



## Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

10632 Route 116 Hinesburg VT 05461

802.482.2281 | hinesburg.org

---

### Hinesburg Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 11, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Present: Liz Doran, Kate Kelly, Bob Hyams, Tobi Schulman, Kathy Beyer

Public Present: Bill Scott

1. Call to order 7:00 PM

2. Nature Notes

Liz mentioned the rain and flooding as well as interest in water levels in beaver activity areas.

Bill noted that O'Neil Road is flooded.

Kathy mentioned extensive flooding in Ludlow VT that has possibly irreparably damaged 25 apartment units, and a positive story of floodplain restoration in West Brattleboro where housing was removed from the floodplain and the river was allowed to flow into it's natural floodplain during flood events.

Bob asked about milfoil monitoring in lake Iroquois. Kate mentioned he could report to the LIA.

Kate observed a ring necked snake

3. Additions/Deletions to agenda

- a. Kate announced that Kathy is stepping down from the CC. Kathy thanked the other members and commented she would like to come back and help on green up day.
- b. Kate confirmed that Tobi will speak on behalf of the CC at the August 3rd Hearing regarding wake boat regulation. Bob expressed interest in speaking as well. Tobi will add a note that she observed all but 2 of the 60 commenters at the last hearing were asking for stricter regulation and a 1000 foot recommendation and asked that the people of Vermont not be ignored in this process.
- c. Minutes approval moved to earlier in meeting.

4. Public Comment for non-agenda items – None

5. Review minutes of June 13, 2023 – Bob made a motion and Tobi seconded, to approve minutes, with change to reflect that Tobi will speak at the wake boat hearing on August 3rd to represent the CC if Kate is unable to attend. All in favor.

## 6. Updates:

- a. Geprags management – parsnip planning, bridge, example of knotweed eradication from Waitsfield CC  
Kate proposed an in person check on Gerprags park for mowing and beaver activity - Bob will try to get there on Thursday or Friday.  
Tobi asked about the document Meg shared regarding the mowing plan, and will dig it up, and also proposed a shared documents system - she will look into Google Docs or something housed by the town and report back at the next meeting.  
Bob had no update on the bridge project but will look into if we need to submit an application to the DRB in order to build a replacement bridge if this is necessary.
- b. Education subcommittee – iNaturalist  
Kate set up an iNaturalist project that can be found at the link below.  
<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/beaver-activity-in-hinesburg-vermont>  
This project is for townspeople to record observations of beavers. Kate will work on developing training and work with Tobi before presenting to the group at the next meeting.  
Kate also presented a document Meg shared on the Town of Waitsfield's Knotweed Removal project called Knot in Waitsfield. Kate shared this report for commissioners to review.
- c. Watershed grant next steps (beaver mitigation)  
Bob spoke with Skip about installing a beaver deceiver and Skip was not excited about the possibility of restricting aquatic organism movement if this is not necessary. Kate and Bob agreed we need to find a more appropriate location for placing a beaver deceiver and Bob will confirm with Will Eldridge at the State if we can use the grant funding for an alternate site.
- d. Natural Resources Inventory  
Kate confirmed we will have a meeting on August 1st from 6-8 pm at the library with Jesse of Native Geographic will present on his work on the Natural Resources Inventory. Jens Hilke from the State will also be present.
- e. RR1 Proposal  
The process with the planning commission surrounding zoning changes is ongoing and Bill mentioned he would review the newest draft.

## 5. Development review

Mitch requested comments regarding the Observatory road development plan and the letter from Vermont Compliance Monitoring Ecologist. There was discussion of the letter. Kate commented that there is no data presented to back up the claims the ecologist makes that the proposed wildlife corridor would be adequate. Also commented that the corridor as a narrow band was a poor substitute for open space to balance development and we should ask if the undeveloped portion of the parcel is being conserved. Tobi and Bob were generally in favor of the proposed corridor as proposed provided the four conditions laid out in the letter were maintained.

- a visual buffer from human activity,
- an established and self-sustaining native plant community,

- multiple height vegetative cover types, and
- topographic variability

We felt that the proposal to not develop lot 7 and 8 would be good for wildlife but perhaps an unrealistic goal, but are interested in the DRB's goals for the protection of wildlife as asked by the ecologist in the letter. "If maintaining a greater amount of habitat and ecological connectivity at the site is a priority for the DRB, versus maintaining a functional migratory corridor that provides relatively little habitat." We were interested to know the thinking of the DRB regarding this question. Kate will draft comments or comment at the meeting next week.

More development Review:

Drew Property subdivision proposal includes steeply sloped areas. We were interested in more information about locations of proposed building envelopes

6. Check-in re: CC activities & direction – tabled until next meeting

7. Adjourn

9:00 PM