



Conservation Commission

Town of Hinesburg

10632 Route 116 Hinesburg VT 05461

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Hinesburg Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 14, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Via Zoom

1. Call to order: Kate, Bill, Liz, Tobi 7:05 PM

2. Nature Notes:

Kate saw some great 4 toed salamanders on swamp road.

Liz - Beaver Dam busted out on Lincoln Hill road during July Floods and was then fixed, but now it broke again in another spot.

3. Additions/Deletions to agenda: none

4. Bill made a motion to approve minutes from October, and Kate seconded, unanimous approval.

5. Update on Land Preservation Fund work:

Bill talked with Todd Odit about past funding of the Land Preservation fund and was able to provide us with data back through 2010.

Proposed Funding mechanism of additional 4 cents, currently worth \$26,000 based on the current grand list, shared between the Affordable Housing Committee and Land Preservation Fund. This fund would be controlled by the Select Board and applied to by either group.

Discussion of this concept – Bill presented data about previous land preservation fund spending.

We must address the issue of how we would spend the money, why we need more than we have in the past. There are 3 projects (2 in FY25) with an estimated need from the town of

\$20,000 each in order to make them happen, according to HLT and VLT. Other towns have more robust funding that is transparent and available to be applied for.

Future thoughts of how to make HCC more active in conserving land in Hinesburg:

We need to develop criteria for what land is high priority for conservation. The Natural Resource Inventory will create a scored evaluation of forest blocks that would help us target landowners to reach out to.

Justification of need of money. Use data based on how much land we would need to conserve to get to 30% by 2030 or 50% by 2050.

We might want to compare funding level to acres conserved from Hinesburg vs other towns. It would be good to talk to the affordable housing committee about how they feel about the joint fund. We would like to have our own fund. Tobi will reach out to Carl Bohlen.

We need to create a proposal before Kate needs to justify budget on Dec. 13th.

Discussion ended around proposing to ask for the \$30k we originally asked for in our budget, to be prepared for the two projects at \$20k each that the HLT sees coming in FY25. This amount would give us the \$40K we need to get these projects done.

6. Updates

- a. Development review
Windy Ridge - Discussion of the last DRB meeting. Setbacks and through roads were of concern.
Haystack - Discussion of removing access to 116 and routing all traffic via Shelburne Falls Road. Grassland birds criteria - there were historically bobolinks there prior to the field being plowed. Fish and Wildlife had informed them that a survey was supposed to be done in order to evaluate. They will be required to pay mitigation fee in order to mitigate the acreage of grassland bird habitat destroyed.
- b. Geprags management – Geprags Management
The sign is down - we aren't sure how to repair - could call the former chair of the CC to see if he has any information.
- c. Education subcommittee – iNaturalist, beavers, water quality presentation - no updates.
- d. Watershed grant next steps (beaver mitigation) - landowner on Texas Hill might need some work done to help protect his private driveway. Bob H. is pursuing landowner outreach.
- e. RR1 zoning changes - Update of Laster zoning line change discussion at planning commission meeting on Wed the 8th - see planning commission meeting minutes for details, Kate, Meg, and Tobi attended.

7. CC mission statement - discuss at next meeting Dec 12th.

8. Annual report - Kate will ask Meg if she is willing to write it again this year.

9. Adjourn 9:16pm