

Town of Bolton
3045 Theodore Roosevelt Highway, Bolton VT 05676

802-434-5075

Bolton Conservation Commission
September 29, 2016
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Conservation Commission Minutes

Absent: Jerry Mullen

Present: Steve McLeod, Virginia Haviland, Amy Ludwin, Ali Kosiba and Brian Mezitt
(pending member)

Note taker volunteer present: Miranda Grover.

1. Review, and additions, minutes of the September 19th 2016 meeting . Approval of past minutes.No comment from previous meetings. Amy motions to move forward, Steve seconds, all in favor.

2. Additions or deletions to the agenda.

Ali→ wants to talk about trail conditions at Preston Pond. Moved to #8

Amy→ Info on: PC discussion question of how the PPCA Management plan would be followed or loosely followed?

3. Public Comments

No public comments.

4. COI question; Does anyone have a potential /or possible conflict of interest issue related to any of the topics on this agenda?

No conflict issues on the agenda.

5. Follow up: Input requested for the Town Plan.

Ali→ has not given her input and would like to.

Amy→ Addressed Emily and Deb about how they will integrate CC input.

Future there will be more to discuss with the Planning Commission.

The Preston Pond Management plan, is meant to be followed or loosely followed? VLT has weighed in, they are clear it should be followed, if something needs to be changed it should be amended similarly to the forest management plan, same goes for overall

management plan to the property. Sent email to Sharon Murray to follow up this.
Discussion; no dispute over this and the recommendation is accepted by the whole CC.

Steve makes motion to accept land trust recommendation of Cara Montgomery. The PPCA MP is expected to be followed. Virginia seconds. All in favor.

6. Budget plans. Overall, and re: fund for PPCA items - \$500 given last year. Level funding or ask for something else?

Level funding should be almost sufficient, but may need more than that to help with upkeep of Preston Pond parking area, or the signs alone, and possible funds for trail work. Long term we can re ask the SB about plowing needs in the winter and what they could do. Possible long term plan be needed, grant funds for improvement might be needed?

If going to ask for more money, needs to be done by Oct. 15th.

There is an \$80 trails grant for the Preston Pond area (needs to be found in funds, Ali did ask Lars about this money)→ will be used for wooden signs and kiosk signs. She is looking into that.

Can we seek :Boy scout troops from Richmond and Waterbury , interested in helping to repair a bridge.Ali will look into that. Possible grant funding needed.

Discussion: This year's \$500 has been spent on Floodplain Inventory work , & membership in AVCC. Amy proposes the commission asks for \$600 this year.

Voted ; all in favor of this.

7. Bolton Falls Request for Info. : re: relicensing of the Hydro project on the river.

The select board has responded to this already. At a request, Tony Barbagallo reviewed the info we got, and the Arrowwood group were asked about this too, as well as other stakeholder groups regarding the floodplain. Feedback needed by October 17th, this is anticipated to be a lengthy process. Discussion, we don't think we need to comment on the plans at this time.

8. Updates: Friends Of Winooski - Smilie School runoff , Wheeler Field , PPCA maps- and signs , Bolton Canoe Access/ Duxbury Road, Floodplain Inventory: & landowner contacts.

Smilie School Runoff-- Virginia met with Anne, Barbara, Sean and Julie to see what can be done with Smilie School runoff...Ideas/problem areas are → Move the dumpster (on top of storm water drain), Rain garden to collect and filter runoff, Catch basins near the hydrant. Three areas are expected to be covered by grants of Friends of the Winooski, Julie (engineer) is working on estimates. How to best plow the Smilie School parking lot, going to be discussed at a Select Board meeting. If members are strongly in favor of this they should reach out to the Board.

Wheeler Field-- Moving at a slow pace, interested buyers ` Lexie Haselton and her Dad a builder, are under contract with Jeff for the whole parcel and moving forward toward a preliminary meeting with the DRB in Oct./Nov.. Tony Barbagallo has

volunteered, and is on top of seeking a contract option to buy the Field land for the Town when that becomes possible, ~ & then we could/ would follow up with an open discussion for the town on next steps, options.

PPCA maps-- Ali has laminated signs, for PPCA and SH property, she'll have / ask for those to be approved by the Select Board. Tangent→ should the Latham Homes parking lot be turned into a park and ride? Need for a local park and ride, perhaps a topic for future discussion? Awareness of some cars at the The Long Trail parking lot on Rt 2 might be using that as a park and ride. Signs need small amendments pertaining to camping, rifle season, dogs on leashes.

Canoe Access Duxbury Rd-- Amy met with forester, Jay (Jason.Nerenberg@vermont.gov) and others (Gretchen Alexander, Ken Brown) for a site visit. Jay is very involved and taking the lead on this, interested in improving the access, discussed design ideas, and looking into options. No request for money from the BCC at this time. Participation with site visit also from the State floodplain expert, Rebecca (Rebecca.Pfeiffer@vermont.gov), who can help with floodplain permitting for the project.

Floodplain Inventory-- Amy checked in with Arrowwood, and it seems that the process is going well. Done by December or January then will give a report and possibly a presentation. VT AVCC gave tiny \$500 grant, want a success story about the floodplain on website with photos within a year after completion, Virginia will do the success story in the spring.

Not on agenda, Preston Pond flooding-- Ali has seen flooding along one section on the VAST trail, Brian has contact information for Larry Burritt to fix this as well as a culvert. Organize a town trails day next summer? Will contact eagle scouts or VYCC to help repair bridge and trails. Libby's Look trail possibly needs to be moved, erosion issues on old logging road section. Ali in the lead on mitigation for these issues.

9. PPCA proposed Management Plan updates; discuss wording changes, follow up from the SB meeting 9/19, and update from Cara Montgomery VLT feedback. Other meetings w / SB re: PPCA draft plan approval.

Wording changes-- Select board has asked BCC to make a rule/wording change for dogs leashed during rifle season. Steve's proposed wording→ Dogs shall be leashed and under control of the dogwalker during rifle deer season which runs 16 consecutive days ending at dusk the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Accepted by the group.

We need to adjust wording for hunting, fishing, trapping in 5.3 and 5.4 to avoid confusion. Will switch order of 5.3 and 5.4. In the PPMA, make 8.2 more neutral instead of directly to the BCC, in second paragraph add "prior to consulting with the select board in their decision". In fourth paragraph add "if warranted". Steve suggests eliminate paragraphs 2 and 4 altogether, go with amended first and third paragraphs, all members in agreement. We changed "If the BCC determines that trapping is required..." to "If there is a determination that trapping is required..." To acknowledge Select Board role more.

SB meeting 9/19 & Cara's update-- the purchase and sale agreement is in line with the original document according to Cara. Steve requests to see original document, Ali will ask Cara about getting a copy of it.

PPCA draft plan approval— VLT / Cara: the wording of 5.3 and 8.2 needs to be positive. Options looked at, second option on handout in green is preferred. Amy proposes this sentence is added to 8.2 and 5.3 to meet the requirement of the land trust. Ali seconds this. Amy, Virginia and Ali are in favor, Steve votes no because trapping should be allowed on a case by case basis as determined by the selectboard, therefore this language is unnecessary. The vote on the following wording that passed : "Trapping is restricted in the PPCA to protect natural habitats and for the public safety of other users in line with the limitations of the conservation easement." Amy will ask the SB about Preston Pond parking lot maintenance, plowing question. Wording changes to the PPCA MP , Ali will make these changes in line with the discussions we've had within our group, and with the SB.

Long term: there could be more community input about Preston Pond MP if the SB wishes to do outreach on that. CC , we've gotten a lot of input already, not thinking we need to actively reach out more.

10. Possible New Members and Member outreach- Welcome Miranda Grover note taker, and helper! MMU Student and Town member. thanks for helping us out. Brian is going to send note to the SB asking to appointed to the CC.

11. Conservation fund policy.

Was drafted several years ago by The CC , when Sharon Murray a member of the CC , there's not a record of it being formally adopted by Select Board, perhaps just an oversight ? Discussion (& approved by the current CC, as follows below). SB to discuss soon, and hopefully approve.

Virginia noted that: Trapping not mentioned in the original document. Steve proposes and it was accepted by the group : To add the word trapping under:

II. Purpose , bullet list item B "The conservation fund may be used to"
bullet 5. Permanently preserve public access to uplands and surface waters for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreational activities that have limited environmental impact.

would become:

II. Purpose , bullet list item B "The conservation fund may be used to"
bullet 5. Permanently preserve public access to uplands and surface waters for hunting, fishing, trapping and outdoor recreational activities that have limited environmental impact.

Discussion: section B, #5 -Steve wants to add "trapping" to "hunting and fishing" All agree this can be added.

Discussion: Town must vote if 1/2 or more of fund is to be used: can this be simplified/ save cost of vote/made time sensitive? what defines a vote? In the Town bylaws - most likely there is already a definition of what a "vote" is, and there are likely options as to how it can be done.

All agree that it makes sense to have a vote: since it's a good deal of the taxpayer's money, Public should have a say.

12 Mtn. Biking at PPCA - VAST info. and update: Brian Mezitt
Mtn. biking in the past had been prohibited on the VAST trails,
Brian discusses the exact VAST policy of trails found on their website: "Permission to use snowmobile trails does not extend to use of these trails by Fat Bikes, ATVs, four-wheelers, motor or mountain bikes, hiking or other uses unless specifically authorized by the landowner and the club"

Brian has been in contact with Larry Burritt (trails coordinator for Richmond Rough Riders Snowmobile Club) and he says that he will allow bicycle use on the VAST trail between Notch Rd. and Stage Rd. Brian will get that in writing from Larry.

Owners of the land which the VAST trail crosses are: Town of Bolton, Streeter family, and ?? - Brian will contact all land owners on that portion of the VAST trails and ask if they will allow bicycle travel on VAST trail portion of their land.

The CC suggests contacting the Zoning Administrator - usage of trail would change with addition of Bicycle travel - question: is a permit or approval required? Brian will follow up on asking about that.

Discussion: How could this be incorporated into PPCA Draft Management plan?

Seasonal use? Mud season to Hunting Season? Not allowed during hunting season?

Perhaps this is left open, general trail use permitted similar to horse use "when not in winter and not when excessively muddy" CC suggests that Brian come up with proposed language to incorporate into PPCA Draft Plan, and we can review that, discuss make proposed wording amendments at our next meeting. Moving up our next meeting date, to 10/17, so as to allow for draft PPCA MP to be complete asap. Also noted that this Draft PPCA MP may be up for approval by the select board before completion - and if so, then perhaps any biking issue we discuss, will have to be an amendment.

13. Meeting schedule: Next meeting: 10/17/16. Then 12/5/16 planned CC meeting due to conflicts w/ scheduling for Nov.

14. Items for next meeting agenda: Visit by F&W to PPCA w / Chris Bernier, follow up PPCA, mail, mtn. biking, snow removal PPCA.

15. Other communications/mail. Will be reviewed at next meeting.

16. Adjournment , moved to adjourn made at 9:00 pm, passed by all.

These minutes are unofficial until accepted.

These minutes were read and accepted by a quorum of the Conservation Commission on:

10/17/16

Amy E. Judson

For the Conservation Commission