

**TOWN OF BRISTOL, VERMONT
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING HELD
AT 6:00 P.M. ON
THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2016
AT HOLLEY HALL, BRISTOL VT**

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Ken Johnson (KJ), Chair; Pete Diminico (PD) Vice-Chair; Katie Reilley (KR), Clerk; David Henderson (DH); David Rosen (DR); Kristen Underwood (KU); Randy Durand (RD); Devlin Rutherford (DvR).

ALSO ATTENDING: David Brynn

- I. Call to order.
Meeting called to order at 6:10 p.m.
- II. Public comment period. (See Item VI. A. below)
- III. Addition of items to the agenda.
- IV. Approval of minutes of 14 January 2016.
Minutes amended to include date in heading. PD moved that the minutes of 14 January 2016 be approved as amended; DR seconded; approved by all.
- V. Correspondence.
E-mails related to items listed below.
- VI. Old Business
 - A. Hogback Walking Trail: Proposal by The Watershed Center to develop a trail off Mountain Street in Bristol; David Brynn to attend.
David Brynn discussed the proposed development of a trail system on a 4.2 acre parcel on Mountain Street. The parcel, owned by The Watershed Center, is currently used by the Bristol Elementary School but does not have a hardened trail. The parcel has an 11' wide access off Mountain Street, with the remainder of the parcel, about 175' wide, extending uphill. TWC is considering installing a trail that goes from Mountain Street to the approximate mid-point of the parcel. This would be a switchback trail, covering the more gently sloped portion of the parcel, and could be made handicapped accessible. A trail would not be constructed in the steeper section of the parcel in the near future. While David expressed interest in creating interest and cooperation with the Conservation Commission, he did not think any permits or other permissions were needed for the trail on the parcel.
The larger possibility, as David explained, is to consider a trail that encircles the top of the Deer Leap area, providing more than 5 miles of trail. The proposed trail could pass through areas where active, positive uses of the forest are demonstrated, with educational information for the public. Trails would also be designed to "slow the flow", showing how to control runoff and create positive solutions.
Randy brought with him a map of the area from the Natural Resource Atlas that showed the areas known to be occupied by protected species (both plants and animals)

- and critical habitats. It was apparent from the map that the area under discussion has a concentration of such uses, particularly toward the south end (around Deer Leap), thus limiting the area that the Conservation Commission could endorse for public use. Devlin was concerned that the area already receives a lot of use, and that it might be better to focus on The Watershed Center properties on Plank Road for trail development.
- Dave Rosen volunteered his time to discuss opportunities for such activities.
- B. **Green Stormwater Infrastructure:** Update regarding the stormwater management project at the corner of Main St. and Mountain St.
It was reported that the drain appears to be functioning (water percolating into substrate) as hoped even without all the drain elements in place.
 - C. **Bristol Village tree inventory:** Follow-up coordination Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program; update.
Randy reported that the tree inventory report is finished, and it will go to him shortly for review.
 - D. **Saunders River Access:** update on unmanned aircraft (drone) flyover by University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab, funded by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, to obtain topographic data and local conditions; scheduled for December 22, 2015.
No update.
 - E. **Monkton Agricultural and Natural Areas Committee:** meeting on Sunday 24 January 2016; update.
Ken, Kristen and Pete attended the meeting. The discussion was attended by a diverse group of local commissions and organizations, including representatives from Monkton, Starksboro, Hinesburg, New Haven, Charlotte, Bristol, and Ferrisburgh. This might become an annual event.
 - F. **Potential changes to Zoning Regulations** regarding river corridor protection; update.
No discussion.

VII. New Business

- A. **Request from Vermont Land Trust** to use Conservation Reserve Fund monies to support a farm conservation project in Bristol.
No further discussion or actions at this time.
- B. **Conservation Reserve Fund:** appropriation request in 2016 Town Budget.
The Commission's recommendation that the \$10,000 appropriation stay in the budget was approved, and will be part of the budget presented for Town Meeting.

VIII. Other

- A. Pete recommended that the Commissioners look at the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) webpage conservation success stories on their website, <http://vtconservation.com/success/>. We might want to broaden our approaches to funding opportunities. Katie will put together a summary of what CRF funds have been used for in the past.
- B. Dave Rosen brought up Green-Up Day planning. As the Town of Bristol no longer has a landfill to accept Green-Up Day bags, we will have to explore other possibilities. The Addison County Solid Waste District will accept bags but might only come to get them on Green-Up Day. Bristol road crew pick up bags over the following week. Dave will investigate.

IX. Upcoming events

- A. February 18, 2016 7:00 p.m.: New Haven Conservation Commission sponsors “The Dam Controversy”, including a viewing of The Nature Conservancy’s movie DamNation; New Haven Town Hall.
- B. March 31, 2016 7:00 p.m.: Vermont Family Forest public lecture entitled “The Art & Science of Forest Ecosystem Conservation”; registration details to be available at www.familyforests.org.

X. Next Meeting Schedule: Thursday, 10 March 2016.

XI. Adjournment

- A. DR moved that the meeting be adjourned; DevR seconded; approved by all. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.