

West Fairlee Conservation Commission

Approved Minutes – Meeting of June 24, 2014

Attending: John Boutin, Fred Cook, Geoff Gardner, Coeey Kearns, Ann Stephens, Peggy Willey, Guy Wilson and Rebecca Wurdak

The meeting began at 7:15 PM.

1. **Minutes** – Minutes of the Commission’s May 27th meeting were accepted unanimously.
2. **Membership** – John Boutin and Coeey Kearns attended and participated in this meeting and are considering joining the Commission. Peggy, Guy and Rebecca will talk to other people who may want to become members. Now that Julie and Corey will be moving, Geoff will take over the Treasurer’s duties until another member agrees to become Treasurer.
3. **Open Meeting Law** – There was a robust discussion of the new provisions of the State’s open meeting law and what it will entail for the Commission.
4. **Brushwood Community Forest** –
 - A) Geoff has contacted Paul Gillies by phone and email to arrange a meeting with him to discuss the right of way issue in Brushwood South.
 - B) Peggy, Ann, Guy and Geoff reported on their tour of the north and south wetlands and their boundaries on the 13th with County Forester David Paganelli and Commissioner of Forests and Parks Michael Snyder and the latter’s helpful suggestions for revising the STA section of the North Brushwood easement and adding a similar section to the South Brushwood easement. The Commission voted unanimously to create a subcommittee to draft these revisions. Members will be Peggy, Ann, Guy and Geoff. The Subcommittee will present its work for review and comment to the CC, then to David Paganelli and then Michael Snyder. A final draft will then be recommended to the Selectboard for action.
 - C) The logger has begun building the road necessary for the timber cut on the former French property in Brushwood South. It was voted unanimously that at the end of project two or three parking spaces for hikers and visitors be created above the present location of the Bloodbrook Road gate. The gate will be moved to a position beyond this parking area, and it will be flanked by large stones to keep unauthorized vehicles out. Peggy will tell David Paganelli about this decision. Geoff will post an announcement about the road preparations and the timber cut on the West Fairlee listserv.
 - D) Guy has now flagged the entire Brushwood North boundary on the west and the north. We will be able to permanently mark the boundary in the fall.
 - E) Guy has mapped and received the County Forester’s approval for a hiking trail in North Brushwood. It’s Guy’s opinion that this trail and its loop including a view of the wetland is all that is needed for hiking in addition to the ATV trails. Names for this trail will be considered at our next meeting. Suggestions so far are *Loggers’ Long Run* for the trail and *Wetland Walk Way* for the loop. Guy will lead a walk to blaze this trail next fall.
 - F) Ann proposed we map a descriptive nature guide and map for the Wpanak Trail in Brushwood South. She and Geoff will walk the trail to explore the possibilities.
5. **Wild Chervil** – Some belated organizing to pull Wild Chervil along the Town roadways was accomplished and some limited areas were cleared. Geoff will post thanks to those participating on the West Fairlee listserv. The Commission resolved to begin organizing more actively next March. It will also explore what the state is doing to cope with this problem and what more it can do.

6. Water –

A) Both the Conservation Commission and the Planning Commission wrote letters of support for Upper Valley Land Trust's application for grant funding to make conservation easements for the Dresser and Modern/Hildebrandt floodplain properties along the Ompompanoosuc River. We should know in July whether the grants have been made awarded for this project. The Commission will need to raise \$8,500 as its share of the funding for this project with assistance from the UVLT.

B) Guy reported on a communication from Ned Swanberg of the State's Rivers Program asking if we would like to participate in a panel next fall on how the State can assist local conservation commissions to meet the challenges of flood resilience planning. There was general agreement that this is an excellent idea and we'd be happy to participate.

7. Village Center Charette – In anticipation of the town wide meeting and design charette to be held at the Bean Hall and Community Building site Thursday the 26th, there was a wide-ranging and enthusiastic discussion about possible uses for that portion of the Village Center, Commission members sharing many ideas.

9. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 9:20.