

Town of Bethel, Vermont
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 9/11/19 6:30 PM
Town Office

Meeting brought to order at 6:35pm

Present: Mary Floyd, Emily Miller, Ferron Griffin, Mark Heckmann, Lisa Campbell,
Danny Dover, Chris Fors

1. Minutes: Minutes from 8/20/19 were reviewed and modified to reflect the absence of Mark in August.
2. Welcome to two new prospective members!
 - a. Chris Fors and Danny Dover
 - b. We will request at the Selectboard meeting on 9/23/19 that they be officially added to the Conservation Commission.
3. Revisions of the Town Plan
 - a. Natural, Scenic and Cultural Resources chapter overview for additions/changes/omissions for the Planning Commission meeting on 9/18/19,
 - b. Section by section review
 - i. Overall question: Is it possible to list the policies and recommendations for each goal, one at a time?
 - ii. (Background section, Recommendation a.1) "The Developmental Review Board should be cognizant of new developments' impacts on the natural, scenic, and historic character of the Town." We wonder if it should be more inclusive and say all town officials/entities involved in the developmental review process rather than just the DRB?
 - iii. (Background section) Does "land resources" include soil quality?
 - iv. (Background section, Goal 3) "To enhance and maintain Bethel's outdoor environment for ~~both active and passive recreational uses including hiking, fishing, boating, camping, hunting, music, and the arts~~ recreational, cultural, and educational uses."
 - v. (Water Resources section, Recommendation g.1 is incomplete, ending with a comma) "The Town should seek to educate residents about stream maintenance, buffer zones,"
 - vi. (Flora, fauna and Natural Communities section, Policy 2, "It is the policy of the Town that development, ~~other than isolated houses and camps~~, should be designed to preserve continuous areas of forestlands and other wildlife habitat, including deer wintering

areas, whenever possible. Fragmentation of forestlands and other habitat is discouraged.”

- vii. (Flora, fauna and natural communities section, Recommendation to implement Policy c) might read “**Applicants should be made aware of conservation strategies.**”
 - viii. (Minerals section) The Conservation Commission wonders about gravel extraction from waterways and whether it needs to be included in this section. Is this covered by state statutes instead?
 - ix. Mary has some suggested edits for section H. Significant Natural and Historic Areas. She will share those along separately.
 - x. (section I.) “Bethel’s Conservation Commission has been actively involved in: creating a plan for the properties the Town acquired as a result of the FEMA buyout process; ~~identifying and eradicating invasive species; and developing a walking trail through the Branliere Town Forest,~~ **advising the town and developing management plans for all town forests.**”
 - xi. (Land Protection Strategies, main paragraph) “~~It is safe to assume that there will never be sufficient funding for land protection strategies to acquire conservation easements or ownership for all of the unprotected areas of value.~~”
 - xii. (Goals, Policies and Recommendations section, Recommendation a.3) The Town should **continue to support** ~~consider creating a~~ conservation fund to be administered by the Conservation Commission for the purposes of natural resource protection and land preservation.”
4. 428 Pleasant St. property
- a. Steve Libby (VRC) would like to meet with us at the field, after 4pm or Saturday morning during the second half of September.
5. Branliere hike to flag trees for removal for vista and flag out new trail
- a. Will happen on 9/12/19 with AJ Follensbee, 9am.
6. Any other business.
- a. Vegetative survey in Branliere
 - i. Postponed to a time when Jenn can attend.
 - b. Forward Fest, 9/21/19, 9-3pm
 - i. Brief discussion of items we should bring
 - c. Letter to donors to the 428 Pleasant St. property
 - i. we reviewed a letter that Mary has drafted.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20pm. Next meeting will be Wednesday, 10/16/19 at 6:30pm at the town offices.