

Bolton Conservation Commission  
Monday, May 19, 2014, 6:00 p.m.  
Bolton Town Office

**Present:** Lars Botzjorns (Chair), Amy Ludwin, Steve McLeod, Ken Remsen. Guests: Jens Hilke (VT Dep't. of Fish and Wildlife), Julie Longstreth.

**1. Minutes of the March 31, 2014 meeting** – Approved without changes.

**2. Tiered Ecological Priorities Map** - Jens Hilke showed a new draft of the map with a current development layer added. He outlined the criteria for primary, secondary, and tertiary conservation areas. He emphasized that the map would be helpful to better define development regulations and could be used to inform land management. Discussion focused on the following points:

- The primary zone would cover about 35% of the town, much if it higher elevation and a considerable amount already in public ownership. Additional development is meant to be prohibited in the primary zone. The other major component of this category in terms of acreage is a 50 meter forested riparian along all stream courses (Arrowwood Environmental shows these as 150 meter zones on the inventory maps). It may be better to use a finer approach by matching buffer width with stream order.
- State significant natural communities ranked S1, S2, or S3 are included in the primary zone in terms of rarity only. Community condition is not included as that is best addressed in specific land management plans, not town-wide regulations.
- The criteria for the secondary zone are based on sound data, except the wildlife travel corridors. This zone would trigger a heightened level of review for any future development. The limited field work conducted by Arrowwood is not sufficient to feel comfortable on which to base development regulations. Much of the development along Bolton's back roads, being one house deep, is not necessarily an impediment to wildlife travel. It was agreed that Jens would drop most of the area inventoried as crossing habitat to the tertiary zone, and retain a subset in the secondary zone that would be based on further analysis of a combination of the Arrowwood data, the state's wildlife crossing value tool and aerial photos.
- It was noted that showing a 100' buffer circle (envelope) around every building on tiered ecological priorities the map may encourage additional development, even in more protective areas. Jens will work on representing development with dots that are visible, but not too disproportionate to their actual size.

Jens will prepare another draft by the September meeting, unless the Planning Commission needs to see it earlier, in which case, we will consider it at our July

meeting.

**3. Preston Pond art proposal** – West Bolton artist Julie Longstreth presented an idea for an interpretive display using natural materials along the trails in the PPCA. The Commission agreed this would be an appropriate project, especially if the artwork could be placed alongside trail markers or on sign posts. Julie is seeking expertise on natural history topics to interpret, and is hoping to work on the project this summer.

**4. Joiner Brook Management Plan** – The Commission will discuss follow-up to the plan at our September meeting. Each member will review at least the recommendations section (pp. 50-55) by that time.

**5. Old Business:** Amy updated the BCC on the Friends of the Winooski River stormwater grant process, including an upcoming meeting among all the town contacts, a possible rain barrel workshop at Bolton Valley, and the need to educate the public about run-off.

**Next meeting:** Lars will put out dates to reschedule the July meeting from the 21<sup>st</sup>. The meeting will entail a field walk of the Fisher and Holbrook properties.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lars Botzjorns