

Waterbury Conservation Commission
Location: Municipal Office Community Room
Draft Meeting Minutes – 9/10/2019
6:00pm-7:30pm
Prepared by Erin Hurley
waterburycvt@gmail.com

Present: Allan Thompson, Steve Hagenbuch, Mike Hedges, Erin Hurley, Tracy Sweeney, Krista Battles, Joan Beard, Billy Vigdor

- 1. Public**
 - a. No public comment
- 2. Review and approve agenda**
 - a. Steve moved to approve agenda. Allan seconded. All were in favor. The agenda was approved.
- 3. Meeting minutes**
 - a. Joan will do missing July minutes. Tracy will do missing August minutes. The commission will vote to approve at the next meeting and submit to Carla.
- 4. Change to Commission bylaws; quorum.**
 - a. Joan Beard proposed to change the bylaws to make quorum be at least 50% of the number of current sitting members of the Waterbury Conservation Commission.
 - b. Allan will give public notice and send notice to select board 7 days prior to the next meeting that we will be voting on Joan's proposed change to the bylaws.
- 5. Invasive plant project needs**
 - a. Mike Hedges requested we work to finish mapping the date the WCC collected on invasive species along roadways in Waterbury. Mike received mowing updates from town managers and talked about future mowing next year. The town did a second mow right after poison parsnip blossomed, which was very helpful. Town managers are keyed into the fact that mowing is good prevention and are willing to mow at appropriate times to help curb the spread of these species.
 - b. Krista suggested we add multiflora rose to our survey in the future considering how much she saw it this summer by roadsides. Allan suggested we keep it on our radar as an invasive but considering mowing isn't going to be preventative, it does not need be included on the mowing map.
 - c. Krista offered to add out data to the map Mike developed. She will bring a draft to a future meeting, so commissioners can give input.
 - d. Krista introduced the Citizen Science, I-map-invasives project in VT and NY. WCC discussed the benefits of getting an I-Map_Invasive initiative going in Waterbury as a way to engage the public.
 - e. Forest Hero training on invasive species– Forest Parks and Rec program. October 4th Rutland and October 5th in Essex junction. 9am-3pm. Krista is attending Essex Junction.
- 6. Shutesville Updates**
 - a. Press release is coming out soon about the 4 closed properties in the corridor including one purchased property and 3 easements. This effort raised \$500k, half from organizations and half from individual donations.
 - b. Events – December 5th Moose Presentation at Green Mountain Club by Alias Rosenblatt.
 - i. We have game cameras and we want to prepare visuals for this talk. We need someone to hire or volunteer to do a story map through GIS.

- ii. Krista offered to build a platform for photos to be shared. Allan and Krista will meet to see if they can create what it needed, but also looking for people who could be commissioned to do it.

7. WLI updates

- a. Waterbury Land initiative explored the route 100 property next to Cabot Annex for the last year and a half. Currently WLI is still exploring it, but it is not on the market because the Red Barn realty contract was up.
- b. WLI is partnering with makers sphere for a Wildlife Habitat Workshop family friendly event on Sunday, Sept 29th 1-4pm at the Beards Farm, 1601 Barnes Hill Rd. The purpose of the event is to engage the community in the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor. The event includes a tutorial on how to take quality pictures on your cell phone complete with a photo contest. There will be programs about wildlife in the corridor and nature walks.
- c. October 20th there will be a showing of the winning photos at the Makers sphere at the Seminary Arts.
- d. Waterbury Conservation Commission was requested to partner and to buy refreshments and cover the cost of printing photos from Pack and Send plus.
- e. Erin makes a motion to cover refreshments, photo printing and other support for up to \$400 for the event. Steve seconds it. All in favor. Motion passed.
- f. The article in the Waterbury Record on the WLI resulted in contacts from the community looking to get involved and a land owner interested in conservation..

8. Next Meeting likely October 16th, 6pm, location TBD to accommodate Steve Lotspeich

9. Discuss, develop proposals for chances to the draft bylaws

- a. We want to be prepared for our meeting with Steve.
- b. Applying regulations to a limited area was preferred. Billy has been working on drafting regulations including here will the regulations be applied and who does the enforcement.
- c. Billy and Steve talked to Tom Jackman in Stowe about their regulations. Their ridgeline steep slopes regulations almost come to route 100. They have more exacting regulations on east side. On the west side they have large parcels of land with landowners they don't think will be developed. Their regulations are quite good. Things we can consider, if we want to transfer of development rights, also Stowe can require parties to pay for an expert.
- d. Steve talked to Melinda Scott in Williston, the conservation planner. Williston is a good model for regulations. Williston has identified all open space as a wildlife habitat. For any proposed development areas in open spaces there has to be a habitat disturbance assessment. Applicant has a burden to hire a biologist to do assessment. It is provided to Williston Conservation Commission, and they make a recommendation to the Development Review Board. Scott noted that no development has been stopped and there have been no significant modifications. In this model, the Conservation Commission has a defined role. Steve suggested we should limit the regulations to Shutesville. We need to consider if we want to take on reviewing habitat disturbance assessments as a commission? Scott says it takes more than half of their meeting to discuss proposals. These regulations have been implemented for 4 years.
- e. Billy needs input on some things...
 - i. In Stowe the ridgelines overlay district has a minimum lot size 4 times larger than other districts. Other things to consider: Not allowing fences, how to limit Subdivision or Planned Unit Developments (PUD).
 - ii. With suggestions on development standards, density etc. send an email to Billy with ideas.
 - iii. Meeting with Steve L. next month in order to discuss our desired revisions to the RHS overlay and get feedback from the select board.