

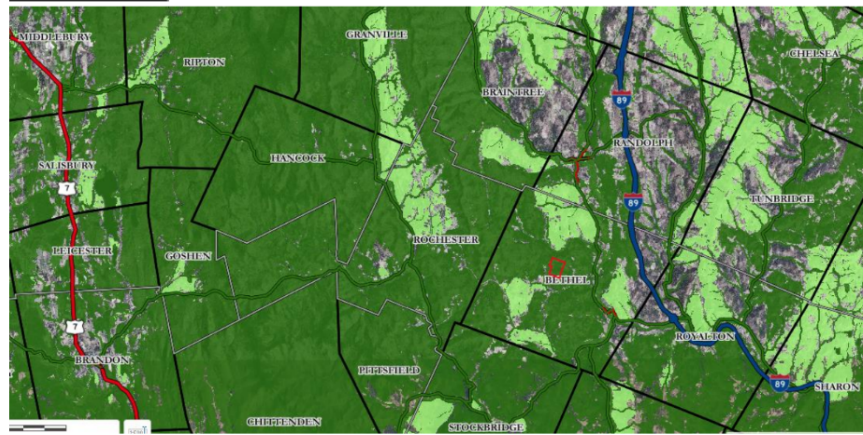
Town of Bethel, Vermont
Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 10/11/22 6:30 PM
Town Offices

Meeting brought to order at 6:30pm

Present: Emily Miller, Ferron Griffin, Mary Floyd, Mark Heckman, Danny Dover

1. Minutes: Minutes from the September meeting were approved.
2. Forward Fest
 - a. Nice crowd, beautiful day.
 - b. Good response to the Bethel Parks Challenge.
 - c. Nice to have Mary Lacy there as well.
3. Planning Commission Update
 - a. We discussed the potential modifications to the unified bylaws. We support what the Planning Commission is trying to do to increase the population and tax base of Bethel, but we want to make sure that we balance those goals with preserving the rural character of our community and the valuable natural resources we have.
 - b. Information to share with the Planning Commission in regards to our concerns about proposed changes to the unified bylaws. With particular attention and concern about the rezoning of the Resource Conservation Districts.
 - i. Bethel Unified Bylaw Adopted June 12, 2017/Amended August 23, 2021:
The purpose of purpose of the Resource Conservation District is to protect the natural resource value of town lands which are essentially undeveloped, provide significant recharge to the ground and surface water supplies of the Town and region, are important for wildlife and wildlife habitat, include irreplaceable recreational and scenic areas and have potential for commercial logging and cutting of firewood.
 - ii. Excerpt [Camp Brook Town Forest Management Plan](#) from AJ Follensbee, Windsor and Orange County Forester, 20:
Camp Brook Town Forest is part of a large unfragmented forest block. The forest block is roughly 2,795ac in size. This block connects to many other very large forest blocks. This block is mapped as critical by VT BioFinder, a biological diversity tool. This block is providing interior forest habitat, connectivity for wildlife and protects enduring physical features. An interior forest habitat block provides suitable conditions to support a variety of native plants and animal species. It is important to keep these large blocks unfragmented. A road, house, agricultural fields or other development splits these forest blocks up into smaller and smaller pieces. The smaller a block gets, the less beneficial they are. Every parcel in the forest block matters. Camp Brook Town forest is an important piece of a larger block. More information on forest blocks can be found at Vermont Bio Finder.



(Map of forest blocks in the town of Bethel. Light green blocks are priority blocks, dark green blocks are high priority)

- iii. From Linking Lands Alliance
<https://www.linkinglandsalliance.org/whatwecando>

Unfragmented land provides:

- *Clean air, clean water, flood protection, and ground water recharge*
- *Forest and agriculture-based businesses and future land management options*
- *Open space for solitude and for diverse recreational pursuits, such as hiking, hunting, and birding*

c. We will continue to gather resources.

4. Bethel Parks Challenge and Planning Forums

- a. Great work to pull all that information together for the Challenge.
- b. There will be some Bethel 4 All planning forums later this month.

5. Any other business

- a. Bee the Change folks don't think the soils at Peavine Park are suitable for planting.
- b. Promote the idea of planting Bethel apple trees.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8pm. Next meeting will be Tuesday, 11/8/22, 6:30pm at the Town office.