



## Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

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### Hinesburg Conservation Commission Minutes

Thursday, October 10, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Via Zoom:

1. Call to order: Kate, Meg, Bill, Summer, Liz, Tobi, Bob and Alex Weinhalten 7:05 PM
2. Nature Notes:
3. Additions/Deletions to agenda: none
4. Public Comment for non-agenda items: none (no public except Alex)
5. Development review – (1) Windy Ridge: Kate attended the DRB meeting, and they began talking about the development but did not get too far. The DRB raised the issue of wetlands. It seems they said that what has been submitted is a master plan for the whole property. They also said that a portion of the property has been “conserved.” Alex explained that three house lots at the top of the slope have been conserved with the town. (The development rights were given to the town.) The rest of the so-called conserved area has not been formally conserved, just set aside for no development. Kate spoke at the DRB meeting for just a minute at the end. Bill visited the area and observed that there is water flowing from the wetland area through a culvert on Route 116. This reinforces the question of whether that is a wetland or a stream. (2) Thompson: Discussion of new subdivision on Burritt Road. Main question is what kind of impact it has on the wildlife corridor and forest areas in that location. Both Windy Ridge and this development are on the agenda for the Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> DRB meeting. Kate made a motion to designate Bob to take the lead on the Thompson subdivision. Bob will attend the meeting.
6. Zoning district line revision (Laster) – Alex Weinhalten: Alex presented his proposal to move the zoning district line between the Village Growth District and RR1 to accommodate the Laster development plan. This move would impact core wildlife habitat and allow the developer to build out a new Phase 3 plan that he has proposed. Discussion of advantages and disadvantages. Meg brought a motion to move the zoning district line to accommodate the development. Kate seconded. A vote was taken, and 6 commissioners voted to oppose the change. One commissioner abstained.
7. Review minutes of August 12 & September 28, 2023: Kate made a motion to pass the minutes. Meg seconded. Passed unanimously.

8. Land preservation fund planning: Request for \$30,000 in our budget. Question – do we want to pursue a tax-based mechanism instead of a line item in the budget. This would be a warned item voted on by the town. We could also warn the lump sum of \$30,000, rather than having it appear as part of our budget. (The net difference from last year is actually only about \$14,000 because of other savings.) Our argument for the increase is that the Hinesburg Land Trust is pursuing about three projects right now and also that a new state statute requires “30 by 30” (30% conserved by 2030), and this town contribution will help achieve that goal. Bill pointed out that conservation is central to our goals. Tobi pointed out that other towns have already done this. (e.g., Monkton, Jericho and Charlotte) Discussion of whether we have the time and the capacity to bring this to voters in March? Bill, Tobi and Meg will work on an argument to bring this to voters.
9. Natural Resources Inventory – extension request from Jesse Mohr. He would like to extend to the end of February to complete his work. Simple amendment to the contract. Everyone agrees that this is not a problem. Kate will let Todd know to amend the contract.
10. Geprag Management: Update from Tobi regarding bird habitat management at the park. She is coordinating with Marc LeBarr and has not gotten a concrete quote from him yet. It sounds like it will be around \$1,000. She will get back to us at the next meeting.

11. Adjourn

9:40PM