

CRAFTSBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

May 16, 2022

Called to order at 7:00 p.m., Craftsbury Town Hall

PRESENT: Steve Moffat, Diane Morgan, Brian Machesney, Farley Brown, Elinor Osborn, Liz Kegl, Colin Netzlay, Ashley Nunery, Susie Houston (Selectboard Liaison); Absent: June Pichel Cook

Steve called the meeting to order. Susie asked to add a discussion of the recent Tick Talk to the agenda.

MINUTES: Diane moved to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2022 meeting. Elinor seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

BIOBLITZ PLANNING / CONSERVATION FUND PROMOTION: Ashley stated that the Outreach WG did not allow sufficient time to recruit group leaders from the last event, so it will be postponed to 2023. Susie suggested a “big tree” inventory event, generating enthusiastic discussion. The WG will present options for a 2022 event at the Commission’s next meeting.

JOB DESCRIPTION PROGRESS: Diane moved to accept the Job Description document that was updated with members’ comments after the last Commission meeting. Brian seconded the motion. Several additional changes were made in discussion and the final version (attached) was unanimously accepted.

GMP/ADLS INVESTIGATION STATUS: June has been unable to find the PUC document containing the ADLS condition identified in the annual GMP letters. Steve and Brian will suspend further action until the document is located.

WEED WRENCH LOAN: Steve will physically transfer the wrenches to the library and finalize the loan agreement language.

MICROGRID PROJECT STATUS: Hardwick Electric did not commit to be a utility partner and there were too many unknowns for the Selectboard to support the project.

INVASIVES WG UPDATE: Elinor reviewed the list of activities that need to be accomplished at the Japanese Knotweed demo site. The group plans to meet in the next few weeks.

NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY WG REPORT: reviewed attached WG report.

NEXT MEETING: The Commission will meet on June 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in Town Hall. Proposed agenda to include: Cons. Fund promotional event planning status (Outreach WG); GMP/ADLS investigation status; NHI WG mapping review.

Farley moved to adjourn at 8:00pm; Ashley seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Submitted by Brian Machesney, Secretary

CRAFTSBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The Craftsbury Conservation Commission was established by town vote in 2007 under State Statute 24, Chapter 118. The Craftsbury Commission has nine members appointed by the Select Board for 4-year terms. When a position becomes open, the Commission makes it known to the public, and any resident of Craftsbury with experience and/or interest in natural history and the conservation of Craftsbury's natural resources may apply by writing a letter or email to the Chair of the Commission. Appointments are made by the Select Board on recommendation of the Commission.

Attendance is expected at all regular meetings which are held the 3rd Monday of each month. From time to time, special meetings may be called. The Commission meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. Commission members also serve on at least one "Working Group" which is similar to a subcommittee and will require additional meetings and projects. The Commission sponsors events from time to time and members who are available also help with those. For quorum reasons, a member should inform the Chair if unable to attend a meeting.

Once appointed, new members are requested to read and become familiar with the following:

1. Vermont Laws, Title 24, Municipal and County Government; Chapter 118: Conservation Commissions
2. The Conservation Commission webpage on the Town of Craftsbury website
3. The Town Plan on the Town of Craftsbury website (especially the sections on Land Use, Natural Heritage and Agriculture)
4. The Conservation Fund Guidance Document, linked on the Conservation Commission webpage
5. Minutes from past Conservation Commission meetings to get an idea of what the Commission has accomplished over the years
6. The Vermont Association of Conservation Commission's Handbook found online

Members are encouraged to attend conservation-related workshops and programs sponsored by the State or private organizations and report back to the Commission what they have learned.

REPORT: NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY WORK GROUP

May 16, 2022

- The NHI WG met at Town Hall for about 90 minutes on May 12, 2022.
- The Conservation Commission provides the Town Plan input on Section 6, Natural Heritage.
 - The next revision of the Town Plan must be approved by the regional planning commission (NVDA) no later than June 30, 2024.
 - The Conservation Commission input to Section 6 must be completed and approved by October, 2023 to give time for review.
- Act 171 will require the most energy for this section in the next update of the Town Plan.
- Next steps of the Natural Heritage Inventory working group:
 - Use ANR's online *BioFinder* program to develop three maps: forest blocks, natural resources constraints and an overlay of the two.
 - Review maps at June 2022 CCC meeting to identify high-priority forest blocks that may be in need of additional protection.
 - Solicit public input, re: community values
 - Public opinion survey
 - Interviews, especially larger land owners
 - Suggestion boards in public places
 - Community values mapping
 - Solicit input from other Town Committees
 - Municipal Forest
 - Academy Woodlot
 - Planning Commission
 - Recreation
 - Trails
 - Others?
 - Invite ANR to address the public at the Conservation Meeting in October 2022.