

West Fairlee Conservation Commission

Approved Minutes – Meeting of September 23 , 2014

Attending: John Boutin, Fred Cook, Coeey Kearns, Ann Stephens, Jim Totin, Peggy Willey and Rebecca Wurdak.

The meeting began at 7:00 PM.

1. Minutes: It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the Commission's meeting of August 26.

2. Treasurer's Report: Brushwood Community Forest Fund: \$73,758.75. Conservation Commission Fund: \$6,924.89

3. Brushwood Community Forest: **A)** Trail Updates: Guy - blazing date set for October 3rd, 11 am, meeting at Knobloch house parking. Paint blaze will be yellow. Ann - walked with MacAdam/Tiffits to see where new/ experienced eyes would want trail signs in Brushwood South. Grant applications not discussed, but Guy offers to help put together ideas for them.

B) French Property_ - Jonathan Blake applied Penn mulch and all post-logging work had been completed when Dave Paganelli's forestry field trip passed through. Ann suggested Dave's group take pictures at various stages of regrowth. Dave and the group agreed this will be a good project to follow regeneration and habitat changes over time. Fred installed chain and lock today for the gate on Bloodbrook Road. Four keys will be available: one each for Rivendell Trail Association (Andy Boyce), WFCC (Peggy or Ann), Town Clerk/Selectboard and the Fire Department. Ann will ask Stephen's Precision to number the keys. Ann and Rebecca will draft an agreement to be distributed with the keys to ensure that they are used responsibly. There was discussion about VAST access and about a gate system that will work for all users and needs. This can be done successfully on a tour with representatives of all groups that use the trail present. The commission will come up with ideas for discussion about access in advance of this tour. Thank you notes will be written to Farmway, J&M Landscaping, Fairlee Feed and the Saddlery, all of whom donated materials for the seeding and mulching of the log landing and road after logging operation was closed out.

C) Monitoring of the Crawford parcel by Upper Valley Land Trust will be the morning of September 30 or October 1 with Doug Brown.

4. Water: **A)** Phase 2 Geomorphic Assessment Projects for West Fairlee Waters – the group discussed and ranked possible water projects delineated in Bear Creek Environmental report as high priority. Joan Allen of Connecticut River Watershed Council will help to move these along.

B. The State watershed basin groups have offered to conduct a Town presentation —possibly with Thetford and Vershire— about watershed projects along the Ompaompanoosuc. The goal will be to find and share answers to questions about how we can all help and find assistance for a process to clearing up the likely sources of E.coli and other contaminants. An ideal meeting time for us would be February, but early November would be our second choice.

5. Education: **A)** Fall roster- October 16th, Thursday evening - Wetlands Presentation at Thetford Elementary School. Steve Faccio, a great speaker from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies in Norwich will present a program, with great accompanying photography, about the various kinds of local Wetlands. The Thetford and West Fairlee CC's will help with refreshments, greeting, set-up, handouts. More details will be upcoming as we get closer. November 9, Sunday afternoon at 3 PM at the Westshire gymnasium, there will be a family afternoon conducted by the Squam Lakes Science Center. They will bring three amazing critters. More details as we get closer.

B) Work will continue on the homeowner information handout over time.

C) It was proposed that a short description be presented on the town listserv each month of CC meeting

discussions in order to inform the town about CC activities. This will encourage thoughtfulness and help to develop project possibilities and the discussion of ideas.

6. **Critters**: ways to increase wider understanding of our local wildlife were discussed. It was decided that each of us would choose a month and a critter and provide a small paragraph about it to be included on the Town listserv for fun and education. The autumn was volunteered, and the rest of us can continue after this: October – Ann on spiders; November – John on a surprise critter; December – Coeey on Otters

7. **Conservation Ops/ Mapping**: Fundraising for Conservation easements was discussed. It was felt it would be very helpful to gather information that helps educate potential donors about particular conservation projects.

8. **Adjourn**: The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.