

DRAFT MINUTES
Conservation Commission
May 26, 2015

Present: Farley Brown; June Cook, Secretary; Joe Houston, Chair; Susie Houston, Select Board Liaison; Diane Morgan, Treasurer; Elinor Osborn; Leah Szafranski; Steve Wright

Absent: John Bailey, Rhoda Sweatt

AVCC Grant: Voted unanimously to approve AVCC (Association of Vermont Conservation Commission) grant application. Farley explained a Sterling student was interested in mapping the next leg of the Black River from the Young Bridget going north to confluence of Black River and Whitney Brook. Mapping would continue from the point of Farley's previous grant. The concerns are infestation of knotweed and non-native species, bank erosion, and sedimentation.

Outcomes of mapping: Student could attend commission meeting, field tour could be organized, presentation in public forum.

Farley reported the Black River GIS mapping database is at Sterling College. Discussion centered on ensuring continuity of town's access to database and having a formalized agreement as personnel and officials change.

If grant isn't approved, Susie suggested the commission seek town funds as the project is very worthwhile and of huge town benefit.

Steve reported on a portion of the Outdoor Center's ski trail disappearing because of bank erosion (Reil's)?

Composting: Joe reported on the Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District's letter to the select board regarding Act 148 (recycling and composting legislation) and its implementation over the next several years. As of July 1, 2015, transfer stations, trash haulers, and public facilities must have recycling bins available. People dropping off trash may not be charged for recycling under the law as of July 1, 2014. Joe pointed out the costs would be placed on the "hauling trash portion."

The select board would like the commission to help decipher what the town and homeowner's responsibilities are under Act 148. Getting information to the community through an informational meeting was discussed. The commission can help in organizing it with the select board.

Joe said Act 148 has little for which the town is responsible except ensuring recycle bins are available in public places. The town doesn't run a mini-garbage collection center; the collection facility is operated by Casella. The onus falls on trash haulers, transfer stations, etc. in implementing the law and making it easy for businesses and homeowners to comply.

The law sets the deadline of July 1, 2017 by which trash haulers and transfer stations must accept compostable materials, i.e., food scraps, leaves, etc

By July 1, 2020, food scraps are banned from landfills. Joe noted that Germany already has this

practice in place and is very strict. How to police the legislaiton was the big question.

Elinor suggested the motto: “Sort It When You Chuck It!”

TOWN PLAN UPDATE: Farley reported the Planning Commission was “stitching” together the updated town plan. The commission is responsible for the natural heritage section. Discussion centered on streamlining goals and recommendations. The object of the town plan is to determine goals and recommendations for implementing those goals.

DRAFT REVISIONS: (These are preliminary and is the best composite I could do.)

GOAL Protect and manage Craftsbury's natural heritage and biodiversity.

Actions:

1. Identify and understand the natural resources within Craftsbury and their ecological significance.
2. Raise community awareness about Craftsbury's natural heritage through education and local conservation planning.
3. Manage our town and school forests as models of land stewardship.
4. Collaborate with Sterling College, Craftsbury Academy, Craftsbury Outdoor Center, town committees, government institutions, agencies, and organizations regarding education and conservation activities.
5. Develop maps on land use patterns to understand current agricultural areas, contiguous forestland, and residential commercial development.
6. Restore ecological health and integrity of rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds.
7. Maintain the natural heritage database located at Sterling College.
8. Identify, map, and provide long-term stewardship of natural communities, including deeryards, bear production areas, vernal pools, wildlife corridors, connected correctors and linkages.
9. Develop mapping on land use patterns to understand impacts on natural heritage.

The commission will meet on Monday, June 23, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

June Pichel Cook, Secretary
May 31, 2015