussion under moving LIA and LCA out of the general budget should be edited to reflect the actual intent of the conversation and what actually took place. It was about taking out the organizations that are under our budget and putting them out into the general nonprofit section of the town budget. The CC wanted this section edited to better reflect the actual discussion that took place that night.

CC members had a discussion about the purpose of the meeting notes and how they go public in draft form before they can be approved or reviewed. Should these notes be less specific and more generic?

Bob moved to approve the notes as amended. Bob seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Mare abstaining, since she wasn't present at the last meeting.

8. Annual report: volunteers or sub-committee to draft?

Joy needs someone to do this. Meg is going to write this up and submit it to Joy.

9. Nature Notes

Kate saw a fox in her field today on her birthday! Bob said that he also saw a fox in his driveway. Also, Bob has had two large Barred Owls outside his house. Meg put up a wildlife camera and only has seen a squirrel, a cat and a deer.

10. Reminders & Adjourn