

## Bethel Conservation Commission Minutes – 3/11/14

**Present** Mary Floyd, Moe Brigham, Tom Warhol, Emily Miller, Jen Schomp, Dave Stanley at the Town Offices.

**Action on Minutes** approved minutes from February meeting as written

### Business

- Rick Benson came to speak with us about the town forests and about the Development Review Board:
  - Town Forests
    - each one has a forestry plan available in the town office
    - recalls that the town forest at end of Woodland Rd. was thinned ~10-15yrs ago.
    - Spoke with us about the Branliere Forest (in town approximately behind/south of the town hall).
      - Presented some information about a plan that had been developed to create trails within the forest. In 2011, they applied for funding from VT Dept. of forest and rec (rec trails program) for the project. Expenses included dealing with a cap for old reservoir and figuring out how to deal with some old open wells. Didn't receive funding and then Irene hit and it fell by the wayside. Old grant application is in the folder at the town office. There would need to be some thinning of trees for a view: Rick flagged trees, talked with Carl about logging with his horses in 2011. It was noted that there's an old barn on the town forest property right above the wall that's unsafe and would also need to be dealt with. Rick expressed interest in seeing someone to take up this project again and reapply for funding.
    - The CC agrees with Rick that we should encourage recreational usage of town forests.
  - Rick talked with us about what the DRB does:
    - DRB meets as needed, not necessarily every month;
    - DRB's role is to interpret the zoning regulation that's developed by the Planning Commission;
    - If the zoning administrator can handle it they do, if they can't deal with it it goes on to the DRB.
    - Rick confirmed that the property near town well on rte 12 that the CC had some concerns about (see minutes from February meeting) did go through the DRB.
- We briefly discussed potential community garden sites (River Street buyout property, parsonage that's adjacent to the pool)
- The CC received a communication from Mary Russ, White River Partnership. WRP has a grant for the VT Youth CC to do river access improvements at buyout sites. Mary (Floyd) will pursue this further.
- Moe spoke with Jon Bouton, Windsor County Forester, about our town forests. Jon would like talk with us. Moe will follow up to invite him to our May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- Daniel Ruddell, Redstart, April 1<sup>st</sup> will come to present some preliminary findings from the Phase II Geomorphic Assessment in Bethel.
- Water Quality Testing/Data update. Jen has gotten some information from the town website and will meet with Abbie sometime next week to learn more.
- Showing of 20 min VINS-produced film (Tom): *Last Irene*
  - local intense weather tied to global climate change
  - part of film series addressing resiliency, flooding, etc.
  - CC would like to host a showing at some point (late spring potentially)

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Next meeting will be **April 1st, 6:30pm (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday instead of 2<sup>nd</sup> this month!).**